



10 October 2002

Prime Minister Costas Simitis

Leader of PASOK and Vice-President of the Socialist International

Dear Prime Minister, Dear Friend,

Fully conscious of your own and PASOK's interest and commitment to the activities of our international socialist family, I had raised some time ago as you would be aware, the proposal to hold the forthcoming meeting of the Council of the International in Athens to underline the profound and sincere relationship of our movement with our Greek comrades. In particular, I had in mind that, to our great pride, Greece under your leadership is an example of a successful socialist government and that during this time you will be occupying the Presidency of the European Union where so many of the hopes and efforts of our movement are concentrated today.

At the same time, topics of common concern made PASOK the natural host and Athens the natural venue for this meeting. These include issues which continue to intimately affect the Middle East and the Balkans. The Council is designed, too, to take place in the days prior to the World Economic Forum and the World Social Forum and set out our views on vital global social and economic issues which will subsequently be aired at both those gatherings.

I was happy therefore to get a positive response to the proposal and that Athens would indeed be the venue and PASOK the host: I set about informing our member parties worldwide of this excellent news.

It will be no surprise to you to hear that the announcement was greeted with great enthusiasm by our member parties and their leaders around the globe. We have already received notification from numerous senior figures in our parties who are looking forward to being in Athens for the Council in January.

In the light of this, I am writing to fraternally ask you to maintain Athens as the venue of the Council on the set dates of 20 and 21 January so that no one is disappointed in the desire to be with you and PASOK in Greece at such an important moment.

I am, dear Prime Minister, of course ready to join you in Athens at any moment at your convenience to discuss this further.

With my respects and warm regards,

Luis Ayala

Luis Ayala
Secretary General