

XXV Congress of the Socialist International
Cartagena, Colombia, 2-3-4 March 2017

CONGRESS RESOLUTION

FOR A WORLD IN PEACE, EQUALITY AND SOLIDARITY

The Cartagena Congress of the Socialist International addresses the priorities of our movement and of people everywhere in these increasingly troubling times. Inequality within and between societies is growing. Meanwhile, the history of efforts by our parties to address inequality is under assault as never before from the economically powerful and their well-funded political allies. Peace remains a dream in many places. Though conflicts between States have greatly diminished in recent decades, millions continue to die and to suffer from civil conflict. Whole societies are being destroyed and unprecedented numbers of refugees from war and violence most often find safe haven in countries of the South, further adding to global inequalities. Migrants from failed States and from climate disasters are certain to add to these numbers on a large scale. As well, the late 20th Century hard won solidarity among peoples and States is breaking down in many parts of the world. Increasingly governments and political parties turn to nationalism, xenophobia, and isolation as simple, doomed answers to the ongoing challenges of a truly globalised world which already requires massively scaled up global cooperation and stronger multilateral organizations and practices like the United Nations and the Socialist International.

The Socialist International well recognises these challenges in the knowledge that we, the socialist, social democratic and labour parties, are the best equipped to address them.

Our confidence rests on the unshakable moral base and values of our movement: To use power with humility and for good. To build greatness by investing in human beings. To build democracy to guarantee good decisions. To recognise that capitalism and free markets do not equal freedom. To ensure growth means social growth and greater equality. To liberate, sustain and encourage the diversity and creativity of humanity. To recognise that war solves nothing, and nothing is possible without peace. To believe that love will conquer fear in a world where human beings are of one single origin linked to one single destiny.

Our confidence also rests on our record of achievement over the past seven decades, in government and in opposition, on every continent. One such achievement is here today in Colombia. We are proud and honoured to meet in Colombia with our Socialist International member party hosts the Liberal Party of Colombia. President Juan Manuel Santos, his government and his country are a beacon of hope to the world. We salute President Santos and the representatives of the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces, FARC, for the peace achieved last year that put an end to more than half a century of armed conflict. A road has been opened for the stable and lasting peace that Colombians deserve. The Socialist International welcomes the commitment and will of the whole of Colombian society to overcome the conflict. We celebrate the peace agreement consideration of the victims of the conflict and we maintain an active concern that these commitments will be fulfilled. We welcome this new era of advancing and strengthening civic culture, human rights, tolerance, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and democracy. We are also proud and honoured to have with us at this Congress member parties

from Israel and from Palestine. The Socialist International renews our role and recommitments our efforts to help to find a lasting, just peace for Palestinians and Israelis by building on the dialogue that takes place here. We are also pleased to have member parties here from Tunisia, Pakistan, Cyprus, Mali, and other countries where dialogues here will help address local and regional peace building and conflict prevention needs.

Along with our moral base, values and accomplishments we also recognise the unique nature and value of the Socialist International as a world-wide forum of parties that can provide hope to people across the globe. We show humanity and heart in believing in a better world. We believe people have the power to change the world on a path of virtue. In these troubled times we believe in a new deal and a new social contract on a global scale. Now, more than ever, we believe in our unity, the certainty our voice will be heard and the commitment to change for the better the lives of our common humanity.

Peace

We meet in Cartagena at a moment of great concern about the foundations, policies and institutions that have maintained world peace for the past 70 years. Our first concern is the challenge to multilateralism that is a target of nationalists, populists and others who offer no alternative to global cooperation, because there is none. A retreat to a purely national security posture, a return to militarised security while abandoning human security, undermining the global trading system rather than improving it, diminishing already inadequate aid to the South, and side lining and underfunding the United Nations and its critical Charter-based work are steps that will make the world more dangerous for all. In an age of globalised threats, no one will be isolated from these dangers.

The Socialist International has long supported disarmament and reduced military spending, including R&D, and advocated greater resources for development to address the needs of the South and to close the North South divide. We renew that call with great urgency. Military leaders themselves recognise that security cannot be bought through increased military spending. The root causes of insecurity must be addressed. Conflict prevention must be strengthened. The role of women as peacemakers must be supported. We call on governments everywhere, especially those in the North, to reject militarised security and increased military spending which has long ago proved a dead end to meeting real security needs and human progress.

The Socialist International has been a strong advocate of the United Nations and its work since our modern founding conference. We call once again for strengthening the UN system, and in the context of peace, strengthening UN capacities for early warning and conflict prevention, peacekeeping, robust peacekeeping interventions, and humanitarian assistance especially for war related refugees and migrants. Directly related to peace is development assistance. We are dismayed that the world lags so far behind in development assistance spending targets for OECD countries. Closing the inequality gap is central to greater security and peace for all. In a week that the New York stock market reached an all-time high, we call on OECD governments to identify paths to quickly reach a minimum 1% GDP development assistance target, not including climate change mitigation and adaptation funding for the South.

Iraq and Syria

The terror carried out by ISIS is a major threat to international peace and security and to the people of the region. It must urgently be brought to an end. We renew our calls to the international community to unite in response, to support the government of Iraq as it works to strengthen and consolidate democracy and to support all Syrians striving for democracy, freedom and human rights. At least 13 million Syrians require humanitarian assistance. Nearly 5 million are refugees. The burden of refugee care is largely borne by Jordan and other neighbouring States. The Socialist International calls on the international community to urgently scale up support for UN and other humanitarian efforts and to seek a political and diplomatic end to the conflict with the full involvement of all Syrian actors. The Syrian people must decide on the final political solution which could include the democratic federalism proposed by the Democratic Syrian Council who should have a place in peace negotiations.

Yemen

The Socialist International expresses our deep concern about the ongoing war in Yemen. Yemen is now exposed to the risk of partition, terrorism and State failure. The Socialist International calls on all parties in Yemen to return to political dialogue and reject the use of violence. We call on all parties to abide by the output of the comprehensive national dialogue. All parties should have equal chance to participate in the upcoming dialogues.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Socialist International calls upon the rest of the international community to assist in the organization of elections later this year. The Socialist International is ready to support this while calling for an environment of freedom, rights, release of political prisoners and inclusion of citizens forced to live in exile. We call on all opposition parties to join the electoral process and to help ensure a peaceful transition of power in 2017.

Cyprus

The Socialist International calls on both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders for the resumption of peace talks aiming to reach a bizonal, bicommunal federal solution for Cyprus as soon as possible. We regret that the peace talks in Cyprus are interrupted at the moment despite considerable progress by the two sides. We hope that the island of Cyprus will soon become an example of peaceful coexistence, cooperation and prosperity in the eastern Mediterranean.

Tunisia

The Socialist International salutes the advances in the democratic transition in Tunisia and calls on the international community to support Tunisia in efforts to address economic and social difficulties and the fragile construction of democracy. We call for an acceleration of democratic consolidation through constitutionally based good governance and anti-corruption reforms.

Libya

The Socialist International, aware of the positive efforts for peace in Libya and the region, calls on the UN to strengthen its efforts to re-establish peace in Libya and we note our support for all UN, AU and neighbouring country efforts

Caucasus

The Socialist International calls for increased dialogue to end hostilities, reduce tensions and armaments and build trust between Armenia and Azerbaijan. We call on the international community to support the ongoing efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group for a lasting peace in the region.

Iran

The Socialist International expresses concern about the violation of human rights and especially the deterioration of democratic rights in Iran, as well as discrimination against the Kurdish people. We support a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issues in Iran.

Ukraine

The Socialist International supports the speedy resolution of conflict in Ukraine based on the implementation of the Minsk Agreement.

Turkey

The Socialist International expresses our concern about the violation of human rights and deterioration of democracy in Turkey. We are particularly concerned about the arrest of thousands of activists, the detention of hundreds of elected municipal leaders and the detention of Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag. We call for their release and for new peace dialogues to address the democratic and human rights development of Turkey.

Myanmar

The Socialist International calls on the leadership and government of Myanmar to immediately end persecution and human rights violations against the Rohingya minority people and to open a full dialogue to address their minority rights and needs to be recognised and respected as full citizens.

Equality

Socialists, social democrats and the labour movement have long fought to address inequality. Conservatives believe inequality is a natural and even necessary part of the human condition. Classic liberals believe equality of opportunity is enough, even if rarely achieved. Our moral base and values reject these views. Our vision is of real equality in the enjoyment of dignity, citizenship, the economy, public goods and the global commons. This includes equality of genders, ethnic groups and faith communities, equality of young and old, and all levels of ability.

The Socialist International recognises that poverty and inequality are complex and multi-dimensional, including gender dimensions. This includes complex multi-dimensional poverty in the South and within highly developed societies. We recognise that structural change to the political economy is necessary to achieve these goals. It is not about creating a level playing field in current power relationships in most societies. Across the globe real reform and real change are necessary.

The Socialist International is committed to economies and expanding wealth that serve societies and human progress. We are dedicated to this through peaceful, democratic processes and oversight based on human rights and freedoms. And we are convinced that our member parties offer this hope to humanity.

The key elements to our approach are values based. We advocate clear goals of change and reform, transparency in public affairs and the private sector, accountability (fighting corruption private and public), the redistribution of power- to the people, and redistribution of wealth through investments in public goods and services that provide for human needs and peaceful, successful societies (this includes the arts, creativity, self-realization, ending alienation in the digital age, and opportunities for youth).

Reducing inequality requires access to free, public education. In turn, education must lead to meaningful secure employment. Workers` rights, promoted and defended by free Trade Unions, is a proven requirement for meaningful and secure employment and for reducing inequality.

For much of the world development is the key to reducing inequality, particularly for poverty reduction. Yet, development often increases inequality by benefiting elites (sometimes elites who have captured the State) only, leaving vast majorities with no benefit from development. This can be addressed through policy change and government intervention on behalf of the poor, especially to address complex dimensions of poverty with attention to gender, food security and nutrition, health care, education, sustainable agriculture, climate change adaptation, indigenous rights and other efforts.

Along with robust attention to complex poverty, political reform and redistribution of resources the Socialist International also calls on governments and others to end tax havens, take other measures to end illicit capital flows from South to North, especially in Africa, speed up land reform where necessary, take stronger steps against multi-national corporation, private sector and public sector corruption, strengthen gender based budgeting, raise minimum wages and end conflicts which undermine development and poverty reduction.

Solidarity

Solidarity is not a slogan. It means we stand together, now more than ever when forces of division are on the rise and so powerful. Stand together means - humanity as one. We are all citizens in a global reality. We are all refugees from the human conditions and history of want, violence, and fear. Our parties and movements stand together at this challenging time as never before.

We stand together North South. We stand together all faith communities and all cultural mosaics – rejecting false claims of clashes of civilizations. We stand together across generations embracing and empowering the next generation who must lead the world through coming perils and advances. We stand together both genders and all sexual minorities.

Our parties stand together as the Socialist International whose current accomplishments include standing with the peace process in Colombia, supporting democratic left unity in Greece, facilitating dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, supporting the peaceful transfer of power in Gambia. We build on the proud foundations and accomplishments of past decades and herald even greater political activism and results in the term ahead. Activism that will benefit ordinary people, the marginalised and poor, the voiceless and dispossessed across the globe. We are the change, the reform, that the world needs and will need in coming times.

We welcome and call on others to join and to renew these commitments and our historic solidarity more vital to the world than at any time in 70 years.

We are in solidarity to combat and adapt to climate change. In 2015 we enthusiastically welcomed the Paris Agreement, particularly the 2 degrees Celsius commitment. We renew our call on all countries to enshrine their climate change obligations in national legislation.

We stand in solidarity with migrants entering Europe and being lost at sea. In the last months we noted European countries have failed in their commitments, and in their moral and international legal obligations, on refugees. We renew our call to the European Union to return to its founding values including the concept of shared responsibility.

We stand in solidarity with all those opposing populism and extreme right parties who inflame societies with hate and xenophobia. We stand in solidarity with all those, sometimes risking their lives, fighting for democracy, more freedom, more economic development, land and indigenous rights, press freedom, equality between men and women and for sexual minorities.

We fully support our member parties and governments in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria in their struggle to end terrorism and violence in the region.

We stand in solidarity with the Armenian people seeking dialogue with Turkey and we will continue to help , as agreed, a roundtable “How will Turkish recognition of the Armenia genocide allow a genuine reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia on the issue?”

The Socialist International joins all progressive Brazilians in their concerns about the removal of President Rousseff in 2016 and the subsequent reforms that have frozen public spending on social services for 20 years along with new social security and labour reforms.

Thanks

The delegates and leadership of the Socialist International greatly thank the Liberal Party of Colombia, the host city and people of Cartagena and everyone associated for an historically successful world Congress. The challenges and troubling times deserve our re-dedicated efforts drawing on our unshakable values, dedication to peace, equality and solidarity and guided by an eternal flame of hope for humanity.
