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News from the Party of European Socialists

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REFORM INITIATIVE TO TACKLE GLOBALISATION FEARS

An ambitious reform process to address public concerns over globalisation will be launched next week in Copenhagen. The aim is to counter the appeal of right-wing populist politicians by finding new ways of involving the public in policy-making.

The Party of European Socialists has appointed former Danish premier Poul Nyrup Rasmussen to head the new initiative.

The Party is to stage an international conference at the Danish Parliament on 10 October to begin the reform process, working in conjunction with the PES Group in the European Parliament and the Danish Social Democrat party. The conference will be followed next day by a private seminar at which leading social democrats and academics, including European commissioners and government ministers, will pool ideas.

The conference – which is open to the media throughout from 09h30 to 18h00 and followed by a press reception – is to explore three discussion areas:

- policy changes to deal with the impact of globalisation on poverty and environmental destruction;
- the role of civil society in controlling the forces of globalisation; and
- social partnership in the world.

Mr Rasmussen is among leading social democrats convinced of the need for new ways of developing policy, drawing in contributions from non-governmental organisations and other representatives of civil society.

The outcome of the Copenhagen talks will be submitted to the Council of the Party of European Socialists in Warsaw on 14 and 15 November.

Conference participants will include: Jeremy Hobbs, executive director of Oxfam; Tony Long, European policy director of WWF; Claude Moncorgé, president of M-decins du Monde; Susan George, vice-president of ATTAC; Giampiero Alhadeff, secretary general of Solidar; Martin Khor, director of Third World Network; Kari Tapiola, executive director of the ILO; and Guy Ryder, secretary general of the ICFTU.

The conference sessions will be led by: Glenys Kinnock, MEP, co-president of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly; Pierre Schori, Swedish ambassador to the United Nations; and Enrique Barón, leader of the PES Group in the European Parliament.

The private seminar on 11 October will address two themes: a social democratic vision for globalisation; and strategies for convincing the electorate.

PES President Robin Cook will be a keynote speaker at the seminar, to be attended by about 30 leading European politicians. Other participants include EU commissioners Pascal Lamy, Margot Wallström and António Vitorino, former French prime minister Laurent Fabius, Convention vice-chairman Giuliano Amato, Policy Network president Peter Mandelson, former Swedish finance minister Allan Larsson, Socialist International President Antonio Guterres and government minister Anastassios Giannitsis of Greece.

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