

Council meeting of the Socialist International  
United Nations, Geneva, 12-13 December 2014

### **Declaration on the conflict in northern Iraq and Syria**

In relation to the ongoing struggle against terrorism in northern Iraq and Syria, the Council reiterates the need for action to bring the insurgency to an end, as expressed by the Council at its last meeting in Mexico City in June and by the Presidium of the SI from the United Nations, New York in September.

The atrocities committed by terrorist groups against innocent civilians in the region are barbaric and condemned by the Socialist International. Coordinated international action is required on a number of fronts in order to eliminate ISIS and the threat it poses not only to the people of Iraq and Syria but to the wider region and the world. Military action alone cannot defeat the terrorist insurgency, but rather the conditions for its growth and root causes must also be addressed. Violence and terrorism are the result of lack of democracy, equality, tolerance, and the existence of a totalitarianism system and the centralist mentality, which denies ethnic, religious, and political pluralism. Effective action must also necessarily incorporate measures to prevent the flow of funds and terrorist fighters from entering the conflict.

Long-term peace in Syria requires a national political solution, with an important role to be played by the international community. The oppression and subjugation of the Syrian people under the Assad regime and the violence employed by the regime have weakened the democratic opposition and fuelled the growth of extremism. Only a democracy with respect for the rights and freedoms of all, regardless of ethnicity or religion is acceptable in Syria, and this requires the removal of both ISIS and the Assad regime. The democratic opposition, including the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, the Syrian Kurds and all those who stand for this fundamental objective have our full support.

Those who have suffered for many decades at the hands of dictatorial regimes are once again on the front line of the battle against extremism. We express our solidarity with all those affected by this conflict, which has had a particularly heavy impact on the Kurdish population. We recognise the extraordinary sacrifices being made to keep this terrorist threat at bay and prevent its wider spread and fully support the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq in their efforts to combat the current terrorist threats in the region.

We equally express our solidarity to the people of Kobani, who have become a symbol of the fight against terrorism, and to all the Kurdish people, who in many places have led the resistance against the terrorist insurgency, are part of the solution to the regional conflict and a key partner for peace and stability. As a nation, they must be granted their rightful democratic voice.

The regional humanitarian crisis has been further exacerbated by the violence and terrorism. All efforts must be made to provide humanitarian assistance to the 3.2 million Syrian refugees, who represent the largest mandate of the UNHCR. We equally urge support in the form of humanitarian aid to the 1.5 million people who have been made refugees and internally displaced persons in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as a result of the terrorist insurgency.

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