



8 September 2000

MEETING OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, SICLAC
Kingston, Jamaica, 1-2 September 2000

Dear Comrade,

I am pleased to forward herewith the documents adopted by the meeting of the Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Kingston, Jamaica, 1-2 September 2000.

The meeting, which was chaired by Raúl Alfonsín, Co-Chair of the Committee, and was hosted by the People's National Party, PNP, had two main themes on its agenda: "Giving priority to people and promoting solidarity in global change" and "Defending and strengthening democracy: the social democratic commitment".

The Committee approved a declaration on each main theme, a declaration on the Caribbean and resolutions on Colombia, Haiti, Peru and Venezuela.

The List of Participants is enclosed for your information.

Fraternal regards,

Luis Ayala
Secretary General

GIVING PRIORITY TO PEOPLE AND PROMOTING SOLIDARITY IN GLOBAL CHANGE

Original: Spanish

Closely linked to the theme of independence is the problem of globalisation that, beyond the wishes of nations, has been imposed in today's world and considered in different ways by the right as well as the left. Reality must be accepted, but at the same time preventive formulas must be found.

The Socialist International Committee on Economic Policy, Development and Environment working paper of late April 1996, affirms that "globalisation is the most important trend in the world economy", but that it is necessary to avoid the ultra-liberal way, with no rules or social or environmental concerns, which will globalise poverty in the developing and developed countries and will standardise social rights downwards producing negative effects to the environment, and spreading social exclusion. It also says that the international institutions must be fundamentally reformed, both those established by the Bretton Woods Treaty and those rules and instructions of the World Trade Organisation (former GATT) in order to permit a fairer trading system. Likewise, it acknowledges that it is very important to improve the standard of living not only for political reasons but also for economic and social concerns, the issues of which require a focused cooperation, "since globalisation has greatly reduced the effectiveness of economic policy". It also claims a "new system of collective responsibility" to fight against "recycled and obsolete economic beliefs" so that the "multinational corporations and anonymous bureaucrats of influential international organisations - free of the burden of any democratic responsibility - stop making decisions that directly affect the life and welfare of millions of people in the whole world."

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (SICLAC) agrees with these concepts in the document and also wishes to emphasise the need for promoting solidarity within global change, as supported at the Oslo Council meeting.

The globalising forces in the Latin American and Caribbean region have obviously limited to the utmost national decision making capacity and increased inequalities within a context of enormous market deregulation and speculative financial mobility, which has led to a removal of social programmes and to increased exclusion.

Foreign debt has undoubtedly increased and the international credit organisations continue to issue loans conditional upon regressive changes in social and economic policies.

Global underdevelopment leads to the loss of social peace in many countries, unless measures to improve trading conditions, or reducing debt, or transferring knowledge are taken. If this does not occur, financial and industrial companies will concentrate an incredible decision making power over the future of millions of people.

It is essential to point out the immoral contradiction existing between the globalisation process and the explosive nature of the social problems that are generated in the regions, which can turn into serious processes of illegitimacy,

because it tries to govern the same essential missions as the state, such as education, health and even the working of institutions.

Meanwhile, the more developed countries speak of opening up the economies, but when it is in their interest they attack the same market mechanisms they proclaim, and a new protectionism, increasingly aggressive restrictions to knowledge transfer and bilateralism, used to exclude competitors, appears.

Usually, democracy could impose itself on the excesses of wild capitalism: it fought monopoly and tried to prevent the exploitation of workers. Nowadays, many of the Latin American and Caribbean governments are inhibited by the excesses of globalisation: financial capital evades state regulation, a tendency towards oligopoly increases, social law is avoided and systems of labour relations take an extraordinarily backward step; unemployment grows enormously, the ethics of solidarity disappear, while marginality increases.

Even the OECD Development Centre affirms that financial globalisation is the main cause of "the weakening of national economic policies with respect to other governments, but especially against the global market... This phenomenon has weakened the central banks' capacity to administer exchange rates, as well as the possibility of them putting into effect governments' monetary independence and tax policy. The states see the base of income tax imposition erode whereas the tax systems are increasingly relying on work and consumption."

With respect to foreign investments in the globalised world, those needed to make the economies grow and unemployment decline, try to set themselves up where salaries and taxes are lower, an intention in the end suffered by the same central countries.

Anyhow, it is clear that the real power is no longer in the companies, but in the financial markets. Not even in political authority, which is being more and more controlled by speculative capital.

Globalisation is really changing the age. Little by little or suddenly, the market or consumerist principles begin to act in the peoples' minds and hearts. All of a sudden it becomes a cultural struggle.

Imperialism stopped depending on national decisions, being based mainly on financial entrepreneurial decisions, which determine their own transnational policies. In the same way that globalisation further defines and subordinates nation states, including the strongest ones, imperialism is recreated on new bases and with different forms. Transnational enterprises, which transformed themselves into powerful world structures, imposed themselves onto states.

In every country, in every society, no matter what the development indicators are, the specific situations that are most worrying, the immediate challenges that arise, this turn-of-the-century antagonism appears to recur in two somehow opposed, but really similar perspectives: to adapt rapidly to conditions demanded by market globalisation and leave behind national scales, or go back to primitive communities, ethnic, regional or religious identities to defend what is being threatened.

It concerns one of the most dangerous traps that leaves behind the cyclical crisis of a welfare state and the neoconservative response to such a crisis.

Those who sing the praises of the market gods, and those who do it to an irredentist country, to the providential leader or to feudal paternalism are singing from the same age-old hymn sheet, are feeding each other and are hindering those actual opportunities of great innovative and reformist coalitions trying to make progress on integration and foresee serious and uncontrollable conflicts today.

Something of this phenomenon is at present impregnating the political culture of governance in hard times for Latin America, combined in a same speech and - what is worse - in a same exercise of power, authoritarian forms of market; a decline in political relations and in an update of production and consumption; a personal "decisionism" to manage institutions and to dismantle any instrument of public intervention in the social field.

Globalisation could be an unstoppable process to transform capitalism, diversification and multipolarisation of production systems, to speed up changes produced by the scientific-technological revolution and by the power of communications. But, far from it, it has become a self-regulated world system, supported by a virtual financial circuit of thousands of million of computerised dollars and governed from a handful of offices. Hence, each country's politics is reduced to disorderly ashes and weeds, when it goes beyond the supervised administration of fiscal accounts.

People have come to the problems of living today, to a globalisation that is seen either as a threat or as an implacable monolithic structure of power, because they have adopted this latest outlook, with resignation or enthusiasm.

The economic problem becomes relevant when identity is defended. The United States and West European peoples are well aware of how the continuity of their democratic systems has become more and more consolidated thanks to development and prosperity.

Inversely, Latin America and the Caribbean have long known that democracy has serious difficulties in surviving in societies affected by crises, underdevelopment and marginalisation.

With the advent of globalisation and the dominance of the market economy, it is necessary and urgent to recognise the particular problems faced by smaller countries, if they are to benefit from the opportunities presented by the growth in the global economy. These particular problems include, among others, and also from unforeseen consequences of the world economic system, vulnerability to crime, now organised globally, involving the trafficking of illegal weapons and drugs, which is a threat to democracy, social stability and community relations; and vulnerability to natural disasters, which destroys critical infrastructure, social as well as economic.

It is not easy to preserve democratic values, when vast sectors do not make up the market, when human beings are stripped of their dignity by misery, when there is no sense of freedom, because there are no options, when ignorance makes it hard to appreciate the true value of respecting disagreement.

When the advanced democracies, encouraging countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to consolidate their institutions, are the same ones that commercially discriminate against them, this becomes a bitter paradox.

Commercially marginalised, they will also remain separated from the financial flows essential to generate resources that are channelled towards investment, the promotion of development and the solution to the foreign debt problem.

SICLAC reaffirms that in the same way that protection of the weakest inside nation states is achieved through the full application of the rule of law, in terms of international relations, the effective protection of the least powerful countries is achieved through the absolute application of international law.

To work to establish an international order based mainly on law, more than on the balance of powers, it becomes necessary to boost and extend multilateralism, both politically and economically. In every forum a co-operative coexistence of free and equal nations must be striven for.

SICLAC upholds the need for regional integration. Integration through economic blocs means wider markets that will, even with their difficulties, help to overcome the deep structural crisis the Latin American and Caribbean economies are going through, by promoting real investment flows and production on a greater scale.

The state's crisis demands changes and modifications in the role of the state itself in order to achieve its essential purposes. This is a time of broad regional spaces, where economic development depends not so much on a particular country but on regional integration, which at the same time helps to avoid the negative effects of financial speculation boosted by globalisation.

One of these purposes must be the commitment of each state to promote and maintain the practice of good governance within their own countries, as well as effective economic management.

It is necessary to create within the respective regions, a system that makes their integration easier, on the basis of essential general democratisation: a compatible exchange rate, a free trade exchange, shared regulations and a common will to set the rules of the game in accordance with their own interests, without hegemonic aspirations or false competition, strengthening the establishment of solid political bases of integration.

Another difficulty raises the subject of foreign debt, which by not being solved will make it much harder to develop economic policies with clearer game rules. The Socialist International Council held in Brussels decided to conduct a campaign for the annulation of foreign debt for the poorest countries. SICLAC declares that in the case of intermediately developed countries, it is necessary to find methodologies that are consistent with their development.

It is true that communism is a programme that has no future, but any programme based on selfishness and injustice is also a programme with no future and will inevitably lead to a moral crisis generating different processes of social dissolution.

SICLAC considers it a priority to achieve, in all sectors, the creation of productive and stable employment, and considers it the state's undelegated obligation to guarantee social security benefits.

Finally, SICLAC reiterates that there can be another version of globalisation, which it is going to work for. If the idea of solidarity is incorporated, what is still

unobserved, can mean an increase in efficiency as well as in production and, if effort were fundamentally ethical, even in justice, rejecting the ideas and logic of marginalisation, inequalities, social exclusion and non-sustainable development.

In order to achieve this, SICLAC observes that it is not afraid of being against the prevailing political current, insofar as it neither compromises its own convictions nor forgets its principles: the only fish that always swims with the tide, is the dead fish.

SICLAC reiterates that serious problems of economic shortage are being faced. It is aware that economic stability is essential. But the real challenge is to grow with fairness.

DEFENDING AND STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY: THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC COMMITMENT

Original: Spanish

The first condition for becoming a democracy is to be a state, which assumes beforehand the idea of self-determination at the international level. A society will never become democratic if it finds itself dominated and controlled from abroad, where the main decisions, linked to its own interest - including those relating to national and cultural identity - are ultimately taken.

The meaning of independence and sovereignty are not easily definable in the present situation. After the great undertaking of decolonisation, new forms of dependency, which seem to be creating a world organisation only carrying new and increasingly unbearable demands for the weakest members in the international system, are starting to be imposed. The well-known effects are: less political independence for the less powerful and an increasingly unfair economic order.

Thus, the inviolability of civil rights in the central countries' domestic order is not always present at the international level in respect of people's right to self-determination. The equality stance in the national message is not included in the foreign version of states' equality and the consequent respect of their sovereignty.

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (SICLAC) wishes that the conviction encouraging the social democratic struggle does not become inactive at the borders of any country, so that everyone is committed to fight for universal justice, mainly now that the folly that tends to dominate the international scenario is crudely manifested in the world economic situation, a fact that accentuates the gap between an increasingly powerful centre and an increasingly powerless periphery.

But on the other hand, as there is no democracy without national independence, there is no actual independence while an effective state control over our countries' domestic problems does not exist, a control that usually weakens and even disappears because of interests other than those of the majority. SICLAC was well aware that the so-called negative freedoms, those protecting the citizen against the state, were not enough. The trouble is that positive freedoms, which protect social rights, tend to disappear.

To those who insist on the concept of a civil society, we want to point out that neoconservatism is synonymous with a non-state, legally guaranteed to avoid state's interference, though surely controlled by the economic power and, in the peripheral countries by traditional families. A control which "becomes naturalised" by enshrining a status of social inequalities. Neoconservatism wants the kind of freedom that will maintain the existing inequalities and - if social conditions and political action allow - will reinstate those inequalities removed by social reforms made over a century. There would be a forbidden, or exhausted, field for politics, which would not be able to exceed certain limits. To those who think politics is first and foremost deliberation, such an idea becomes absurd. An apolitical society would not be a distortion resulting from disorganised, apathetic, selfish, or merely negligent attitudes but a fight that is worthwhile, a conquest that is worth making.

This does not mean that the appearance of the most diverse intermediate organisations is not positive; they actually generate significant and varied forms of participation. Before them, the political parties should be cooperative rather than competitive, even though it must be understood that genuine national solutions are linked to multidisciplinary analyses, which sometimes demand consensus, even among these types of movements. Moreover, SICLAC confers a fundamental importance to the so-called third sector of the economy, which with the NGOs involve co-operatives, mutuals and those volunteers that cannot be substituted in the spread of solidarity as well as in the fight against unemployment.

For a majority of our peoples the situation has become nonviable and involves the working and the middle classes, while redistribution is getting worse and unemployment and the debt are increasing at an alarming pace.

Today SICLAC needs to enlarge the concept of citizenship by acknowledging the right to inclusion based on the idea of social insertion and integration. This means linking social rights with moral obligations, trying out new forms of labour supply; improving educational systems and professional training, as well as developing an intermediate space between paid job and social activity, to fight against exclusion, which eliminates self-esteem and makes participation impossible. This is how SICLAC will move away from populism, a serious distortion of democracy, a product of its flaws and limits, and a useful instrument to demagogically and deceitfully mobilise those deprived and disregarded sectors, which for freedom, means a step back.

SICLAC proclaims that the right to individual freedoms is a trap if it does not care about equality. Political equality means economic distribution and knowledge distribution. It is impossible to separate freedom from equality. The dogmatism of neoliberal theories claims that this is possible and maintains that both are contradictory and excluding. However, SICLAC does know - and it knows it because reality reminds the Committee of it -, that, under the constitution and with positive laws, to proclaim and ensure the civil and political freedom of citizens is not enough. SICLAC knows this acknowledgement can only be formal as the use that the marginalised and dispossessed can make of it is not the one a satisfied citizen can. It is true a good number of negative liberties are necessary to positively exercise freedom, just like protecting people from despotism and arbitrariness, but this guarantee is not enough. It is very difficult to enjoy freedom without education, health, jobs, without everything that makes a person a normal person.

An important ethical conclusion is derived from this: the opportunities of reaching such assets must be equally distributed among them, hence the democratic process acquires the extraordinary importance of becoming a requirement of distributive justice.

On the other hand, the participation it generates boosts processes that promote citizens' virtues always considered essential to establish a good political system.

SICLAC points out the relation between freedom of expression and participation, as it is natural to make collective decisions in the framework of a full public debate and discussion, leading SICLAC to a broader concept of freedom of expression with two dimensions: a negative one and a positive one. According to the first one any action that damages it, such as censorship,

closing down the media, persecuting journalists, or pressures of any kind, has to be forbidden. Its correlate is the obligation of informing in a true and objective way, without prejudicing the respect for freedom of opinion of the issuer. The second one needs a positive action of the state in order to obtain the best plurality possible with regard to information. The right to inform includes the right to research, receive and disseminate information and opinions through the wide media.

SICLAC agrees with those who maintain that monopolistic or oligopolistic communication is something typical of authoritarianism, while the multiple flow of information is an essential instrument of democracy, and that an adequate balance among the commercial, communal and governmental media, would satisfy the requirements of a freer and more rational discussion and would prevent that its omission strengthen the interests of anyone but the majority.

A sense of responsibility implies a will to participate, a movement intended to expand freedom, welfare and human relations. It cannot be imposed by factors outside the life of those participating, but it needs the encouragement and support of all public and private institutions.

It is a movement that changes in the collective mind and, consequently, in the institutions. These changes are directed at promoting the integration of citizens with each other, as well as to their integration with their representative organisations, and to the recovery of solidarity and a sense of national unity.

The concept of such shared democracy represents an extension and intensification of the modern concept of democracy, and it by no means sets itself against democracy. Any democracy is formal insofar as it has rules to contain, limit and organise a political activity as well as the running of the institutions of the state and society. And, by definition, democracy also implies the citizens' participation in political decisions. Recall that in Athens anyone who did not actively participate in the concerns of the city was considered an idiot. Likewise, a people who cares for nothing, who does not know what it wants and who is not able to even wish for something, can quickly embrace any ideology. Social crisis lies in this potentiality.

SICLAC insists that democracy stand on two pillars: freedom and equality. It agrees with those who assert equality is based on mechanisms of distribution which would permanently reassign the primary assets and equal access to collective services: housing, education, health, etc.; it also agrees with those who affirm that even though justice has an absolute value, the content of social ethics, that is, the set of values which a certain society favours and which change according to circumstances, is established in the law which has to express them. And the fact that these values are represented in law supposes that democracy exists, and the law that it creates opens a reformist path towards democratic socialism, while building legality, which expresses the hopes of society and receives from it corresponding legitimacy.

SICLAC believes that, ultimately, social injustice and the necessary transformation of economic and social structures are due to a moral imbalance: selfishness, greed, a lack of love in man. Reform can only be made through education, and it will have to promote an austere morality, tolerance, intellectual honesty, sense of responsibility, dignity and fundamentally will have to understand the sacred value of the person. Democratic reorganisation needs the participation of all, from their work place and from their respective level of

responsibility in order to find frameworks of common action in the distribution of resources as well as in generating them. Rules of coexistence, jointly accepted values and shared courses of action are the essence of this shaping stage in which we are living, with views to an open horizon already in sight but too far away.

The call to a convergence of political forces and to the concertation of social forces in the framework of a founding democratic pact of this new stage, is proof of the desire and expectations of our peoples at this historic moment. To face these challenges a new collective capacity of cooperation and participation is needed, willing to remove old defects, unfair structures and outdated behaviours. Fundamental changes are needed and SICLAC is ready to carry them out together with the people's determination to make and consolidate them.

The representative system implies that no democracy exists without political parties or individuals. It has been said that agreements between different parties weaken each one's most "non-negotiable" aspects, or take them to a centrist approach. Notwithstanding, SICLAC thinks that inter-party agreements are starting to become necessary in order to acquire the essential efficiency to defend the democratic components of institutionality, disregarded by the influence of the most important economic sectors and by the mass media at their service. Certainly, this refers to the commonly called "progressive" parties, undoubtedly an ambiguous word, but expressing more than enough what SICLAC intends to say, since those rightwing parties easily adapt to the new situation, while others adopt hybrid concepts of populism.

SICLAC reaffirms that its idea of a fair society as an alternative to crisis means a social pact articulated through two principles: freedom and equality. In this sense, one should bear in mind that value of freedom depends on its distribution and the value of equality depends on what is distributed in an egalitarian form. On the one hand, everyone has the same right to enjoy freedom effectively; on the other hand, an egalitarian distribution must include all those resources needed to fully exercise freedom. Thus, the apparent tension between freedom and equality is overcome by an egalitarian distribution of freedom.

This is the essence of an ethics of solidarity. Equally distributed freedom implies bettering the situation of those less favoured individuals. Moreover, it means a broad approach to human rights. They are infringed not only by direct aggression but also by not providing resources for an honourable and autonomous life. SICLAC agrees with those who point out the impossibility of making equality compatible with an economic concept, which is increasingly creating greater inequalities.

In many aspects, any society has been and, up to a certain point, still is a society strongly influenced by the selfishness of its leading classes; and there is a certain individualistic thought that still believes social harmony is possible by encouraging selfishness. Social solidarity has been weakened by such selfishness, creating situations of helplessness and fear, which have made people specially permeable to those false Messianic solutions - populist and otherwise - where the isolated individual tries to fit into and get protected. Selfishness has promoted both pseudoliberal authoritarianism and populist Messianism. The ethics of solidarity are imposed against these blind alleys by

emphasising an innovative harmony so many times, undermined by selfishness.

For SICLAC the ethics of solidarity means observing society from the point of view of those in a disadvantageous position as regards the distribution of abilities and wealth. Within an increasingly complex society, where multiple interests clash and corporate mechanisms of social relationships are worn out, it is essential to think up and construct a system of social equality in the democratic organisation of society and equality, in the search for self-fulfilment.

At this point SICLAC thinks of a democratic pact; an agreement that protects individuals' independence while defining a shared framework to address and solve disputes, and where differences may be mutually tolerated. Consequently, to present a valid version of the democratic pact reconcilable with an ethics of solidarity, it is necessary to enrich, and therefore, redefine the traditional notion of citizen - or citizenship -, recognising that it includes, beyond formal juridical-political equality, many other aspects related to the essence and material possessions of human beings, that is, to the natural distribution of abilities and the social distribution of resources. Certainly, natural distribution is unbalanced. Likewise, there is an unequal social and historical distribution of wealth, status and profits. The consequences of the said imbalances are inconsistent or contradictory with the fact of recognising each citizen as a member having the same dignity within social cooperation.

Accordingly, this recognition widens the meaning of human rights, which are not only violated by active interference against life, freedom and personal property, but also by omitting to offer the opportunities and resources needed to lead a decent life. A democratic pact based on these ethics of solidarity means it is clearly supported by conditions ensuring the best possible social justice and, therefore, recognising the need to assist the most disadvantaged.

SICLAC advocates an essential modernisation compatible with the premises and conditions of the plan of society it is proposing. A process of modernisation progressively increasing general welfare, for the benefit of society as a whole.

A modernisation purely and exclusively thought out and practised to reduce costs, preserve competitiveness and increase profits is a modernisation with a narrow outlook and socially unfair, since it puts to one side the consequences of the changes introduced for the welfare of workers and of society as a whole.

As against a modernisation based on strengthening private powers and another based on strengthening state powers, the modernisation of democracy and solidarity means the strengthening of the independently constituted powers of society.

Likewise, decentralising the state's administration is to open it to forms of participation where the greater the decentralisation, the better the participation. Decentralisation is not only a centrifugal movement but also a cascading one, making the state administration go down to such a level that intermediate social organisations may have an unthinkable role in a highly concentrated system.

This allows citizens to take part in decisions that affect them in institutions near their area of activity. Insofar as these institutions have a real power, such participation will not just be a mere civic exercise, it will significantly affect

individuals' lives, making them take their role more seriously and, hence, become the guardians of the democratic system.

All in all, democracy is a permanent struggle to extend and strengthen human rights, and in this particular moment in history, when a new phase in organising collective work is starting, marked by the incorporation of those technologies that completely modify the methods and structures existing in previous centuries, democracy should also be the rule of coexistence for the different peoples and regions in the world.

There will be no solid or lasting democracy for each society if the same principles and values do not govern the international political and economic organisation. The coexistence of rich and poor peoples, free and authoritarian peoples, is inconsistent with an international peaceful and harmonic society; a society that has already been turned into an indisputable reality by economic interrelation mechanisms and by modern communications systems. That international society, which for the first time in history includes the whole of humanity, interacting and interdependent in such a global and irreversible way, should also be a society of solidarity.

If the protection of human rights entails not only the opposition to the active interference in the life, freedom and integrity of the individual but also the availing of means and opportunities so that they can develop their abilities to the maximum, the relationships among the peoples cannot and should not be based on an uneven distribution of resources and opportunities. The existing international economic order, insofar as it limits the growth of so many peoples of the world, is an order that hardly accords with human rights and with the ideals of the great democratic revolution in which SICLAC has become enlisted.

We reaffirm SICLAC's utopia: it desires a democracy where every individual has the essential political means to act on a tolerable level of equality, guaranteeing certain rights, opportunities and necessary obligations to all.

The one SICLAC wants to build and protect is defined as a sovereign state, a state of law, which respects the division of powers, protects men and women who live in it, guarantees the possibility of alternation, takes into account diversity and plurality typical of a modern society, recognises and works on these conditions that create inequalities and exclusions. Be aware that by denying diversity it perverts democracy, and by meanly speculating with the existence of inequalities, exclusions and injustices what will be left is only a democratic shell of institutions.

Conceived in this way, society is the foundation on which freedom, equality and economic reforms must be built and strengthened. A society is a community made up of men and women who are respected and who respect one another, who are citizens because they can express their will and join forces for the same purpose. Citizenship is not a passive condition but an opportunity, a possibility of an active life, full of participation and responsibility in the political process, in the labour market and in society. Men and women of our region, who work, live, suffer and dream have, as citizens, a fundamental role to accomplish in the consolidation of our incipient democracy, but they need to feel such democracy in their every day experiences, in the material and spiritual quality of their lives, in their face to face relations, and in their jobs and in their spare time, in the public square, in the streets of their neighbourhood they walk along every day, in the daily and sometimes forgotten experience of what is

familiar. Therefore, SICLAC would like a broad and deep democracy of participation, a democracy to be lived and daily exercised by everybody.

STATEMENT ON THE CARIBBEAN

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (SICLAC), meeting in Kingston, in relation to the theme "Giving Priority to People and Promoting Solidarity in Global Change" addressed issues of particular concern to the Caribbean, together with representatives of political parties of these countries, and noted a number of issues:

1. With the advent of globalisation and the dominance of the market economy, there is urgent need for the recognition of the special problems faced by small/micro states, if they are to benefit from the opportunities presented by growth in the global economy. These include but are not limited to:
 - Sudden shocks from the world economic system related to unregulated and increased flows of short-term capital.
 - Threats to the offshore financial industry in a number of countries from regulations imposed by the OECD countries, which will undermine the comparative advantage which these countries previously enjoyed.
 - Vulnerability to crime which is now organised globally, involving the trafficking of illegal weapons and drugs, and which is a threat to democracy, and stable social and community relations.
 - The terms of trade faced by small banana producing countries of the region which threaten the foundations and future prospects of their economic development.
 - Vulnerability to natural disasters which have the potential to destroy the social and economic infrastructure of these countries.
 - Modern communications technology which challenges the cultural norms and practices, as well as the cultural authenticity of Caribbean peoples.
2. The meeting noted with concern the action taken by the European Union, which now restricts the entry of critical exports from Curaçao and Aruba, which are Overseas Countries and Territories of the European Union, and recommends that full support be given to the requests by these countries for the appropriate kinds of technical support that will help to develop alternative economic activities.
3. The representatives agreed that as an international organisation, the SI is uniquely placed to promote solidarity with and support for the concerns of small and micro states at the global level, as one way of ensuring that the needs and aspirations of the peoples of the Caribbean are not isolated or further marginalised by developments in the global economy. The group is calling on the SI to intensify these efforts.
4. The representatives acknowledged the need for Caribbean political parties to promote and maintain regular and effective communication; to develop strategies that will lead to the region acting in unison, and assist in shaping the global processes that currently determine policy options at both national and international levels.
5. The representatives also acknowledged the obligation of individual Caribbean states to promote and maintain the practice of good governance within their own countries, as well as the effective economic management of their resources.

6. With respect to the situation in Haiti, it was agreed that the region needed to be vigilant about political developments in this country, as a serious threat to the democratic process exists.
7. The participants also congratulated Aruba for offering to host a next SICLAC meeting and offered their full support in this regard.

Participants from the Caribbean included representatives from Aruba, Curaçao, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica and Jamaica.

RESOLUTION ON COLOMBIA

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean reiterates its grave concern about the situation in Colombia and expresses its support for all efforts towards strengthening political solutions in the search for national reconciliation.

It reaffirms its solidarity with the people of Colombia and with its member party, the Liberal Party, in their efforts to achieve full participation of citizens and a social consensus to confront inequalities, overcome injustice and put an end to violence.

The Committee makes an appeal in order to ensure that the application of the so-called Plan Colombia does not mean increased militarisation or violence, nor an obstacle to the continuity and development of the current peace negotiations or the lengthening of the civil conflagration.

RESOLUTION ON HAITI

Original: French

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (SICLAC), meeting in Kingston, Jamaica on 1-2 September 2000:

- *deplores* the fact that the elections organised in Haiti on 21 May 2000, far from helping Haiti advance in the democratic process, have only highlighted the socio-political crisis in the country;
 - *expresses* its concern that the regime in power in Haiti has practically placed itself in a situation of political isolation in relation to the rest of the international community;
 - *invites* democrats of all the political families of the world, particularly socialists and social democrats, to be vigilant with regard to a deterioration of the political situation in Haiti;
 - *appeals* to the Secretary General of the United Nations to appoint a committee to investigate the current situation in Haiti and to recommend appropriate action.
 - *encourages* the SI member parties in Haiti to reinforce their common strategy in order to effectively contribute to the establishment of a true economic and political democracy in Haiti.
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RESOLUTION ON PERU

Original: Spanish

The representatives of the member parties of the Socialist International, meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, 1-2 September 2000, issue the following resolution regarding the situation with respect to democracy in Peru.

Considering:

That the electoral process of 9 April and 28 May 2000 in Peru is considered fraudulent by the international political community, raising questions as to the legitimacy of the third term of office of the leader, Alberto Fujimori, in violation of the Peruvian constitution;

That even the OAS Observer Mission, led by Ambassador Eduardo Stein, withdrew from Peru before the second round of elections, in view of severe irregularities that occurred during the electoral process;

That owing to disturbances, which occurred on 28 July in Lima, Peru, the Peruvian government has started a series of actions amounting to political persecution against the leaders of the democratic parties, and particularly against the presidential candidate, Dr. Alejandro Toledo, and the Secretary General of the Peruvian Aprista Party, PAP, Dr. Jorge Del Castillo, bringing legal action against them and threatening the latter with exclusion from the Congress;

That Resolution 1753 of the General Assembly of the OAS put forward at Windsor, Canada, created a high-level OAS commission made up of the Canadian foreign minister, Lloyd Axworthy, and Secretary General, Dr. César Gaviria, who have designated Dr. Eduardo Latorre, former foreign minister of the Dominican Republic as Permanent Secretary of this Mission to Peru;

That the democratic parties, including our full member, the Peruvian Aprista Party, PAP, have reported that the dialogue initiated is being undermined by actions on the part of the regime;

That a main theme of this Committee is "Defending and strengthening democracy - the social democratic commitment"

Have agreed:

1. To support the political dialogue developing in Peru under the auspices of the OAS and to promote the efforts undertaken by the high-level OAS Mission and its Permanent Secretary, Dr. Eduardo Latorre, in seeking consensus between the government, the democratic opposition and Peruvian civil society, in order to restore full respect for the constitutional framework and institutions of Peru;
2. To ensure that the above-mentioned dialogue results in consensual decisions on each of the 29 points of the agenda proposed by the OAS and accepted by the political community. This dialogue must give priority to matters relating to the restoration of the fundamental rights of individuals and the process of democratic reform that, in time, should be worthy of

ratification, through consultation with the people and the holding of free and fair elections;

3. To reiterate the solidarity of the Socialist International with all democratic efforts in Peru and with the Peruvian Aprista Party, PAP, and its Secretary General, Dr. Jorge Del Castillo, who have been the victims of hostility of the regime. To demand that the Peruvian government put an end to persecution of the former presidential candidate, Dr. Alejandro Toledo, and of all citizens peacefully exercising their democratic rights in support of democracy.

RESOLUTION ON VENEZUELA

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Kingston, Jamaica on 1-2 September 2000, received with concern the report presented by its member party from Venezuela, Democratic Action, on irregularities and challenges to the electoral process on 30 June this year, in particular what happened in the states of Mérida, Cojedes, Nueva Esparta, Barinas, Táchira, Falcón, Anzoátegui, Lara y Sucre.

The Committee, consistent with its fundamental commitment to democracy and the holding of transparent, free and fair elections, as the fundamental condition of popular sovereignty and of governance, calls on the National Electoral Council of Venezuela to check exhaustively and speedily these challenged results and to pronounce on them.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Co-Chair of the Committee

Raúl Alfonsín
(Argentina, UCR)

Secretary General of the SI

Luis Ayala

ARGENTINA
Popular Socialist Party, PSP

Mariano Díaz

ARGENTINA
Radical Civic Union, UCRJosé Saes
Luis Alberto Cáceres
Raúl Alconada
Oscar Torres Avalos
Alejandro TullioARUBA
People's Electoral Movement, MEPRudy Croes
Dirk DumpfriesBOLIVIA
Revolutionary Left Movement,
MIR-New Majority

Oscar Eid Franco

CHILE
Radical Social Democratic Party, PRSD

Patricia Carrasco

COSTA RICA
National Liberation Party, PLN

Rolando Araya

CURAÇAO
Movement for a New Antilles, MANKenneth Gijsbertha
Armin Konket
Magda Martina

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| DOMINICA Dominica Labour Party | Lloyd Pascal |
| DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD | Hatuey De Camps Peggy Cabral José Martínez Castillo Luz del Alba Thevenin Sonia Jiménez Silvia García Priamo Medina |
| FRANCE Socialist Party, PS | Jean-Jacques Kourliandsky |
| HAITI Party of the National Congress of Democratic Movements, KONAKOM | Victor Benoit |
| ITALY Democrats of the Left, DS | Donato Di Santo |
| JAMAICA People's National Party, PNP | Percival J. Patterson Robert Pickersgill Maxine Henry-Wilson Paul Robertson Sharon Haye Alfred Rattray Judith Wedderburn Frank Pringle Matthew Beaubrun Pearl Earl Dennis Morrison Teresa Ann Whittick |
| MEXICO Party of Democratic Revolution, PRD | Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas Juan José García Ochoa |

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| MEXICO Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI | Carlos Flores |
| PANAMA Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD | Nils Castro Reinaldo Holder |
| ST VINCENT & THE GRENADINES Unity Labour Party | Ralph Gonsalves |
| SWEDEN Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP | Monica Andersson |
| URUGUAY New Space Party, PNE | Hugo Rodríguez Filippini |
| URUGUAY Socialist Party of Uruguay, PSU | Antonio Gallicchio |
| VENEZUELA Democratic Action, AD | Timoteo Zambrano Rafael Poleo Jorge Millán Angel Cido Guerreros William Dávila Enrique Nuñez |
| <u>Guests:</u> | |
| CUBA Democratic Socialist Current of Cuba, CSDC | Manuel Cuesta Morúa |
