

30 June 1999



**DECLARATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL**

Buenos Aires, 25-26 June 1999

Dear Comrade,

I am pleased to send you herewith the 'Consensus of Buenos Aires' and the other declarations and resolutions adopted at the meeting of the Council of the Socialist International which was held in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999.

The list of participants at the meeting is also enclosed.

Yours fraternally,

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

Luis Ayala
Secretary General

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CONSENSUS OF BUENOS AIRES

The pace of change in our world continues to accelerate: it is the task of the member parties of the Socialist International to make sure the benefits resulting from that process are fairly distributed amongst the peoples of the world.

The technical advances which have brought new technologies and advanced systems of communications offer many opportunities for social progress and wealth creation. These the Socialist International welcomes wholeheartedly.

They offer the chance of ending the poverty which has constantly haunted the human race. At the same time our International recognises that this process of quickening change offers new challenges, not least the task of moulding to new realities the principles which have always guided our strategies.

It is for that reason that our Council meeting in Buenos Aires has concentrated on the idea of shaping change in ways that give it direction and offer the promise of a better future for all the world's citizens. Furthermore we need to build an organisation that is capable of helping to deliver the International's objectives. To that end the Council calls on the Secretary General to bring forward plans to the Congress in November, based on the proposals of the Global Progress Commission to re-vamp the organisation and structure of the Socialist International so that it is able to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

The changes in the patterns of the world economy have produced results which have been mixed at best, with greater prosperity for some, deeper poverty and dislocation for others and increasing uncertainty about where all the changes are leading.

Unregulated global markets are often a key factor in the widening gap between rich and poor, continuing conflict and the increasing degradation and depletion of the world's resources.

In such circumstances it is the task of the International to ensure that we forge policies for the next century which will enable us to form the future of our new global society in a spirit of solidarity that has always been the hallmark of democratic socialism.

While much has been done to eliminate poverty this century in many parts of the world it is still a tragic fact that a quarter of the world's population lives in sub-human conditions. This fact demonstrates the inadequacy of current global financial orthodoxies. It is a matter of urgency to harness the opportunities offered by the new global phenomena to the strategy of eliminating once and for all unemployment, hunger and indigence.

The challenge is nothing less than to link material advance to social progress in a new consensus which will ensure that political considerations will take priority over purely economic ones. While the International welcomes a market economy it rejects a market society.

For the forces of change to be shaped to the benefit of all the world's citizens the processes and institutions of democracy must be strengthened at the local, national and international levels. Democratic governance has to be promoted where it does not yet exist and human rights must be enforced where they are not yet respected.

If it is to be fought with the greatest effectiveness, the fight against world poverty demands a joint effort from political parties, professional associations, trade unions, private

enterprise and governments and non-governmental organisations on the basis of common interests and a shared resolve.

In the economic field in many countries of the world, particularly in Latin America, the introduction of market reforms such as liberalising foreign trade and stock markets and privatising state enterprises, has meant the postponement of vital reforms of a non-economic nature, such as the modernisation of education and health services.

In this context it comes as no surprise that democratic socialists in different parts of the world do not adopt a rigidly uniform attitude to structural reform. While in Europe, for instance, the task of promoting technological advance in order to maintain competitiveness is a principal consideration; in Latin America, with its record of great social inequalities, the question of better social integration is a topic of prime importance.

There is a need for a new international consensus to transcend the so-called Washington Consensus which stressed merely market reforms.

Europe has a Treaty which promotes monetary convergence and stability coupled with a strong social solidarity pact. In this same sense, we need a worldwide social consensus that leads towards concrete agreements for social change in addition to economic stability.

Whatever the understandable variations in emphasis among democratic socialists in different parts of the world, priority in the new consensus must be given to investment in education, the present systems of health care must be reformed; priority must be given to investment in infrastructure; the machinery of the state must be modernised; priority has to be given to the security of the citizen; greatly increased protection must be extended to the world's environment and the rights of consumers must be better protected.

In all these fields particular attention has to be given to those who are at particular risk, children and women, and therefore women must have an equal share in decision-making related to the world economy, alleviation of poverty, environmental degradation, conflict negotiation and the promotion of democratic governance.

At the same time the world's financial markets cannot be allowed to continue to put the stability of nations at risk for want of prudent regulation. The task of ensuring financial stability must be accompanied by a reshaping of the international financial institutions to make them respond to the new challenges and the new realities of the world economy. Moreover the weight of foreign debt bearing on relatively less developed countries must be alleviated in order to produce the conditions needed for social progress in all regions of the world.

Meanwhile recent experiences in the Balkans demonstrate that the ugly forces of ethnic tensions and aggressive nationalism are a continuing danger to world peace. In this context it is incumbent on the International to contribute to the strengthening of world peace by emphasising its commitment to the leading role of the United Nations in the regulation of the world's conflicts. In a related field, the establishment of an International Criminal Tribunal and the bringing to justice of those responsible for crimes against humanity are projects worthy of the International's strong support.

In an era of unprecedented interdependence our vision of a democratic world society based on liberty, justice and equality provides the framework in which people can shape the rapidly changing world in which we live for the lasting benefit of all.

RESOLUTION ON ALGERIA

Original: French

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999, having followed with great interest the course of the electoral campaign and the presidential election in Algeria and then the development of the situation in a country sorely affected by seven years of violence,

records with satisfaction that the presidential election campaign with the participation of Hocine Ait Ahmed, President of the Socialist Forces Front, FFS, as candidate, has created a positive popular dynamic in favour of dialogue, peace and national reconciliation, for which the Socialist International has consistently appealed, and has mobilised the citizens with the hope of turning this election into an opportunity to re-direct the country onto the path of democratic process;

regrets that this hope for a return to the democratic process, with respect first for the will of the people and its freedom to choose its president, should have been dashed by those who had recourse to grave irregularities which obliged six candidates, including Ait Ahmed, to refuse to recognise as valid these irregular elections and to withdraw from them, leaving in the running one candidate, presented as that of the authorities;

adopts a position of solidarity and respect with regard to the Algerian people to which it pays homage for its mobilisation during the electoral campaign and for its attitude of massive abstention on polling day;

is concerned by the political evolution of the Algerian government, marked as it has been by a slowing down of political reforms, in particular the respect for fundamental individual and collective freedoms, the prohibition and violent breaking up of popular demonstrations, the prohibition of meetings scheduled by the six ex-candidates united by the Manifesto for freedoms and democracy, the shutting down of the media and the pressure exerted on certain sectors of the privately-owned press;

reminds the political and military authorities that it would be a grave mistake if they remain deaf to the demands expressed during the electoral campaign by the majority of Algerian women and men for a peace marked by democracy and freedom;

reminds the Algerian authorities that only a transparent dialogue, which embraces all political forces who reject and condemn violence, will be able to guarantee a global and democratic political solution to the crisis, a sine qua non of lasting stability, and

reaffirms its fraternal support to its member party, the FFS, and to Hocine Ait Ahmed, in their fight for the re-establishment of peace, for national reconciliation and the building of a democracy based on respect for basic individual and collective freedoms and respect for human rights.

RESOLUTION ON THE FALKLAND/MALVINAS ISLANDS

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999,

convinced of the full validity of the principles and proposals of the Charter of the United Nations, and more specifically of the duty of all member states to resolve conflicts through diplomatic means set out in the said Charter;

encourages the governments of the Republic of Argentina and of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to implement the Resolutions of the United Nations and of the Committee of Decolonisation in order to maintain dialogue to settle all outstanding issues relating to the Falkland/Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

RESOLUTION ON HAITI

Original: French

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999, informed of the social and political aspects of the crisis in Haiti,

expresses its concern with regard to the deterioration of the political situation seen in Haiti for some months, to the detriment of most of the population of that country, struck as it is by extreme poverty;

condemns the acts of violence which each day increase the climate of insecurity in Haiti;

applauds the efforts towards transparency of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) aimed at encouraging a high level of participation in the forthcoming elections at the end of 1999 in Haiti;

encourages the democratic forces of Haiti, especially its member parties, to continue in their efforts to foster a high level of participation of the people in future elections;

asks the SI Presidium to send a delegation of observers to Haiti for the future elections, which are necessary for this country's return to constitutional and institutional normality at the beginning of the 21st century.

DECLARATION ON MEXICO

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999,

considering that on 2 July 2000 federal elections will be held in Mexico for a new president and new Chambers of Senators and Deputies;

taking into account that the majority of the Chamber of Deputies approved a set of electoral reforms which include the elimination of legal obstacles to the formation of electoral coalitions and common candidatures, greater transparency of financial resources, greater equity which will grant the vote to millions of Mexicans who live abroad; these reforms will allow greater progress towards clean and transparent elections and will make a contribution to the process of democratic transformation through which this country is passing;

concerned by the fact that these proposals are being debated in Senate committees;

requests that the senators approve them with the greatest possible dispatch.

RESOLUTION ON THE MIDDLE EAST

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999,

referring to its previous statements of concern regarding the stalemate in the Middle East peace process,

expresses its profound satisfaction at the election of Ehud Barak as the Prime Minister of Israel;

congratulates the Israel Labour Party and Meretz on the election result;

pledges its support to the revival of the Middle East process in conformity with the spirit of the Oslo accords and the Madrid process in order to secure the success of the Final Status negotiations;

underlines the importance of the full implementation by both parties of all relevant decisions and agreements to achieve a durable and mutually acceptable peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples;

reaffirms that these principles and agreements provide for the Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian territories, allowing the Palestinians to practice their inalienable right to self-determination and statehood;

appeals to the international community to rally economic support for the Palestinian Authority under the leadership of President Yasser Arafat;

asks the SI Middle East Committee, SIMEC, to prepare the ground for a comprehensive resolution to present at the SI Congress in Paris on every track of the Middle East peace process.

RESOLUTION ON PARAGUAY

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999,

declares its solidarity with the people of Paraguay who managed to prevent the realisation of a totalitarian political plan;

encourages all the democratic political forces to build a real government of national unity and to consolidate freedom and social justice among its people.

RESOLUTION ON PUERTO RICO

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999, expresses its solidarity with and support for Senator Rubén Berrios Martínez, President of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, PIP, a Co-Chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, who since 8 May has been carrying out uninterruptedly and at great risk to his own security and personal freedom a peaceful campaign of civil disobedience on land occupied by the United States Navy on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques in protest against the bombing practices that are carried out there to the great detriment of the peace and security of the population of the territory and to further the demand for the return of the land occupied by the Navy to the people of Puerto Rico.

RESOLUTION ON VENEZUELA

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Buenos Aires on 25-26 June 1999,

concerned by the direction taken by the political process in Venezuela, marked as it is by a climate of instability and uncertainty as a consequence of the government's policy of permanent confrontation with the established authorities;

regrets the bypassing of political parties as a fundamental democratic institution and *condemns* the constant and unjustified attacks against those parties and their leaders as these damage the possibility of dialogue and agreement which are fundamental tools for democratic participation;

conscious that the National Constitutional Assembly may become a vehicle to promote, revitalise and renew democratic institutions and practices, nevertheless *expresses* its great concern at the constant indications by the Venezuelan government that it will turn the Assembly into a body with the capacity of concentrating power and setting aside the decisions of the Supreme Court of Justice;

alarmed by the widespread military interference in various institutions and in the decision-making and execution of state policies, as well as the Bolívar 2000 programme of civic-military collaboration and the decision to incorporate obligatory pre-military training in the educational curriculum of the nation,

calls on the government of Venezuela to respect human rights and the free play of politics, tolerance and respect for political dissent and freedom of opinion and expression.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Pierre Mauroy
Luis AyalaFULL MEMBERS

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Pavli Zeri

ALGERIA

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 Jesús Rodríguez
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 Luis Cáceres
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