



SI COUNCIL IN BUDAPEST

The SI Council met in Budapest on 2 - 3 December 1994. The main theme of discussions was 'Social democracy in central and eastern Europe: deepening democracy - developing an efficient economy - promoting social justice'.

Budapest, where Prime Minister Gyula Horn and the Hungarian Socialist Party, MSzP, had been in government for some six months, was a most appropriate venue for the meeting, as SI President Pierre Mauroy stressed in his opening remarks. 'We are with you', he told Hungarian socialists, 'The presence here of a hundred parties, representing social democracy in all its diversity, bears witness to that. We

bring a message. To you, of course, and to all the Hungarian people, but also to all the peoples of central and eastern Europe'.

This gathering of parties, he said, represented a constantly developing Socialist International. 'More than sixty organisations from all parts of the world are applying to join us! And thanks to the actions of our parties and governments around

the world, I have the impression that our authority, both political and moral, is growing stronger and wider... We are a unique type of organisation, which, although it has a long history, seems to me extremely modern'.

In central and eastern Europe, Pierre Mauroy said, 'there is now a demand for a new social equilibrium reconciling indispensable freedoms with the legitimate ideal of justice and social

progress. I am convinced that we are at the historic meeting point of these aspirations and the values of social democracy. What we all feel today is the powerlessness of liberal capitalism to establish a global equilibrium compatible with these values... After twenty-five years of crisis, social democrats are calling for a different conception of develop-

referred to the recent gains for peace in the Middle East and in Ireland, to the restoration of the democratically elected president of Haiti, and to the continuing war in the former Yugoslavia. The worst option in that conflict, he said, would be for the international community to give up in the face of failure thus far to find a peaceful settlement.

jointly chaired by Jiri Horak, Czech Social Democratic Party, CSSD, and Piero Fassino, Italian Democratic Party of the Left, PDS, to forge strong relationships with left-wing parties in the region. He said that those in Hungary who had worked for reform and democracy had been strongly influenced by western European social democracy and strongly supported by a number of SI parties in western Europe.

The decisive victory of his party in the elections of May 1994, he said, was the culmination of five years intensive work and was almost unprecedented in the extent of the defeat inflicted on the previous right-wing government. 'The failure of the conservative right in Hungary was no accident. Right-wing conservative forces are failing one by one also in other countries in this region. Only a new left imbued with the spirit of Europe,' the prime minister told delegates, 'will be able to effectively build up a new social system that is also sensitive to social issues. We realise, however, that we have to face immense challenges. Never in the history of mankind has a market economy been built from the top down, or state property privatised on such a large scale as in Hungary and central and eastern Europe today... The Hungarian Socialist Party is building capitalism in Hungary. This capitalism must reconcile market forces and economic performance with social justice, solidarity and equality of opportunity. It is unprecedented... that the accumulation of capital and the building of social partnership which can be seen in Hungary and the region today should be done side by side, controlled by government policy. This is a task that can be accomplished only by a left-wing party. It must be done, if we want to avoid lais-

Gyula Horn



ment which respects not only macro-economic balances, but also the just aspirations of the people, of our societies, and the desire - which has been ours ever since the Brandt Report - for a better balance at world level'.

He went on to speak of the importance of European cooperation, and eventual integration, as well as cooperation with Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union, while warning against regional introspection and stressing that there should be no question of central and eastern Europe 'competing' with Africa or Latin America for international attention and assistance.

'We are living through one of those exceptional moments when everything is possible, but everything is also terribly fragile', the SI president said. He

He called for maximum support for the initiatives of the United Nations, stressing that a future strong and respected UN must be born now, in the midst of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, and on the fiftieth anniversary of the organisation's creation.

Concluding, he said: 'central and eastern Europe is henceforth part of a world which is open, rich in possibilities. Our task will be arduous, we know that. Our hopes are enormous; we are proud of that. We will struggle for the progress of our ideas. This is the promise of Budapest, and we shall keep it!'

Gyula Horn, welcoming the SI Council to Budapest, expressed appreciation of the work done by the Socialist International, and its Committee for Central and Eastern Europe, SICEE,

sez-faire capitalism. It is, of course, a very painful process, fraught with tension for the whole of society, but we have no other sensible options'.

He called for the whole international movement of democratic socialism to lend its support and experience to this process. The objective for Hungary, he said, was to join the European Union, where regional security could be ensured and close cooperation enjoyed with neighbouring social democratic parties.

László Kapolyi, leader of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party, MSzDP, also welcomed delegates to Budapest. He said that democratic socialist parties and governments in other countries had always been the best friends of democratic political and economic development in Hungary. He stressed that his party would do its utmost to support the Hungarian Socialist Party in promoting socialist values.

In the ensuing debate on the meeting's main theme, participants heard contributions from many party leaders, including Rudolf Scharping, chair of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD; Milos Zeman, chair of the Czech Social Democratic Party, CSSD; John Prescott, deputy leader of the British Labour Party; Massimo D'Alema, national secretary of the Democratic Party of the Left, PDS, Italy; Anne-Marie Lizin, president of Socialist International Women; Paavo Lipponen, chair of the Finnish Social Democratic Party, SDP; Erdal İnönü, SI vice-president, Social Democratic Peoples' Party, SHP, Turkey; Akis Tsochatzopoulos, general secretary of PASOK, Greece; Makoto Tanabe, SI vice-president, Social Democratic Party of Japan, SDPJ; Philippe Busquin, chair of the Socialist Party, PS, Belgium; Petar Dertliev, leader of the Bulgarian

Social Democratic Party, BSDP; Aloyzas Sakalas, chair of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, LSDP; Petre Roman, leader of the Democratic Party, Romania; Pauline Green, chair of the European Parliament Group of the Party of European Socialists; Sergiu Cunescu, president of the Romanian Social Democratic Party, PSDR; Araz Alizadeh, president of the Social Democratic Party of Azerbaijan, SDP; Vassily Lipitsky, chair of the Russian Social Democratic People's Party, RSDPP, and co-chair of the Russian Social Democratic Union; and Aleksander Kwasniewski, chair of Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland.

Many speakers described the Council meeting as symbolic, and paid tribute to Hungary as the home of the first impetus towards democratic transformation in central and eastern Europe, and now the site of an important victory for democratic socialism. 'It makes one feel good to come to a country governed by social democrats, in particular in this part of Europe where a few years back this new reality would have been unthinkable', Rudolf Scharping said.

Leaders from the region emphasised the difficulties their parties had experienced at first in attracting support when, as Aloyzas Sakalas said, 'for almost 70 years the ideals of equality, social justice, labour and freedom in this region were utilised as a cover for a brutal totalitarian system'. They described the widespread revulsion against public provision and the workings of the state, the high expectations of the all-powerful market encouraged by politicians and ideologues of the Right, and the quickly evident reality - alongside many real and encouraging gains - of social and economic polarisation, increasing

unemployment, poverty and insecurity.

Democratic socialist parties had consistently presented the view, summed up by Milos Zeman, that 'economic growth should lead toward a higher quality of life' and that 'social justice does not mean an egalitarian society, but a society of solidarity'. Such arguments had met with substantial success, and the recent electoral victory of the Hungarian Socialist Party was not an isolated episode, all concurred. In a number of countries, people had begun to vote against the numerous injustices caused by right-wing policies and an untrammelled free market and in favour of a fundamental right to social justice and solidarity. Social democratic parties were growing stronger almost everywhere in the region - a trend reflected also in Russia, with the recent formation of a Social Democratic Union, bringing together six smaller social democratic groupings.

Much emphasis was also placed on the crucial role of central and eastern European countries in the future of the whole continent; on the desirability of opening the European Union to all countries which wished to join; on the importance of economic cooperation and cooperation in the field of security; on the need for a Europe-wide approach to issues of minorities, immigration and asylum; in sum, on what John Prescott called 'the long-term transformation of our European continent. Not a European Union of haves and have-nots, where richer nations exploit the advantages of market forces, cheap labour and one-way flows of trade. It is our aim to reduce those differentials'.

The Declaration on Central and Eastern Europe subsequently adopted by the Council looked

to the many elections due in the next two years and defined the SI's central objective in the region as support for parties of social democratic inspiration, to ensure that those parties obtained the best possible electoral results and increased parliamentary representation. (The declaration is printed in full below, together with the other resolutions of the Council).

The Middle East

Also on the Council's agenda was a report from the SI Middle East Committee, SIMEC. Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, Social Democratic Party of Germany, who chairs the committee, reported on its meeting in Cairo in November. The Council extended heartiest congratulations to Israel's Labour prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and foreign minister, Shimon Peres, as well as to PLO Chair Yasser Arafat, on their receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize. Shimon Peres addressed the Council. He stressed the much changed nature of today's world, with the end of the cold war and with technology constantly transcending national boundaries. In this new international climate, he said, he regarded the Middle East peace process as utterly irreversible. He recalled the Socialist International's important role, since the 1970s, in seeking peace in his region, and appealed to the SI and its member parties in government to now give every support to the PLO in building up the economic infrastructure of the self-ruled territories.

Speaking for the PLO, Ilan Halevi also stressed the urgent need for delivery of the promised economic aid, without which the people of Gaza and the West Bank would not see an improvement in their daily lives. Equally, he added, political and

economic progress were intimately linked, and continuing support was needed for the rapid implementation of elections.

The International's determination to continue offering every support to the peace process was reflected in the resolution adopted by the Council (see page 43).

SI Committees

The Council also received reports from the chairs of other SI committees, as well as a report from Secretary General Luis Ayala on all the activities of the International in recent months (printed in full on page 35).

António Guterres, SI vice-president, general secretary of the Socialist Party of Portugal and co-chair of the SI Africa Committee, reported on the committee's meeting at the end of November in Abidjan (see report on page 20), as well as on the SI mission to observe the elections in Mozambique in October. The resolutions of the meeting in Abidjan on the current situation in a number of African countries, as well as on African integration, were adopted by the Council and are printed in full on page 37.

The SI Committee on Human Rights, SICOHR, met in Geneva early in November, as reported in Issue 3/1994. Committee Chair Peter Jankowitsch, Social Democratic Party of Austria, reported to the Council on that meeting and on the current concerns of the committee, as reflected in the resolution subsequently adopted by the Council (page 42).

SI Vice-President José Francisco Peña Gómez, leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party and chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, SICLAC, gave a report on recent political developments in that region, where

elections had been held in several countries. He focused in particular on the elections in Mexico, where a delegation of the Socialist International had observed the poll, and in the Dominican Republic, where an SI delegation had also been present and had been prominent in condemning widespread irregularities. He also referred to the important Miami Summit on economic American integration, to be held a few days after the SI Council, and to the much welcomed restoration to office of President Aristide in Haiti.

Resolutions, decisions

As well as its Declaration on Central and Eastern Europe, the SI Council adopted in Budapest resolutions on Africa, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Haiti, Human Rights, Iranian Kurdistan, the Middle East, the People's House in Prague, and the implementation of Quota for women's representation.

After deliberations by the SI Finance and Administration Committee, SIFAC, the Council agreed to propose to the next SI Congress that the Hungarian Socialist Party (at present an observer party of the International) be given the status of full member; that full membership be granted to the Party of the Democratic Left, Slovak Republic, and the United List of Social Democrats, ZL, Slovenia; and that observer status be granted to Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland and to Unia Pracy, UP, Poland.

SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL IN BUDAPEST

I
I am very pleased to report to the Council at our first meeting in Budapest. I thank the Hungarian Socialist Party and the Hungarian Social Democratic Party for their hospitality in this historical and strategically important European city. Our meeting here will give a tremendous impetus to the work of the Socialist International in this region, central Europe.

It has been a particular pleasure for me to visit Hungary several times over recent months to prepare this meeting, just as Prime Minister Gyula Horn and the Hungarian Socialist Party began their work in government. Our meeting today serves to underline the solidarity of our International with the prime minister and with his party and our support in the considerable tasks ahead of them.

II
The concerns of central and eastern Europe have always been among the concerns of the Socialist International, especially since the great events of 1989 and 1990 which so changed the face of this region.

All in the Socialist International rejoiced with the people of central and eastern Europe in the peaceful revolutions of five years ago and firmly supported the quest for freedom, democracy and an efficient economy. Equally, we are aware of the contradictions brought by an unregulated transition to a market economy. We have seen injustice and social and economic hardship, and we very much welcome recent election results which indicate that a growing number of citizens are attracted by the ideas of democratic socialism.

The International's presence in this part of Europe and our contacts and partnerships with parties of democratic socialist inspiration in almost every country of the region have developed rapidly. Many of these parties meet regularly in our SI Committee for Central and Eastern Europe, SICEE, under the joint chairmanship of Jiri Horak of the

Czech Social Democratic Party and Piero Fassino of the Italian Democratic Party of the Left. For our committee, which met in Budapest on the eve of the Council meeting, this was a return visit. The committee last gathered in Budapest in May, at a crucial moment, during the last days of campaigning for the second round of Hungary's general elections.

In the recent meetings of this committee and in all our ongoing work, the International has been much preoccupied with the continuing tragedy in the former Yugoslavia. We are in contact with social democratic parties working for peaceful and democratic ends in the former Yugoslavia and the International continues to support all efforts towards peace, despite the great difficulties encountered by such initiatives.

One more focus of attention for the SI Committee for Central and Eastern Europe is the elections currently taking place, and our support and solidarity for the social democratic parties taking part.

Another recent initiative was the visit of an SI delegation led by our vice-president, Philippe Busquin, leader of the Belgian Socialist Party, PS, to Bucharest for talks with the leadership of a number of Romanian political parties. Their meetings and discussions will help to inform the International's continuing contacts and dialogue with those political forces in Romania which share our principles and values.

Contacts and activities in central and eastern Europe will certainly continue to be a very important area of the International's work. Our committee will meet next year in Prague.

III
Just as the present meeting is a significant one for our work in central and eastern Europe, so the last meeting of our Council in Tokyo in May was significant for the International in Asia and the Pacific. Following the very successful inaugural meeting of the SI Committee for Asia and the Pacific in Kathmandu a year ago, an unprecedented number

of Asian parties and organisations were present in Tokyo, where our regional committee also met again on the eve of the Council meeting. We have made new contacts with parties in Asia and the Pacific and deepened existing relationships, both with SI member parties and with others who share our political perspectives.

In June, I had the opportunity of going to Pakistan for meetings with the prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, leader of our member party, the Pakistan People's Party, and other leading representatives of the party, government ministers, and parliamentarians. We discussed the PPP's participation in the SI and the SI Committee for Asia and the Pacific, as well as the current situation in Pakistan itself and the region.

Our committee has established a series of priorities, reaffirming our commitment to help strengthen democratic development where it is already under way, our solidarity with those still struggling for basic democratic freedoms, and our support for social democratic parties, and in particular for newly developing political forces.

The next meeting of the SI Committee for Asia and the Pacific will be held in Manila on 11 and 12 February 1995, hosted by the Philippines Democratic Socialist Party, PDSP. As well as showing support for those working for democratic development and social democratic policies in the Philippines, it will be an important opportunity to further develop the International's profile, contacts and activities in Asia and the Pacific.

IV
Since we met in Tokyo, the Socialist International learned with sadness of the death in July of one of our Japanese leaders, SI Honorary President Eiichi Nagasue. A former leader of the Democratic Socialist Party and former SI vice-president, he was an active and long-standing participant in the International's work. He will be much missed.

Many of us were still in Tokyo when

we heard the news of the sudden death on 12 May of John Smith, our vice-president, leader of the British Labour Party and chair of the SI Committee on Economic Policy, Development and Environment. Since assuming the leadership of his party just two years before, he had taken a leading role in the work of our International. His death was a great shock and a great sorrow. Though he was active in the Socialist International for a short time, his contribution was decisive and will endure.

V

Turning to our work in Africa, I am pleased to report a constant expansion of our activities and our positive and useful relationships with many like-minded political forces.

I headed an SI delegation to Mozambique at the end of October to observe the important and long-awaited elections for president and parliament, which marked the culmination of the UN-sponsored peace process. We observed a poll in which voter turnout was high and procedures meticulous. We met the incumbent president and leader of Frelimo, Joaquim Chissano, as well as other party and government leaders. President Chissano was decisively returned to office, while the Frelimo party will be the largest in parliament. We wish them well and will do all we can to support them, as the people of Mozambique look to their new democratically elected government for economic and social reconstruction after more than 30 years of colonial and civil war.

In 1992, an SI delegation was in Angola to observe the elections there. These were free and fair, but sadly there was not to be a peaceful democratic transition. Our concern for Angola and support for democratic forces there has continued. We warmly welcome the recent peace agreements and look forward to a better future for our friends in the MPLA and for all the Angolan people.

Another focus of our deep concern has been the terrible events this year in Rwanda. The Socialist International has called on the international community to give every possible political and economic support to democratic

forces in Rwanda in restoring law and order, public infrastructure and the economy and the safe resettlement of refugees.

We held a meeting of the SI Africa Committee a few days ago in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, at the invitation of our member party, the Ivory Coast Popular Front, which is the main opposition party in that country. The co-chairs of the committee will make a full report to the Council in Budapest on this two-day meeting, which was well-attended by representatives of SI member parties and many invited guests from all parts of Africa. The committee continued its focus on the democratisation process and the role of social democracy in Africa, considering in particular the political situations in Equatorial Guinea, in Gabon, in Ivory Coast, in Mauritania, in Togo, and in Zaire. It examined recent economic developments in Africa and their social and political implications, and a statement was adopted on the question of African integration. Also on the agenda were the crucial questions of conflict resolution and humanitarian action. In the present context of both crises and hopes in Africa, the Socialist International is a significant platform for the many parties which share our social democratic values and priorities.

VI

Socialist International delegations have also been in Latin America to observe elections. In May I led an SI mission to the Dominican Republic for the presidential, parliamentary and municipal elections. SI Vice-President José Francisco Peña Gómez, the leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, was a presidential candidate. Having visited polling stations in many parts of the country, the SI delegation reported serious irregularities affecting the carrying out of truly free, fair and informed elections. Thousands, we noted, had been unable to vote because their names did not appear on the electoral register. Similar reports were made by other international observers. The country's electoral authorities subsequently declared the incumbent president, Joaquín Balaguer, re-elected, and reiterated the claim after a recount of some of the votes cast. The Socialist

International denounced the inadequate conduct of the elections and in July, prior to President Balaguer's inauguration in August, issued a statement stressing that new elections should be held as soon as possible. An agreement was subsequently reached between the political parties in the Dominican Republic that the current presidential term will be shortened to two years, with new elections to take place in 1996 after a thorough process of electoral reform. The International will continue to give the fullest support to our member party and its leader and to call for the rapid implementation of reforms.

An SI delegation was also in Mexico for the presidential and parliamentary elections held there in August. We attended many polling stations in a wide variety of places and observed a calm and orderly voting process, with a high level of participation, marred here and there by the reported inadequacy of voting provisions for electors who were away from their homes. At the conclusion of the voting our delegation underlined that the SI should continue to strengthen its relations with Mexican political forces committed to the welfare, progress and democratic development of the Mexican people - aims which are shared by our International.

The International strongly supported President Aristide of Haiti during his enforced three-year exile after the coup d'état of 1991, and has warmly welcomed his restoration to office, stressing that Haiti requires continued assistance from the international community to help it recover from the disastrous situation of the last three years. In response to an invitation from President Aristide, we will be holding the next meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, SICLAC, in Port-au-Prince on 18 and 19 January. It will be a practical demonstration of solidarity with the president and his newly appointed government, which includes ministers of PANPRA and KONAKOM, the two SI parties in Haiti.

The chair of SICLAC, José Francisco Peña Gómez, will make a full report to the Council on developments in the region concerning our member parties. SICLAC continues to be an active and influential force for solidarity and the

exchange of views and experiences among democratic socialist parties in the region.

VII

Support for the peace process in the Middle East is an ongoing priority for the International. We are proud of the role played by our members in the important developments of the last two years. Our warmest congratulations go to our vice-president, Yitzhak Rabin, and our former vice-president, Shimon Peres, as well as to PLO Chair Yasser Arafat, on their receipt of this year's Nobel Prize for Peace.

The International organised a meeting of our Middle East Committee, SIMEC, in Cairo on 5 and 6 November, at the invitation of the governing National Democratic Party, NDP. The chair of the committee, Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD, will make a full report to the Council on that meeting. The committee continues to bring together SI member parties from the Middle East and beyond with invited representatives of other countries in the region and of the PLO. In the days before our Cairo meeting, the International warmly welcomed the signature of the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. The committee focused on the situation in the autonomous Palestinian areas, following the return of PLO Chair Yasser Arafat to head the new Palestinian National Authority, stressing the importance of early elections and practical assistance to the electoral process.

A basic perspective of our International is that peace and security are dependent on political and economic development. SI President Pierre Mauroy reflected this when he said in a statement in July, 'It is not acceptable that difficulties of an economic order compromise the enormous progress achieved thanks to the determination of the PLO leaders and the Labour government of Israel'. In this context, international economic assistance to the peace process was the other main item discussed in Cairo.

In February or March of 1995, the SI committee hopes to meet in Israel for the first time, travelling on to visit Gaza,

Jericho and Jordan. A priority in the coming months will be the encouragement of dialogue between the governments of Syria and Israel.

We are also concerned about developments in the Maghreb, where the continuing conflict in Algeria is a cause of grave disquiet. Support for our party in Algeria, the Socialist Forces Front, FFS, in its quest for dialogue between all parties and the holding of truly democratic elections, is a priority for the International as a whole.

Shortly after our Council last met in Tokyo, the working group established by SIMEC on the Kurdish question met for the first time and began a programme of discussions and visits. The working group elected Conny Fredriksson of the Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP, as its chair. It has since held a further meeting. At the end of June Conny Fredriksson and Karim Pakzad of the French Socialist Party, PS, travelled to northern Iraq on behalf of the International to hold talks with the leaders of the PUK and the KDP after differences arose between these two Kurdish parties with whom the SI has long-standing contacts. Our mission proved a useful contribution to the easing of that situation.

VIII

Members of the Council will recall that questions of regional and global security were high on our agenda earlier this year in Tokyo. Since then our attention has remained on situations of conflict or potential conflict, as already stressed with regard to our ongoing commitment in the Middle East and in the former Yugoslavia.

The policies for peace and security of the Japanese government, now headed by Tomiichi Murayama, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, are of great significance.

In Europe, we have warmly welcomed the ceasefires recently declared by both sides in the long-standing Irish conflict and are proud of the roles played in that peace process by the leaders of our member parties in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

IX

The SI Committee on Human Rights, SICOHR, met early in November in Geneva, where it continued its consideration of the follow-up to last year's World Conference on Human Rights and welcomed as a special guest the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, José Ayala Lasso. The chair of the committee, Peter Jankowitsch of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, SPOe, will be reporting to the Council on that meeting. The High Commissioner, whose post was established as a direct result of the World Conference and the wishes expressed by, among others, the Socialist International, described to the SI committee his work and priorities, with particular emphasis on the situations in Rwanda and Burundi. He expressed appreciation of the priority given by our International to human rights questions and his hope for the fullest dialogue and cooperation - a sentiment strongly endorsed by the committee.

Another priority in the field of human rights is a democratic socialist strategy against racism, intolerance and xenophobia, as reflected in the draft resolution being presented to the Council. The exchange of views and experiences on this very urgent issue, begun at the recent Geneva meeting, will be continued by the committee in the coming months.

Following our activities together with the other political Internationals in the context of the World Conference on Human Rights, there are also plans for further joint initiatives on human rights such as the holding of a meeting in Canada next year.

X

The presence of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at our meeting in Geneva and our fruitful discussions with him are in line with the continuing positive development of the International's working relationship with the United Nations. As we approach the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations, it is timely to reiterate our commitment to its work and aims, and no doubt the Socialist International will be prominent in commemorating that anniversary.

Following the attendance at our last Council meeting of the chair of the Preparatory Committee for next year's UN Social Summit, plans continue to ensure that our International will have a major input in that event.

In June, I had a meeting with representatives of the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, again along with the secretaries general of the other Internationals. We discussed the holding in 1995 of a third Round Table on Population and Development. Our good collaboration with the UNFPA ensured that the position paper of the Socialist International, as well as a joint statement of the four political Internationals, were official documents of September's UN International Conference on Population and Development.

In the light of these developments and of the Socialist International's central commitment to support for the UN, we have applied this year for the re-classification of our organisation's consultative status with ECOSOC (the UN Economic and Social Council) so that we may have the opportunity of taking an even more active role in UN activities. I have submitted a dossier on the activities of the International in support of the United Nations' aims, which will be considered by the responsible UN committee which meets in March 1995.

XI

Following this year's elections, the Party of European Socialists maintains its position as the largest group in the European Parliament. We congratulate Pauline Green, of the British Labour Party, on her election as the first woman leader of the PES group, and Klaus Hänsch of the Social Democratic Party of Germany on his new role as president of the European Parliament.

The International was happy with recent electoral successes for SI member parties. The victory of the Hungarian Socialist Party last May is in the forefront of our minds as we meet in Budapest. In the Netherlands, Labour Party Leader Wim Kok took office as prime minister in August at the head of a new coalition government including the PvdA. In the same month, Ernesto Samper, leader of

the Colombian Liberal Party, was inaugurated as president, following his victory at the polls in June.

SDPJ Leader Tomiichi Murayama has since June been at the head of government in Japan. Elections held in June in Luxembourg returned to power the coalition which includes the Socialist Workers' Party, POSL.

In September the Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP, led by Ingvar Carlsson, returned to power after an election victory. In Denmark the Social Democratic Party, led by Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, continues as the largest party in the coalition government following September's elections. After the elections in Austria in October, Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, leader of the Social Democratic Party of Austria, SPOe, continues at the head of a coalition government. And the Barbados Labour Party won a decisive victory in elections in September and formed a new government under Prime Minister Owen Arthur.

In Germany the Social Democratic Party has increased its representation nationally, though still in opposition, and reinforced its position as the strongest party in the second chamber of parliament. The British Labour Party for its part scored very well in local and European elections in May and June, consolidating its position as the strongest party at municipal and district level, while in Greece municipal and provincial elections in October confirmed the Panhellenic Socialist Movement, PASOK, as the largest party.

XII

I had the pleasure during recent months of attending on behalf of the International the congresses of several member parties. Another important event at which I represented the International was the international summer camp for young people organised by the International Falcon Movement/Socialist Educational International this summer in Germany. And in September we held a working group meeting in London with representatives of the Socialist International and the Labour Sports International, CSIT, another associated organisation of the SI. We plan to meet again and develop joint activities.

XIII

I want also to mention that preparations continue for the Socialist International Conference of Mayors, to take place in Bologna, Italy, on 28 and 29 January 1995 under the title 'The Urban Face of Socialism'. The conference will be chaired by our president, Pierre Mauroy, mayor of the city of Lille, and hosted by the Italian Democratic Party of the Left, PDS. It will bring together socialist mayors from SI member parties and others invited as guests, from different continents and regions, to exchange their experiences of practical socialism in an urban context. The conference will adopt a 'Declaration of Bologna', drawing on the contributions of prominent socialist municipal leaders around the world.

When I was recently in Africa I took the opportunity to briefly visit South Africa for meetings with our friends in the ANC. In our discussions, they indicated their interest in hosting the next meeting of the SI Council in South Africa.

XIV

The SI is now truly global in its activities. There is no region of the world where it is not active and I am happy to say that the pace of our work is constantly quickening. This cannot however be sustained if the International is not assured of the financial resources necessary to carry out its growing functions. There are a number of member parties which have not fulfilled their financial commitments. I must appeal once again for the prompt payment of membership fees, while reminding member parties of the relevant articles of the International's statutes.

XV

Even as our International celebrates the gains for peace and democracy represented by such positive events as the recent elections in Mozambique, we are constantly aware that the absence of war and the presence of ballot boxes are not enough. Sustained and peaceful democratic development goes hand in hand with economic and social progress. The cause of peace, democracy and just social and economic development is at the heart of all our International's work.

RESOLUTIONS

AFRICA

Angola

The peace agreements signed in Lusaka on 20 November bring new hopes: peace in Angola is an absolute necessity in a country torn by a bloody civil war. The last phase of this civil war, provoked by the refusal of UNITA to accept the election results of September 1992 which were declared free and fair by the United Nations, has turned out to be more murderous than before.

The Socialist International is optimistic that these hopes for peace will not be dashed and it calls upon all political forces in Angola to support the peace process and to truly respect the cease-fire.

Angola is now the only country of southern Africa which has not successfully accomplished a process of democratic development and political stabilisation. Angola is a country with enormous economic potential and cannot resign itself to a situation of under-development caused mainly by the war. Too many human lives have already been lost. Angola deserves a better future.

The Socialist International calls upon the international community, especially the United Nations and the states of the region, to make an effective commitment in the next stages of the peace process. Lack of vigilance by the international community after the agreements of Bicesse permitted the election results not to be respected and civil war to break out again.

The Socialist International calls upon the international community for effective assistance in the reconstruction of the economic infrastructure of the country which will allow the successful participation of all Angolans in the civil life of the country, and the national reconciliation of Angola.

Equatorial Guinea

The Socialist International,

- Gravely concerned by the blocking of the democratisation process in Equatorial Guinea which has led to a serious and rapid deterioration of the political climate and of living conditions;
- Noting in particular the persistent and still unpunished violation of human rights (arbitrary arrests and torture of party leaders of the democratic opposition);
- Noting the lack of will of President

Obiang's regime to respect the commitments made during the conclusion of the National Pact with the democratic forces and at the Conference of Sponsors (in three years no viable census has been able to be established);

- Condemns President Obiang's regime for its political obstinacy and its systematic violations of citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms;
- Offers its encouragement and support to the democratic political forces of the Platform of the United Opposition (POC), in particular the Convergence for Social Democracy (CPDS), whose existence is threatened;
- Commits the worldwide socialist political forces and the international community to follow with extreme vigilance the situation created by the arbitrary and dictatorial regime of General Obiang Nguema, and to exert all necessary pressure for the start of a genuine democratisation process jointly with all the parties concerned in accordance with the agreements already made but not respected.

Gabon

- Considering the role played by the PGP (Gabonese Progress Party) and the regrouped parties within the HCR (High Council of the Resistance) to create an independent electoral commission, to promote the rule of law, and to form a government of consensus in order to implement the Paris Accords;
 - Considering that the Paris Accords have been signed by the executive and by the majority, the member parties of the HCR and by the mediator and international observers;
 - Considering that the first act of implementation of these accords is the establishment of a government of consensus called government for democracy;
 - Considering that the establishment of this government failed to meet the expectations of the Gabonese people and democrats throughout the world, by violating both the spirit and the letter of the accords;
 - Considering that this government is the primary instrument of implementation of the Paris Accords;
- The Socialist International:
1. is concerned about this first violation of both the spirit and the letter of the Paris Accords,
 2. urges the new government for democracy as of now to respect scrupulously the Paris Accords,

3. reminds the parties in opposition that, in order to ensure that the Paris Accords are adhered to, it is their duty to remain united within the HCR, within the government and within the National Assembly,

4. immediately calls on the Gabonese people and the Gabonese institutions to obtain from the present government the strict implementation of the Paris Accords, in order to prevent the return to another deadlock in the political, economic and social situation in Gabon,
5. encourages the parties to the Paris Accords to resolve the difficulties of implementing the Paris Accords, by means of internal negotiations and international mediation implied within the Paris Accords and laid down by the Paris Accords.

Ivory Coast

- Considering that free and transparent elections are the requirement for the expression of the people's sovereignty and the guarantee of social peace in a democratic regime,
 - noting that the political parties in the Ivory Coast have long been demanding the setting-up of minimal conditions for universal and democratic suffrage, envisaging an agreed electoral code and an independent electoral college,
 - noting that the draft law on the electoral code put before parliament by the Ivory Coast government is far from meeting these minimal requirements,
- The Socialist International:
- expresses its grave concern about the profound disagreement characterising the current political climate in the Ivory Coast;
 - calls therefore on the government to take immediate steps in order to seek, with all the political parties and groupings, a platform for transparent, honest and democratic elections which are the requirement of a legal state.

Mauritania

Having learned about the situation in Mauritania, in particular with regard to the democratic process and respect for human rights;

The Socialist International:

1. calls the attention of the international community to the repeated intrigues with regard to the black population in Mauritania,
2. condemns the inhuman and anti-democratic practices and the grave attacks on human rights seen in this country,

3. calls for the establishment of an independent commission of enquiry to shed light on the frequent absence of human rights,
4. calls for the organised return of deported Mauritians and the restoration of their civil documents, and their belongings and land,
5. calls for the reconstruction of villages which have fallen victim to these intrigues,
6. calls for the immediate restoration of a genuine and secure democracy guaranteeing the expression of individual and collective freedoms, in a framework of social justice and for the benefit of all Mauritians,
7. alerts member parties of the SI to the current political situation in this country, and calls on them to act in favour of the establishment of a democratic and egalitarian society.

Mozambique

The Socialist International welcomes the holding of free and fair elections in Mozambique, the final step in the peace agreements.

The Socialist International sends its congratulations to President-elect Joaquim Chissano and to the Frelimo party, which obtained a majority of seats in the new Parliament.

Now begins a new phase of consolidation of the process of national reconciliation. The Socialist International calls upon the international community to support this reconciliation process, helping with the reconstruction of the country's economic infrastructure, destroyed by more than a decade of civil war. The process of mine-sweeping is the most urgent necessity for peace, and the training of managers for the running of the new country which has just held these elections. The hopes of a better future for the people of Mozambique cannot be dashed.

The holding of elections in Mozambique is part of the process of democratisation and political stabilisation which is spreading throughout southern Africa.

The Socialist International expresses its best wishes for the future of the whole region, for a future of peace, of respect for human rights and social justice and it calls on member parties to establish training programmes for managers in Mozambique, with a view to future municipal elections.

Rwanda

- Considering the genocide perpetrated by the rulers of the former Rwandan regime, which claimed hun-

dreds of thousands of victims;

- considering the establishment in July 1994 in Rwanda of a pluralist government with Faustin Twagiramungu, the prime minister already appointed in August 1993 under the Arusha accords;

- considering that the former Rwandan Armed Forces, with the benefit of international complicity, and militia from the former regime, have not given up taking their revenge, and exert constant pressure in the refugee camps, seriously hindering the process of national reconciliation;

- considering that the present Rwandan authorities, extremely destitute and isolated, cannot implement a policy of national reconstruction,

The Socialist International:

- reiterates its wish to see the establishment of the Rule of Law in Rwanda. While condemning the increase in acts of retaliation and revenge for which the current government is responsible, the Socialist International does not intend to put them on the same scale as the acts of genocide and the massacres of democrats perpetrated by the partisans of the former Habyarimana regime, who must be tried and sentenced; but rather appeals to the states of the international community and their financial backers to end Rwanda's isolation. This state of isolation considerably reduces the chances of the Kigali government re-establishing the rule of law and initiating the reconstruction of the country. In addition it encourages the desire for revenge on the part of the rulers of the previous regime, while increasing the risk of authority drifting within the present Rwandan government.

The Socialist International will do everything possible to support the action of the Rwandan democrats, in particular the Social Democratic Party, in rising to the challenges of national reconciliation and the reconstruction of Rwanda within the framework of the government.

South Africa

The Socialist International expresses its profound satisfaction with the ongoing process of consolidating democracy in South Africa. With the democratic transition, South Africa has changed from being a destabilising factor in the region to becoming a stabilising one, to the benefit of all southern Africa.

The SI congratulates President Nelson Mandela on his great success as the first democratically elected president in the history of his country. His outstanding personality and statesmanship have gained constantly growing

respect and support and taken South Africa on a path to true national reconciliation.

The SI reiterates its firm support for President Mandela and for the new government in their efforts to lift the nation out of centuries of racism and division, and to improve the living conditions for their people.

We call on all SI member parties, and on the whole international community, to increase the financial, technical and human assistance for the social and economic development of South Africa, and in the preparations for the next important step in the democratic process, the local elections due to be held in 1995.

We call on the new government and on the entire administration to cooperate in establishing democratic institutions at all levels, and in bringing order to the armed forces.

The SI strongly condemns the continuous political violence, which threatens stability and causes great suffering among the population, and calls on all political parties in South Africa to join forces in bringing it to an end.

We specifically call on the Inkhata Freedom Party and on the extreme right-wing movements to put their separatist interests aside and to contribute constructively to peace and national unity, and in building the new, democratic South Africa.

Togo

- Considering that the legislative elections of February 1994 brought no more solution to the crisis in Togo than did the farcical presidential election of August 1993;

- considering that those who hold power today in Togo do not do so legitimately through the will of the people clearly expressed through the ballot box;

- concerned by the state of human rights in Togo characterised among other things by recent assassinations and political kidnapping;

The Socialist International:

- condemns the use of indiscriminate violence in Togo as a means of conquest and the exercise of power;

- urges the international community and more particularly the socialist parties throughout the world to mobilise themselves to exert effective pressure upon the de facto authorities of Togo, in order to end all violations of human rights in that country;

- considers that only a political or global agreement between the different parties is likely to lead to a lasting solution to the crisis in Togo.

Willy Brandt Fund

Considering the difficult advances of democratic forces in the African continent these last five years,

The Socialist International decides to recommend the creation of a solidarity fund called the Willy Brandt Fund.

This fund will be for the concrete support of policies adopted by the SI in favour of democratic processes in Africa.

Zaire

The Socialist International is very concerned at the deterioration of the socio-economic situation in Zaire where chaos is spreading, plunging the population into poverty, insecurity and desolation. This is even more unacceptable as Zaire is a country potentially very rich in natural and human resources.

It condemns the dictatorial regime of President Mobutu who, by delaying tactics, is blocking the democratisation process begun by the Sovereign National Conference, and organising a more and more systematic and violent repression against the democratic opposition, the free press and the defenders of human rights.

The Socialist International asks the international community to maintain a firm attitude vis-à-vis this regime and deeply regrets that some western governments are attempting to break the international isolation in which President Mobutu was maintained.

It renews its solidarity and its support for the forces in Zaire who are struggling for the establishment of a true democracy and particularly for the UDPS, a party which has applied for membership of the SI.

The Socialist International condemns the harmful role played by President Mobutu in the conflicts which are tearing apart certain countries of the sub-region.

African Integration

- Considering that Africa suffers at present from its division into numerous, some very small, states, an inheritance of its colonial past;
- Considering that development is severely hampered by the narrowness of internal markets in Africa;
- Considering furthermore the major effect of economic factors on relations between states;
- Considering finally that individual small countries carry insufficient weight with their usual partners in negotiation (the large trading blocs and international organisations);

The Socialist International takes the view that, faced with the chal-

lenges of today, only real integration can give African states greater opportunities in trade and development; and recommends:

1. that parliamentarians from SI member parties in Africa establish a group for cooperation, in the perspective of a future African Parliament;
2. that the SI Africa Committee devotes a session at one of its meetings in 1995 to this important subject.

AZERBAIJAN

The Socialist International notes with concern the report of the SIW Executive delegation to Azerbaijan on the devastating effect of the war on the economy and people of Azerbaijan. We are particularly concerned that more than half a million people have been displaced and are living in very difficult conditions and that the health and nourishment and education of very large numbers of children have been severely affected. The SI strongly condemns the occupation of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the attempted forced annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The SI calls on its member parties to offer material help for the support of refugees and displaced persons in Azerbaijan.

The SI congratulates the women and youth of the Social Democratic Party of Azerbaijan on their efforts to make contact with Armenian women and youth in order to build trust and confidence across enemy lines. The SI welcomes the fact that the ceasefire has held for months, and calls on democratic forces in both countries to work towards a permanent peace.

The SI reiterates its firm conviction that boundaries shall not be changed by force, calls on the UN General Assembly and Security Council to work for the full enforcement of UN resolutions pertaining to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and calls on all states in the region to provide protection of the human rights of all minorities.

The SI further calls on the Government of Azerbaijan to fulfil its promise that the elections scheduled for 1995 will take place.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

The SI is totally opposed to the logic of war which prevails today. But our capacity to act can only be a direct con-

sequence of the coherence of our analysis.

Any prospect of stability is uncertain if we do not put a stop to the tragedy that has stained this area with blood for over three years and has inflicted all sorts of violence and abuse on millions of people.

Even if negotiations have so far proven incapable of reaching a peace agreement, we cannot and should not give up. Even in the tragedy there is a gleam of hope for negotiations and we need to make every effort to ensure that negotiation prevails over arms and to secure stable and lasting peace.

Some minimum conditions are essential to achieve our aim. The peace agreement must be based on the maintenance of the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Croatia within their internationally recognised boundaries. Whatever the institutional and territorial subdivision of Bosnia may be, we should guarantee a multi-ethnic composition in every territory, thus ensuring the fundamental rights of men and women and equal rights for each ethnic and religious community. General elections - with international guarantees - should take place as soon as possible in all territories for the composition of truly representative parliaments. War crimes - and, in the first place, the mass rape of thousands of women - cannot be dismissed, and the International Court set up by the United Nations should therefore start its activities.

The basis for the necessary agreement has been offered in the Plan presented in July to all parties by the Contact Group which includes the European Union, the USA and Russia. Although the plan was not fully satisfactory to everyone's claims and it cannot yet be regarded as a final settlement for the whole conflict in Bosnia, it could provide a reasonable framework to convert the current situation and tendency from confrontation into co-existence and from war into dialogue. One should not hide the fact that, while others accepted the plan, including Belgrade, the Serbian Bosnian self-proclaimed leadership rejected it, thus openly challenging the international community. That is why they are to be charged with the responsibility for the ongoing tragedy in Bosnia, including the most recent events in Bihac.

The Bosnian Serbs are therefore to be pressed to accept proposals for a settlement, and that pressure is to be exerted with all possible means. Probably the moment has come to involve Belgrade as a partner in such a pressure, as a significant factor to bring the

Bosnian Serbs to reason.

This cannot mean forgetting Belgrade's overwhelming responsibility for the whole war nor their unacceptable occupation of Croatian territories. But there is nothing to lose and much to gain by testing and giving a new chance to the leaders in Belgrade to play a positive role in the Bosnian issue. In any case, all efforts must be made in order to induce the international community to be united and firm. The presence of UNPROFOR forces should be continued. Withdrawal of UNPROFOR would only hinder humanitarian efforts and would lead to more war and more victims.

At the same time, to prevent the tension still prevailing in that region from breaking out into open conflicts, an initiative on Kosovo cannot be delayed. We should also support useful initiatives to allow the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to live in peace and to cooperate with its neighbours.

BULGARIA

The Socialist International supports the Democratic Alternative for the Republic (DAR) coalition formed by the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party and other parties of social democratic inspiration which share all social democratic values.

The SI supports their efforts to implement a new social democratic climate in Bulgarian political and economic life.

The SI wishes DAR success in the forthcoming elections on 18 December.

DECLARATION ON CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

1. This is the first time the Council of the Socialist International has met in a central or eastern European country, five years after the fall of the Berlin wall, and while in all central and eastern European countries the difficult transition from a command economy to a market economy and from regimes of party-states to democracy is under way.

We wanted Budapest to be the site of the meeting, since it is the symbol of the Hungarian people's heroic fight for freedom. It is thus with emotion that today the socialist and social democratic leaders from all over the world meet in a democratic Hungary led by a government in which socialists are the main force.

2. After the fall of the Berlin wall, we had all hoped that the collapse of communist regimes would rapidly open a space of broad consensus for social democracy. But alongside this hope there is also a tough reality. As a matter of fact decades of communism - which tragically misused the word 'socialism' - initially brought about deep hostility and mistrust of anything connected with the left in the public opinion of those countries.

It is obvious that economic, social, demographic and ideological crisis made the totalitarian communist parties look for changes and solutions. In 1985, Gorbachev declared the start of 'perestroika' as there was no other alternative for the collapsing regime. Democratic elections took place in all the countries and politicians from the national and dissident movements came to power. However, new political forces often chose 'shock therapy' and a laissez-faire market, not a social market and step-by-step reforms. Of course, the whole burden of these fell on the working people and caused differentiation and inequality. Even minimal social security was destroyed.

Today, however, there is a basic change in public opinion. First the elections in Lithuania and the later success of left-wing parties in Poland, Hungary and other countries show that a 'second phase' in the democratic transition of central and eastern Europe is taking place and that a growing number of citizens are again looking toward the values and ideas of democratic socialism with hope and trust.

3. Our thoughts must go, first of all, to the women and men of the former Yugoslavia.

Even if negotiations have so far proven incapable of reaching a peace agreement, we cannot and should not give up. Even in the tragedy there is a gleam of hope for negotiations and we need to make every effort to ensure that negotiation prevails over arms and to secure stable and lasting peace.

The passivity of the international community faced with the conquest by the Serbian forces of the Bihac pocket and their entry into the security zone, as laid down by the UN, is not acceptable. If we allow this action it will be a new step towards the dismemberment of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a new victory for the forces of ethnic cleansing, an extraordinarily dangerous precedent for the maintenance of stability and peace in the rest of Europe.

The peace plan agreed in July must be reaffirmed and the withdrawal from the territories included in the plan must be imposed on the Serbian forces by all

necessary means.

4. In all central and eastern European countries a complex transition to a market economy is under way.

Decades of shortages, poor and scanty consumption and the fall of communism had aroused great expectations for an open market, spreading the illusion that it would be possible to have access to high consumption in a short period of time.

This illusion was amply spread by the media and the new ruling class with great promises to the citizens of rapid and easy well-being.

This illusion soon revealed itself as such. The transition from a market economy has taken place causing great injustice and acute social imbalances, with the rapid accumulation of great wealth in the hands of a few and the persistence of uncertain and precarious living conditions for a large group of citizens.

This does not mean that everything has been negative during the transition phase. On the contrary, there are many positive signs: in 1993 many countries registered a net increase in GNP and a growth in national production and wealth. In almost all the central and eastern European countries inflation is rapidly decreasing. There are signs of constant growth in investment.

This has, however, highlighted even further the imbalances between those who enjoy this wealth and those who pay for its social costs.

The underestimation of the enormous social problems and the total lack of any adequate employment and job-creating policies by the conservative governments further aggravated the situation of the people.

This contradiction has led to the crisis of conservative governments.

5. The Lithuanian, Polish and Hungarian votes are not therefore 'nostalgic' votes. In central and eastern Europe no one wants to return to 'communism'. The result of these elections is a vote against too many injustices of unregulated laissez-faire, it is a vote where the citizens asked for development which takes into account the fundamental rights of equality and solidarity.

Balanced development cannot be achieved if efficiency and competitiveness oppose solidarity and fundamental social rights.

The 'market' in itself cannot resolve problems and conflicts. On the contrary, a social market economy needs to be developed, where the state plays a role which - without any return to those forms of stalisation completely rejected by the public opinion in these countries - can combine modernity and solidar-

ity, efficiency and equity.

To achieve such objectives international aid needs to act as a catalyst not only on the resources of the state, but also on a high flow of private investment, just as the foreign debt of each country needs to be renegotiated taking into account the specific needs of each country. Also needed are an investment policy aimed at reconverting an obsolete industrial structure, and the growth of modern scientific research; a training programme for the management of industry and training for a public administration freed from the bureaucratisation of the past regime; a radical reorganisation of commercial distribution; a policy of agricultural modernisation and a programme for protecting and improving the environment, the searching for alternative sources of energy and the conversion of nuclear power plants are objectives not only for the people of the region but for the whole of Europe.

A fundamental aspect of a modern and advanced society is real equality between men and women: this requires the revision of legal, moral and social rules which still permit many forms of discrimination against women and limit their possibility to choose their own future. Women must participate in decision making, and play their full role in all areas of society.

6. This is the context in which we should approach the relationship between the central and eastern European countries and the European Union, towards which central Europe is looking with great expectations.

Today's Europe of 12 (soon to be 15) often risks presenting the East with a closed and hostile image. There is a visible gap between the declarations of principle - all aimed at evoking the broadest European integration and cooperation - and the European Union's concrete acts of economic policy characterised by a strongly protectionist line.

The European Union must adopt an adequate strategy to encourage all possible integration processes, extending 'association' status to new countries and establishing new bilateral 'cooperation agreements' between the European Union and other eastern countries, as well as intensifying its existing specific programmes of the European Union. A timetable for negotiation with those countries applying for membership of the Union should be set up in the near future.

The association of countries from eastern and central Europe to the EU cannot be a subject subordinated to controversies that those countries may have with their neighbours. The SI

expects that the forthcoming European Council - called for 19 December - will decide to launch the negotiation for the association of Slovenia.

But the eastern countries are not only asking for full economic integration. Today the evolution of eastern Europe requires - as an absolute priority - a rapid consolidation of democracy. This is why, while gradual economic integration is taking place, it would appear useful to immediately identify forms of involvement for central European countries in the activities of the community and European political institutions.

A special role could be played by full participation of all central and eastern European countries in the Council of Europe, as guarantor of respect for human rights and democracy.

The SI welcomes in this context the efforts of the Council of Europe and especially of the Socialist Group for the further strengthening of the democratisation process in general and the integration of left parties in the European family in particular.

7. Russia maintains a decisive role for any policy of cooperation and stability in our continent and Europe has a fundamental interest in seeing that in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the other CIS countries the transition towards sound democratic institutions and a social market economy takes place successfully.

After a troubled period, Russia is entering a phase of democratic consolidation.

Support is needed to those people acting to ensure for Russia a stable democratic regime.

Indeed, the progress of the anti-democratic and ultra-nationalistic forces must be stopped and these forces defeated.

In this context the SI welcomes the current regrouping of social-democratic forces with a view to forming a united and coherent movement.

The SI, therefore, considers that it is crucially important for the democratic future of Russia that the elections be held at the normal dates fixed by the Constitution.

Today much more decisive action is needed from the world community and international financial institutions to assist and support the economic transformation and democratic consolidation of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the other CIS Republics.

For all these reasons we welcome Russia's permanent association with the political decisions of the G7.

The SI supports the ongoing efforts for full membership of Russia in the Council of Europe to take place in 1995. Such membership will mean a substantial contribution to the consolida-

tion of the rule of law and of democratic reforms in the Russian Federation as well as an element of stability for Europe at large.

At the same time, we need to work for Russia's increasing involvement in the development of common security and in the international handling of major crisis points under the authority of the UN.

8. The war in the former Yugoslavia and the signs of possible conflicts show us that the fall of the Berlin wall and the failure of bipolarism have not, alone, resolved security in Europe.

Although the risk of nuclear conflict has certainly been reduced, nevertheless it cannot be forgotten that nuclear arms still exist - in the first place in Russia and Ukraine - and that a large number of countries, even small ones, possess the raw material and the technology for the production of nuclear arms.

The SI is concerned at the increasing illegal trade in nuclear materials and the poor standards of safety at many civil nuclear power stations. Urgent action is therefore necessary.

The Socialist International supports all those mechanisms of political and military integration which, in this area, can favour a policy of cooperation and security: a strengthening of the CSCE and of its apparatus for preventing conflicts, a more accelerated involvement of central and eastern European countries in the WEU and in the European Union's foreign policy of common security, and NATO's Partnership for Peace with numerous central and eastern European countries, leading to full membership in NATO for some.

The conversion of the arms industry of these countries is another lever to pave the way for democratic reforms and social stability.

At the same time it should be stressed that economic aid, and technological collaboration, are factors of internal and external security; in the same way as, if not to a greater extent than, military apparatus.

9. One of the major threats to security and peace in central and eastern Europe today, comes from the emergence of possible ethnic-national conflicts.

The pretext of founding the existence of states on ethnic or religious homogeneity is unacceptable: the future will be marked everywhere by multi-ethnicity and multi-culturalism. Central and eastern Europe is a decisive test case for the affirmation of the objective of integration and supranationality and the Socialist International reconfirms its commitment to full recognition in

every state of human and political rights for each citizen and for each ethnic, cultural and religious community.

Borders are inviolable, as established by the constitutive act of the CSCE which establishes that modifications of borders cannot be imposed by force, but can only result from agreements freely signed by the states concerned.

The SI reaffirms its commitment against forces and parties which are ultra-nationalist, racist, xenophobic or anti-semitic.

10. New possibilities are opening, therefore, for the action of democratic socialism in central and eastern Europe. This is confirmed by the fact that in many countries the successful parties are those which presented voters with explicitly social democratic programmes.

In the next two years there will be elections in all the central and eastern European countries. These will be two decisive years to consolidate and extend the forces of those parties which identify with democratic socialism and the influence of the Socialist International.

The central objective of the Socialist International and its parties must be to work so that in all central and eastern European countries the parties of social democratic inspiration are strengthened and so that these parties - or the lists they support - obtain better electoral results and greater parliamentary representation than at present.

In order to achieve this objective the Socialist International intends to act by supporting the action of those parties that are already members of the SI, as well as welcoming numerous parties and movements, inspired by the principles of democratic socialism, that have asked to establish relations with the SI.

What Europe will become tomorrow, in fact, depends to a large extent on what happens in the next few years in central and eastern Europe. And if democracy, progress, rights and solidarity are to be achieved in these countries, it will depend on us and on our ability to restore credibility and faith in the values and ideals of socialism, by gathering around them the hopes and consensus of millions of men and women.

HAITI

On the occasion of the meeting of its Council in Budapest, Hungary, 2-3 December 1994, the Socialist International renews its support for the democratic process in Haiti marked by the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to the Presidency of his country on

15 October.

The Socialist International congratulates President Aristide on his policy based on national reconciliation and the formation of a broad-based government where the two Haitian members of the SI, PANPRA and KONAKOM, are represented.

The SI takes the opportunity to salute the courage and determination of its two fraternal parties in their struggle for the promotion of democracy and social justice in their country.

The SI is happy that President Aristide favours the idea of organising a national conference in Haiti and gives its support to the process of political negotiation already marked by the meeting President Aristide had with various political parties in order to promote social peace and to arrive at a commitment to form the Electoral Council which is indispensable to the organisation of the forthcoming legislative and regional elections.

The SI makes an urgent appeal to the international community to set in motion at the first opportunity the programmes of cooperation and economic assistance necessary for the economic development of the country.

The SI announces that in January 1995, its Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, SICLAC, will organise a meeting in Haiti to allow it to renew its political solidarity with President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and all the political forces committed to the democratisation of the country.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Socialist International is deeply concerned by the continuing, gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in many parts of the world. This year human rights violations have reached a new level of barbarism, with genocide in Rwanda and ongoing ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. In countless other countries around the world there are less publicised - but no less unacceptable - abuses of human rights.

The SI reaffirms that the protection and promotion of human rights is a central responsibility of the international community. We resolve that the safeguarding of human rights and fundamental freedoms be given increased attention in all international fora.

The Socialist International welcomes the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action agreed at the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993. In particular, we welcome the reaffirmation of the universality and

indivisibility of human rights. Now there is a clear need for coordinated international action to give practical effect to the principles agreed at Vienna. The text of the Vienna Declaration and the Programme of Action provide a yardstick against which the performance of UN member states must be measured.

We welcome the establishment of a new post: the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The SI has argued for several years for the creation of such a post. We trust that the agreement of UN member states to establish this position is an indication of their willingness to give enhanced priority to human rights issues. Moreover, we hope that the High Commissioner will be able to serve as a powerful and effective advocate for human rights worldwide.

There needs to be a reallocation of the regular resources of the United Nations to human rights activities. It is quite unacceptable that less than one per cent of the regular UN budget is spent on the protection or promotion of human rights. UN agencies cannot be expected to effectively monitor the observance of human rights commitments with such meagre resources.

The protection and promotion of human rights needs to become part of more comprehensive national and international strategies for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. Often it is the abuse of human rights that is the trigger for wider inter-state or intra-state conflicts. Early action to deal with human rights abuses - through arbitration, mediation and the deployment of human rights monitors - might form part of a global conflict-prevention strategy.

We need to ensure, too, that the UN and other international organisations take human rights fully into account when undertaking peacekeeping or peace-enforcement operations. All international personnel need to comply fully with UN human rights principles, and there should be standardised training for all human rights monitors.

The SI urges the international community to ensure wider acceptance and strengthening of international legal instruments for the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. All states should be expected to fully comply with UN human rights covenants and additional protocols to which they are signatory.

The SI is alarmed by the present resurgence of racism, xenophobia and intolerance in Europe as well as in other continents, and by increasing acts of violence against people of different ori-

gin. The SI believes that extreme nationalism and ethnocentricity give rise to the abuse of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We are convinced that only democratic and pluralistic societies, built on diversity of culture and traditions, can guarantee full respect for human dignity. For this reason, we reaffirm our implacable opposition to all forms of prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, nationality or religion.

The SI undertakes to assume a firm role in combating all ideologies, policies and practices constituting an incitement to racial hatred, violence and discrimination, as well as any action or language likely to increase fear and tension between groups from different ethnic, national, religious or social background. The SI supports stronger national and international legal action against racist and fascist groups, that increasingly organise and operate internationally. We endorse national and international action to address the problems of poverty, unemployment and social despair that are so often the breeding grounds of racism, xenophobia and intolerance. In addition, there is a clear need for greater public education to combat the prejudice that results from misinformation and stereotyping of different racial and national groups.

The SI will continue to work in its Committee on Human Rights towards the elaboration of a socialist strategy to combat racism, xenophobia and intolerance.

The SI believes that economic and social rights are no less important than civil and political rights. It is clearly intolerable that millions of fellow human beings continue to lack the basic essentials of life and to exist in conditions of abject poverty. The persistence of worldwide poverty and injustice is a clear violation of human rights. The SI reaffirms its commitment to promote economic and social development, as part of a comprehensive approach to human rights promotion and protection.

The SI believes, too, that specific attention needs to be paid to the human rights of women. In many countries around the world women are denied the most basic human rights, in many other countries they suffer discrimination and second-class status. We will press for coordinated international action to enhance the rights and status of women so that they enjoy full equality with men in all spheres of economic, political and social affairs. The SI looks for practical and progressive results from next year's UN Conference on Women in Beijing.

IRANIAN KURDISTAN

The Socialist International once more has reason to protest against the continuing persecution of the Kurdish population in Iran and specifically against the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, PDKI. The assassinations of the PDKI leaders, Gassemlou in 1989 and Sharafkandi in 1992, took place directly after their participation in SI Congresses. Their presence at the SI meetings had underlined the SI's solidarity with the cause of the Iranian Kurds.

Since March 1993, systematic ethnic cleansing, artillery attacks and other hostile actions along the Iraqi border have forced the Kurdish population there to seek safety in Iraqi Kurdistan. Even in this area, however, Iranian troops and aircraft have managed to carry out attacks, despite the existence of the no-fly zone, supposed to be enforced by the powers which took part in the Gulf war.

The Socialist International protests against these constant violations of the human rights of the Iranian Kurds and their representatives, the PDKI, by the Iranian regime.

We support initiatives to improve the human rights situation in Iran, such as the Manifesto of the 134, which demands the lifting of censorship in Iran. Such initiatives are aimed at improving living conditions in that country.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Since its early days in Madrid, the peace process in the Middle East has made considerable progress. The basic agreement signed by Israel and the PLO in Washington and the treaty between Israel and Jordan, constitute two major breakthroughs on the road to a lasting peace. The Socialist International welcomes this development and is willing to give it every support within its capabilities. The Socialist International thanks all those who have initiated and assisted the process. This vote of thanks also goes to those of our affiliated parties that have played a part in this process.

No agreement has yet been reached with Syria and Lebanon, but here, too, signs of rapprochement are perceptible. Based on a 'land for peace' policy and on UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, the peace process between Israel and Syria and Lebanon should now be taken in hand without much further delay.

The process of peace must become irreversible. It is a great hope for everyone concerned, for the entire region and, in fact, for the whole world which is seeing so many new conflicts.

Despite a favourable development of the peace process, especially in the self-governing Palestinian territories, no economic progress has taken place yet. Palestinian self-governing bodies need a secure financial budget in order to fulfil their functions in the sphere of welfare, education and security. Funds must be made available far more speedily than they have been in the past. It will only be possible to unseat the enemies of the peace process if people can see the positive effects of that process in their everyday lives. Those who delay projects such as creating jobs, housing and social institutions will strengthen the position of the enemies of the peace process. Besides the assistance from governments and non-governmental organisations, private companies also play an essential role in the process. After the recent Brussels donor conference we expect to see practical progress to strengthen the administrative and economic structures in the self-governing territories and tangibly improve the living conditions of the Palestinians. Private-sector investment should therefore be encouraged.

The opponents of the peace process continue in their efforts to destroy it by acts of terrorism. The massacres in Hebron and in Tel Aviv not only involved the loss of human lives but also greatly endangered the peace process.

The SI calls upon all those holding office in the region to reject any form of terrorism. Countries granting external assistance to terrorist groups must be internationally isolated.

Terrorism needs to be controlled by security forces. However, from its worldwide experience the Socialist International knows that economic development and social progress are of crucial importance in curbing extremism of any kind. We observe with great concern that terrorist organisations using the banner of religious extremism and others are conducting some of their activities from outside the Middle East region. A common stance of all SI members is not within reach but is utterly necessary. Terrorism can only be defeated if it is stopped everywhere.

Early elections in the occupied territories, which according to the Oslo agreement should be preceded by a redeployment of Israeli forces, are an essential factor in the continuation of the peace process. Elections, moreover,

are an indispensable means of internal reconciliation. Elections should be held under the supervision of international observers. We expect Israelis and Palestinians to arrive at a full understanding over this matter as soon as possible.

At the beginning of the peace process in Madrid the role of Europe, unfortunately, was that of a mere observer. Experience has now shown that without the active political and economic commitment of Europe in the Middle East the goals cannot be reached. Europe will therefore have to fulfil the economic and financial commitments it has already undertaken and increase its political efforts. Europe can set an important example of regional cooperation.

The countries of the Middle East must bring about regional cooperation. This must also include agreements on arms limitation.

The Council of the Socialist International considers that greater attention has to be paid to the problems of the Maghreb region and approves of the fact-finding mission to Algeria planned for the near future.

The Council expects to receive a report from the sub-committee on the Kurdish question in the spring of 1995.

THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE IN PRAGUE

The Socialist International welcomes the decision of the City Court in Prague to confirm the verdict of the District Court, that the Czech Social Democratic Party is the rightful owner of the 'People's House'. This decision of the Czech independent court confirms the historical fact that the 'People's House' has since 1907 been a seat of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party and its affiliated organisations.

The Socialist International calls on the Czech Ministry of Finance to accept this court ruling. The refusal to do so would only suggest that the Czech government authorities are not seeking justice but are looking for political steps aimed at the main democratic opposition party.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QUOTA

In its Council resolution of December 1988 in Paris, the Socialist International declared its full support for the goals of the Socialist Decade for Women announced by Socialist International Women in Lima in 1986, namely an increase in the number of women in all decision-making bodies of SI member parties and as candidates in elections.

To this end, the Socialist International recognised that positive action was necessary, be it quota, which is a means of dismantling all forms of discrimination, or other regulations in party statutes, and called upon its member parties to implement the SIW's Lima resolution, demanding that all socialists should aim to achieve equal representation (50/50) of women at all levels.

Socialist International Women has since then been monitoring the implementation of the Lima and Paris resolutions and supporting the struggle of women's organisations in member parties to achieve equality in political representation. At its Bureau meeting in Lisbon in October 1993 the progress made and the difficulties encountered were discussed.

The SI welcomes the fact that a growing number of member parties have, over the past years, adopted some kind of quota system, but notes that the majority have not yet adopted quota or other measures of positive action to promote equality for women. SI member parties in Canada, the USA, Sweden and France have already adopted a 50/50 quota, either for the party structure or for candidates' lists. Other parties (in Germany, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and Israel) have introduced a 40 percent quota for both genders. Most have quotas between 20 and 33 per cent for women or proportional quotas according to the percentage of female membership in the party.

The SI congratulates women's organisations on their success and welcomes progress made in SI member parties and acknowledges that the SI is making an important contribution to the promotion of women in decision-making bodies.

However, while quotas are generally applied at national level, they are less likely to be implemented at local level. The SI notes with concern that at higher levels of responsibility fewer women are represented and resistance of parties to elect or appoint women to positions of influence becomes stronger.

The SI also notes that women often find quota regulations offensive and belittling, because they never encountered obstacles in their own career and resent the 'protection' aspect of quotas for women. Men often consider quotas as an unfair preference of women, even as discriminatory against men. Younger women who have matured politically in an environment of gender balance often do not understand the continued need for measures securing this balance.

Therefore the SI stresses the necessity that member parties:

- support the principle of quotas for both genders which are generally perceived as enhancing inner-party democracy;
 - monitor closely the way in which quotas and other regulations are implemented;
 - elaborate and include precise implementing regulations when quotas are introduced; the lack of such regulations frequently results in non-compliance;
 - propose women for decision-making bodies of the party structure at all levels;
 - prepare women to hold political office by offering them political education and by training women candidates;
 - ensure that party work (timetables, agenda of meetings etc) is adapted to women's needs, thus changing the political culture which at present is mainly geared to men's participation. Party work should be made compatible with work schedules and family commitments of both men and women;
 - demand a 10 percent increase in women candidates for every election in order to reach the 50 percent gender-balance by the year 2000;
 - make national reports on the number of women in their parliamentary party groups every two years.
- The SI calls on member parties to point out that quotas are transitory tools to overcome gender imbalances and that anti-discrimination formulas for both genders are to be considered as permanent democratic guarantees to achieve and maintain politics based on equal opportunity. The SI underlines that in the 1990s and beyond, a truly progressive and comprehensive social-democratic policy cannot be implemented without women's full contribution. The SI stresses that in the light of the principle of parity for women and men, quotas should not be taken as short-term measures for achieving equality, but as a means of putting into effect the principles of democracy for all.

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