

Council Meeting of the Socialist International
Istanbul, 11-12 November 2013

DECLARATION ON PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Istanbul on 11-12 November 2013 held discussions on Middle East peace with the participation of member parties from Israel and Palestine.

Recalling the previous declarations of the SI on the Middle East, in particular the statement of the SI Council in New York in June 2010 and the Socialist International Middle East Committee (SIMEC) in June 2011, and with the full participation and support of Palestinian and Israeli delegations, the Council:

- Calls for an end to Israeli occupation, and respect for the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people.
- Calls for the establishment of two national states existing side by side based on the 1967 borders, including East Jerusalem.
- Condemns the continuous construction of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories whilst peace negotiations are going on as a contravention of international law.
- Supports the EU decision to apply the terms of the Association Agreement with Israel only to areas included within the 1967 borders
- Calls for the immediate cessation of the demolition of Palestinian homes.
- Calls for an end to the siege of Gaza.
- Calls for the release of terminally ill prisoners and administrative detainees
- Calls for a halt to demographic and geographic measures that change the status of East Jerusalem as an occupied territory.

We recognise the intensive efforts taken to renew the peace process. In solidarity with our member parties who have shown their full commitment and dedication to a peaceful solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and wishing to encourage and give a renewed impetus to the process, the SI Council resolves to designate 2014 as the *Year for Middle East Peace*. Over the course of 2014, the SI and its member parties will take a series of coordinated actions in support of our long held objective of peace between Palestine and Israel, and call on the Israeli government to enter seriously into negotiations that will lead to this goal. These actions will include:

1. Parliamentarians from SI member parties will introduce discussions in their respective assemblies on Middle East peace in order to place this crucial issue on the legislative agenda. The presence of elected representatives of SI member parties in dozens of parliaments, assemblies and congresses across the world can ensure that during the *Year for Middle East Peace*, our vision for a two-state solution is never off the legislative agenda.

2. A high-level delegation of ministers from SI member parties in government will go to Israel and Palestine, to urge the Israeli government to cease activities counterproductive to the peace process and take the bold decisions necessary for peace. The delegation will stand alongside Israelis and Palestinians united by their desire for peace and reconciliation in a demonstration of our shared will to make 2014 the *Year for Middle East Peace*.
3. SI members pledge that their party leaderships will write to the Israeli ambassadors in their respective countries, informing them of the SI's *Year for Middle East Peace* and calling upon the Israeli government to genuinely work to this end.
4. The Socialist International will coordinate an international day of action, during which member parties across the world will demonstrate in support of Middle East peace, working with members to ensure that the event receives local and global media attention.
5. The next meeting of the Socialist International at the Assembly of the Inter-parliamentary Union will place peace in the Middle East at the heart of its agenda and ensure that our parliamentarians speak at this gathering with a united voice to bring our initiative to the centre of the debates at that assembly.
6. Member parties will mobilise their members in support of the International's goal of peace, raising awareness at a national level and building a grass roots network that can engage in coordinated action.
7. SI member parties will report to the next two Councils of the International, scheduled for 2014, on their activities and initiatives in line with the *Year for Middle East Peace*.

Parties participating in the Council have pledged their support to these actions as part of the *2014 Year for Middle East Peace*. Between now and the end of the year 2013, the Socialist International will invite the leaders of all its member parties to formally make this pledge, placing this call for action at the centre of our agenda from the very beginning of the year. A coordinated, sustained campaign which mobilises action from the grass-roots up to the level of Heads of State and Government can make a tangible difference to the prospects for peace and a two-state solution in Israel and Palestine. The successful realisation of the *2014 Year for Middle East Peace* can serve as a platform for future coordinated actions and initiatives of our global family.
