

COUNCIL MEETING OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL
Cascais, Portugal, 4-5 February 2013

STATEMENT ON PUERTO RICO

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Cascais, Portugal, on 4-5 February 2013, expresses its satisfaction and solidarity with the clear expression of an absolute majority (54%) of the Puerto Rican electorate on 6 November 2012, explicitly rejecting the continuation of the current colonial status of Puerto Rico. This vote, called for by the territory's legislative power, demonstrated the highest electoral participation (78%) of any previous consultation on Puerto Rico's political status.

The SI appeals to the government of the United States. US President Barak Obama has recognised the claim for political change in Puerto Rico and has also formally expressed his commitment to promote legislation to allow Puerto Ricans to choose between clearly defined status alternatives that are guaranteed by Congress, and to act willingly and promptly so that the people of Puerto Rico can fully exercise their inalienable right to free determination and independence to choose non-colonial alternatives recognised by international law.

The result of this vote is a significant expression of the absolute majority of Puerto Ricans who demand to put a stop to the existing regime of political subordination. In view of this, the SI reiterates the declarations it has previously made on Puerto Rico during the last thirty years, from the resolution at the Albufeira Congress in 1983 that stated: "The Socialist International supports the independence of Puerto Rico, a Latin American nation", to the resolution adopted of the 2012 Council meeting in Costa Rica. This last declaration confirms the support – which we continue to confirm today – of the SI to the repeated and unanimous call of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation that requests the General Assembly examine the case of Puerto Rico and further requests the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners, in particular, Oscar López Rivera who has now been imprisoned in the US for 31 years charged with seditious conspiracy.