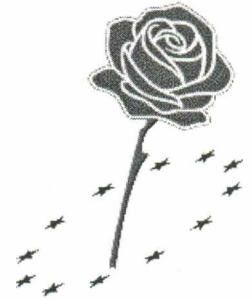


De Europæiske Socialdemokraters Parti • Sozialdemokratische Partei Europas  
Ευρωπαϊκό Σοσιαλιστικό Κόμμα • Party of European Socialists  
Partido Socialista Europeo • Parti Socialiste Européen  
Partito del Socialismo Europeo • Partij van de Europese Sociaaldemocraten  
De Europeiske Sosialdemokraters Parti • Partido Socialista Europeu  
Euroopan Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue • Europeiska Socialdemokraters Parti



12<sup>th</sup> December 2001

## **The Future of Europe**

The Laeken Summit of the European Council will issue a declaration on The Future of Europe. Its purpose will be to provide focus for debate on the aims and objectives of the European Union, and to provide a perspective for the Inter-Governmental Conference in 2004. This declaration is the contribution of the PES to that debate on The Future of Europe.

It is a statement that reflects our commitment both to a united Europe and to our shared values of solidarity and social justice. It is not an attempt to codify our position on amendments to the treaties or on reforms of the institutions. Those are matters for an IGC in three years' time. The immediate priority is to supply a vision for Europe that captures the public imagination and renews public support for European Integration.

It is important that the European Treaties are comprehensible and that the European Institutions are efficient. But before we can have a sensible debate on what changes would be of benefit, we first must decide what it is we want Europe to achieve. We can only be confident of the changes that should be made at the IGC if we use the intervening period to agree what we want the European Union to deliver to the citizens of its countries.

The debate on the Future of Europe comes at an opportune time. Some of our citizens are too ready to take for granted the immense gains that have come from European integration. Others are driven into retreat into nationalism by the false fear that a strong Europe is a threat, not an asset, to member states. Common to both these views is a perception of the European Union as remote from its citizens, and unaccountable to their wishes.

The European Union can only succeed on the basis of popular legitimacy. A Europe without public support will falter and lose direction. The PES seeks a strong and dynamic European Union. We offer this declaration as our contribution to convincing the public of the case for European integration and providing its citizens with a coherent vision for the future of Europe.

### **The Achievements of Europe**

It is well to remember the conditions which provided the starting point for the parents of the European Community. Most of Europe had been devastated by total war for the second time in a generation. Necessities such as food and clothing had been in such short supply that they had to be rationed. And Europe was deeply divided between two different military alliances and two distinct political systems.

The contrast provided by modern Europe is a measure of the remarkable achievements of European integration.

Today the citizens of Europe are free to cross borders at will and to live and work in any of the countries of the European Union. The borders between countries have been removed as barriers between people and, from 1 January, the euro will be the official currency in most member states.

The workers of Europe contribute to the largest, richest single market anywhere in the world, with a combined GDP greater even than the USA. The dramatic growth in trade which this has stimulated has been a prime driver of more exports, investments and jobs.

The citizens of Europe have enjoyed the longest period of peace and stability in our long history. The European Union has made unthinkable war between any of its members. By removing the barriers between us, we have created more security for each of our countries than we ever managed by arming frontiers against each other.

The Social Democratic parties have made a specific contribution to Europe's achievements in the development of the social model. European integration is based on a set of principles which have regard for the welfare of Europe's citizens and stress the importance human rights, equality and citizenship for every person in the European Union. Over recent years the EU has set in train new means of cooperation - covering areas such as employment, training, social exclusion and pensions - expressing its clear commitment to the creation of an inclusive society based upon sustainable social justice.

It is too easy for young people brought up in the modern Europe to take these benefits for granted and to overlook the crucial role of European integration in delivering them. It is only necessary to look at the countries just over the border of the European Union to understand how desperately these benefits are prized by those who have been denied them. Every neighbouring country which has emerged from the communist bloc is enthusiastically seeking membership of the European Union. The popularity of the European Union for those who are outside it, is a valuable reminder of how great are the benefits for those who are inside.

### **The Challenge of the Global Age**

The countries of Europe face new challenges of competition from the dramatic growth of global economic forces. Nations now more inter-dependent and inter-connected than at any time in history.

On the one hand globalisation has increased growth and employment, and broadened cultural horizons. On the other hand it has provoked a greater gulf between rich countries and poor countries, and disrupted existing social structures. It has given nations the means to communicate and to co-operate around the globe for common purposes, such as conserving the environment. But it has also opened up opportunities that can be exploited by those with intent to harm, such as organised criminals and international terrorists.

The advent of these global pressures provides a compelling case for the further integration of Europe. However, the process must address concerns made visible in the protests which seem to accompany every international summit. We must seize the opportunities that globalisation presents, but should do so in dialogue with its critics.

Together we have a better chance of enabling our industry to compete in the new global economy. The more open the European market is to all of its businesses and the easier it is for them to raise capital throughout Europe, the more they will be able to realise the strength of the European economy. It also makes sense to forge a collective defence to the global reach of the financial markets. Through recent turbulent weeks the common single currency has provided a stability in the financial markets that would not necessarily have been available to all its members if they had retained their own separate currency.

Each member state has a better prospect of securing its objectives in global talks if we negotiate from a common position rather than from fifteen different positions. International agreements that are crucial to our prosperity and to our quality of life are now negotiated multilaterally rather than bilaterally. Our terms of trade and the stability of our climate now depend on the outcome of negotiations in which the whole world takes part. The successful launch of a world trade round at Doha and the agreement to the Kyoto Protocol at Marrakech are both good recent examples of how Europe can use its strength in global negotiations to deliver outcomes that are of benefit to each of its members.

There is security in numbers in the modern world. By standing together we can better protect our communities from the new challenges to their stability as a result of Globalisation. The drugs trade is second in value only to the oil trade. Organised criminals respect no national boundaries. The integration of national efforts to deter crime and to detect criminals is an increasingly important dimension of the European Union.

The demolition of part of the financial centre of North America organised from a cave in Central Asia is a striking illustration of the new threat that globalisation brings in its wake. Citizens from sixty countries, including nearly every European Union member state, were victims in that single act of international terrorism. The lesson of September 11<sup>th</sup> is that no country can hope to find security through isolationism. Closer integration and greater solidarity will be the key to a more secure future.

### **Rebuilding Popular Support**

It is a paradox that at the very time when the global developments require more Europe there should be a rising demand among many citizens for less Europe. The Eurobarometer reveals that over the past ten years those voters who consider the European Union "a good thing" have dropped from just over 70% to just under 50%. The two most recent referendums, in Denmark and in Ireland, have ended in defeat for the pro-European side. The long term success of the European Union will turn on whether we can halt this decline and revive public support for the European Union.

Part of this revival must involve broadening the democracy of Europe institutions. Democracy can only function when the voters understand whom to hold to account. We need greater clarity in Europe of who is responsible for decisions. We need to bring decisions closer to the people and to draw on the popular strength of national democracy by giving the parliaments of member states a place in the architecture of Europe. But we also need to use the democratic institutions closer to the ground, at local and regional level, to deliver and engage citizens.

Democratic structures cannot be imposed from the top. Treaty amendments settled within a closed IGC will not address the alienation of the public if they are not driven by public demand. Too often in the past European integration and reform has been perceived as an elite process. This time the citizens of Europe must be engaged in proposing the reform of Europe.

We welcomed the launch of the debate on Europe's future at the Nice Summit. This was, for the first time, a public debate with the cooperation of the Commission, the participation of the European Parliament, the national Parliaments and the civil society. The PES has been fully committed to this debate; its member parties, its national and European parliamentary groups engaged with the views of citizens and civil society.

The second stage that has to be launched in Laeken is in the form of a Convention, which has to carry out the preparatory work. Following the successful experience of the Convention on fundamental rights, the elected representatives of our people, on a national and European level, the governments and the Commission, with the active participation of the candidate countries, must prepare a coherent proposal, accompanied by other options that receive significant support in the Convention, to the IGC that will adopt clear and simple constitutional treaties in order to improve democracy, effectiveness and transparency in good time for the elections of the European Parliament in 2004.

But however much we perfect and polish the institutions of Europe, we will not impress the people unless they believe that Europe is capable of addressing the problems in their lives and the concerns of their families. Tackling the Democracy Gap is important, but it is not sufficient in itself to resolve the issue of popular legitimacy. The peoples of Europe will give wholehearted support to the European Union only if they understand that it is the best way to obtain more and better jobs, safer streets with less crime and a cleaner environment with a stable climate. If we are to renew enthusiasm for European integration we must also tackle their perception of a Delivery Gap.

## **A Vision for Europe**

As social democrats we believe in solidarity and in social justice. We want a Europe that reflects those values and gives our people a better prospect of living in a free and equal society. For us the European Union must be more than an internal market for business. It must also provide a social model for the people. In this concluding section we set out what we want for the Future of Europe.

### ***Europe: a future democracy and freedom***

As parties of the Left we are committed to the principle of political equality which is the foundation of democracy and civil liberty. The parties of the Left believe in the equal worth of every human life. That is why we are committed to equality for all citizens whatever their race or religion, and respect for the diverse cultures that enrich our continent. That commitment is not limited to the borders of the EU, we must continue our work to strengthen democracy in central and Eastern Europe. Greater co-operation will enable Europe better to defeat the enemies of the open society, such as racists or terrorists. We support the Tampere agenda for co-operation between the police and judicial systems of member states. We welcome the new impetus given to this agenda in response to the mass murder of September 11<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Europe: a future of security***

Member states of the European Union have lived at peace for an unprecedented period. But our continent over the past decade has witnessed dramatic violence and brutal atrocities in the former Yugoslavia. We know that primarily the necessary political, economic and social conditions must be ensured and created in order to ensure durable security and stability. However, the EU also needs appropriate military capacities to parallel its instruments for economic and financial intervention. We applaud and further promote the strengthening of an efficient Common Foreign and Security Policy CFSP. And we welcome the further development of the European Security and Defence Policy which will give the European Union the military means for crisis management, and we will work to make it operational at the earliest opportunity. Parallel to this, we will also further support and improve civil crisis management instruments.

### ***Europe: a future of social justice***

The European Union has enabled us to take down the barriers between our nations. The parties of the Left also want to dismantle the barriers within nations, such as the barriers of social exclusion or barriers to decent education. The wealth of nations today lies in the knowledge and qualifications of all of their people. Our economies are stronger when our societies are just, and no citizen is denied access to the new technology and the skills to use it. Parties of the Left have secured the commitment to a Europe of full employment. We want Europe to deliver on that commitment and to meet the targets for increased participation in the workforce that will widen job opportunities for women.

### ***Europe: A united future***

We will not build a Europe of the Future until we consign the divisions of the Cold War to the Europe of the past. The destruction of the Berlin Wall marked an end to the division of Europe between freedom and oppression. We have overcome much of the Cold War's legacy, to prolong the continent's longest period of peace and stability. But only the enlargement of the European Union can end the division of Europe into rich and poor countries. The PES includes parties in government within the Member-States and associate parties in government in the candidate countries. Along with sister parties throughout Europe we will work as a bridge throughout the period of enlargement in order that as many as possible of the candidate countries are admitted in time for our sister parties to stand alongside us in the next elections to the European Parliament in 2004.

### ***Europe: A sustainable future***

The parties of the Left understand that the environment is not a commodity that can be left to market forces. Nor do pollution, acid rain or climate change respect national boundaries. We recognise the need for minimum standards to promote the long-term health of the continent and its citizens: from the safety of power plants to the quality of the food we eat. The

preservation of our environment and the safety of our food require collective action across Europe for the common good. We must also recognise that our environment is an asset we hold in common with future generations. Children born today in Europe will live into the last quarter of this century. Their quality of life will be determined by our respect today for the environment and the climate. We want the European Union to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are in the mainstream of all European policies and that Europe fulfils its responsibility to bring the Kyoto Protocol into force at the earliest opportunity.

***Europe : a future of solidarity***

In moving towards increased integration, we have to show our serious commitment to the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the whole, enlarged Union. Strengthening solidarity and shared prosperity which are at the basis of our European project will call for a viable future for the structural policy aiming at supporting lagging regions and localities.

***Europe: a force in the world's future***

The solidarity of the parties of the Left does not stop at the borders of the European Union. Europeans cannot claim freedom and civil liberty for themselves and fail to support those peoples of the world who are denied basic human rights by their own governments. Nor can we seek opportunity and prosperity for our children while ignoring the poverty of other nations' children. The stronger the European Union we forge, the greater will be our responsibility and our capability to show leadership in tackling world poverty, dropping the debt burden and promoting fair terms of trade. The PES welcomes the agreement in Doha to launch a new world trade round and we want Europe as the largest market to use its bargaining strength to ensure that it will be a genuine development round.

The debate on the Future of Europe often centres on questions about the future powers of the Commission, decision-making in the Council, the role of the Parliament, and the relationship of these European Institutions with the national democracies of the member states. These are crucial questions and it is important that Europe finds the right answers to them by the IGC in 2004.

However, the Future of Europe will rest even more on whether the European Union has made progress by 2004 in meeting the challenges of real concern to the citizen.

- Have we completed the Tampere agenda by making Europe safer from terrorism and by cutting trafficking in human beings?
- Have we finalised ESDP and completed a rapid reaction force of corps strength?
- Have we secured full employment, increased the participation rate in the workforce of women and diminished poverty?
- Have we admitted most of the candidate countries as full member states?
- Have all member states ratified the Kyoto Protocol and met their target cuts in greenhouse gases?
- Have we completed a world trade round that opens up the European market to the developing countries of the world?

The citizens of Europe will judge us as much by how we perform by 2004 in delivering these real benefits as they will on whether we succeed in amending the Treaties. The challenge for Laeken is to agree a Declaration that launches Europe a renewal of public support for Europe, by demonstrating that closer political union is the best route to meeting the anxieties of the public and to fulfil their hopes for the future.