

17 March 1998



**STATEMENT OF THE MEETING OF THE  
SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL MIDDLE EAST COMMITTEE**

**Cairo, 14 March 1998**

Dear Comrade,

I am pleased to send herewith, for your information, the statement issued by the Socialist International Middle East Committee at its meeting in Cairo, which was hosted by the National Democratic Party of Egypt.

The Committee's discussions reviewed the conditions prevailing in the region, particularly in the light of the current deadlock in the peace process.

I also include the list of all participants at our meeting, which was chaired by the Chair of the Committee Bjørn Tore Godal of the Norwegian Labour Party.

Fraternal regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luis Ayala', with a long, sweeping underline.

Luis Ayala  
Secretary General

## STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST

The Socialist International Middle East Committee, SIMEC, meeting in Cairo on Saturday 14 March 1998 to review the serious conditions prevailing in the Middle East as a result of the deadlock in the peace process which could lead to an escalation of violence, and after considering the latest developments:

*Expresses* its deep concern over the deadlock on all tracks of the peace process negotiations. Israel has a special responsibility to bring the peace process back on course.

*Confirms* its determination that the peace process on all tracks be established on the principles and basis of international legitimacy as embodied in resolutions 242, 338 and 425 of the UN Security Council, and on the principles stated on the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference, foremost among which is the principle of Land for Peace, the Oslo Accords, and all other resolutions and agreements concluded by the parties concerned.

*Reaffirms* that permanent and stable peace must be just and comprehensive in conformity with the principles approved by the international community. Foremost among these principles is the Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories, allowing the Palestinians to practise their inalienable right to self-determination and the setting-up of an independent Palestinian state, as well as the principle of respect of the right of all peoples in the region to live in peace and security and channel their efforts to national reconstruction and development.

*Calls upon* the parties to implement their commitments, particularly on re-deployment, in accordance with the Oslo Agreements, so that final negotiations can be entered upon to resolve problems concerning Jerusalem, the settlements, refugees and borders.

*Calls upon* the Israeli government to desist from unilateral practices, particularly those of collective punishment, which impede the peace process and undermine mutual confidence. In this regard, the Committee condemns the settlement policies that aim at establishing a *de facto* situation in the occupied territories.

*Condemns* terrorism wherever it comes from, in the strongest terms. We cannot accept the killing of civilians, men, women and children, under whatever guise. The Palestinian Authority must spare no effort to destroy terrorism and isolate the terrorists. It is also the obligation of the Israeli government to put an end to extremist activities. It is not only human lives that are at stake but the peace process itself.

*Calls* for Israel and Syria to resume negotiations on the Syrian track on the basis of UN Resolutions and the Madrid conference Terms of Reference. Resolution 425 on the Lebanese track should also be implemented. Moreover, the Committee calls upon the international community to increase its efforts to achieve the consolidation of the peace process, saving it from total collapse.

*Calls upon* the peace process sponsors to continue their efforts in re-installing negotiations on all tracks with a view to achieve a just and comprehensive peace bringing security and stability in the region. The Committee also expresses its solidarity with its Israeli and Palestinian member parties, Labour Party, Mapam/Meretz and Fatah.

*Welcomes* the stance adopted by the European community and all other peace-loving nations confirming the pivotal role played by the Egyptian leadership in furthering the peace process and the importance of continuing that role.

In response to President Mubarak's initiative of 1991, the Committee *underlines* the importance of rendering the Middle East region free of all weapons of mass destruction.

Furthermore, the Committee *reiterates* the importance of granting economic support to the Palestinian Authority and of extending every kind of assistance to the Palestinian people in order to improve their living conditions in such a way as to permit them to achieve stability and a favourable climate for resuming the peace talks.

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**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

Chair of the Committee

Bjørn Tore Godal  
(Norway, DNA)

Secretary General of the SI

Luis Ayala

BELGIUM  
Socialist Party, PS

Simone Susskind

CHILE  
Party for Democracy, PPD

Marcia Covarrubias

EGYPT  
National Democratic Party, NDP

Youssef Wali  
Kamal El-Shazly  
Osama El-Baz  
Safwat El-Sherif

Mohamed Abdellah  
(Vice-Chair of SIMEC)

FRANCE  
Socialist Party, PS

Pierre Guidoni  
(Vice-Chair of SIMEC)

GERMANY  
Social Democratic Party of Germany,  
SPD

Wolfgang Weege

GREAT BRITAIN  
Labour Party

Ernie Ross

GREECE  
Panhellenic Socialist Movement,  
PASOK

Vassilis Konstantineas  
George Florentis

ISRAEL  
Israel Labour Party

Shlomo Ben-Ami  
Israel Gat

ISRAEL  
United Workers' Party of Israel,  
MAPAM

Latif Dori

ITALY  
Democratic Party of the Left, PDS

Umberto Ranieri  
Gianfranco Brusasco

MOROCCO  
Socialist Union of Popular Forces,  
USFP

Mohamed Lakhssassi

NORWAY  
Norwegian Labour Party, DNA

Tonje Westby

PORTUGAL  
Socialist Party, PS

José Lamego

SWEDEN  
Swedish Social Democratic Party,  
SAP

Pierre Schori  
Carl Lidbom  
Brigitta Silén

TERRITORIES UNDER PALESTINIAN  
AUTHORITY, Fatah

Yasser Arafat  
Hani El-Hassan  
Ilan Halevi

TUNISIA  
Constitutional Democratic Assembly,  
RCD

Saïd Naceur Ramadhane

Office of SI President

Jean-Michel Rosenfeld

Party of European Socialists, PES

Jean-François Vallin

Parliamentary Group of the  
Party of European Socialists

Jannis Sakellariou  
Vagelis Lepouras

International League of Religious  
Socialists, ILRS

Evert Svensson

SI Secretariat

Gabriela Shepherd

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