

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL**

**Istanbul, 11-12 November 2013**

**Speech by M.G. Ahmed**

**Head of the International Department**

**Yemeni Socialist Party**

Allow me to give you warm greetings from the Secretary General of the Yemeni Socialist Party, Dr. Yassin Said Numan. He told the Secretary General of Socialist International, his friend Luis Ayala, during their telephone conversation last week that he would find it very difficult to attend, but that he will do the impossible to attend. He had completed his preparations to participate in this important meeting, but due to important and unforeseen circumstances he was not able to go to Istanbul. This was because he is one of the vice presidents of the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, chaired by Mr. Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, the President of the Republic. He is overseeing the conference through its last stages, which are very sensitive and important to the current period. The Secretary General of our party also carries the responsibility of the rotating presidency of the Conciliation Committee in the Dialogue Conference, which is entrusted with receiving and deciding, daily, on the disparities and differences between the work of the teams in the conference. The work of this committee continues day and night as the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference has completed 90% of its work. I am confident that all of you want our party to continue in its efforts to contribute to this historic achievement, and spare Yemen from regressing.

Ladies and Gentlemen: The Peaceful Popular Revolution in Yemen has stretched from 2007 until <sup>2011</sup>~~2009~~. Through the sacrifices and perseverance of the youth of this country, a way of progress towards democracy and the building of a modern Yemeni state, with the values of justice, freedom, equality, and human rights was opened. The Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, which started in the past march, is considered one of the main components of this political process that led through the Peaceful Popular Youth Revolution, the Gulf Cooperative Council's Initiative, and its executive mechanism. The National Dialogue Conference comes with other components of the political process, which had a direct influence in saving the country from conflict and confrontation and the collapse that it was on the verge of. Its mission has been taking Yemen towards the future through a social contract to build the state and lay the foundation for political, economic, legal, and human rights to build this country. Other tasks include the drafting of the constitution, which ensures all of the outputs of the conference to

establish a civil, modern, and democratic state and includes the solutions for the national disintegration that led to the wars, centralism, corruption, and authoritarianism at the forefront of the issue of the South and the successive wars in Saada. We can say that our party, and despite the difficult and bitter conditions that it has been through since the War of the summer of 1994 until today, has carried the responsibility well with its allies in the Joint Meeting of Parties and the rest of the political forces. This happened mainly because of the peaceful revolution, and whether during or after it, after the signing of the GCC Initiative and its executive mechanism, and to the beginning of the National Dialogue Conference, this conference was confirmed by the ten sponsoring countries and the Assistant to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Envoy Jamal Benomar, as being a model not only for the countries of the Arab Spring and the region, but for the rest of the world, and for any country living in political, economic, and security conditions like Yemen's. The National Dialogue Conference brings together 565 participants from all across the political spectrum; from different parties, women, youth, the marginalized, and the civil society organizations. The conference is made up of 29% women and 20% youth who participate in its work. Our party was unique in that it gave socialist women 30% and socialist youth 30%.

The Conference is made up of 9 work teams, and they are:

1. The Southern Issue Team
2. The Saada Issue Team
3. The National Issue Team
4. The National Interest Team and Transitional Justice Team
5. The State Building Team (9 the Constitution, its principles, and foundations)
6. The Good Governance Team
7. The Army and Security Foundation and Roles Team
8. The Relevant Body Independence Team
9. The Rights and Freedoms Team

Women were elected to the presidency of 3 teams, and 9 women were elected as vice presidents of these teams. In addition to that, women have decision-making positions in the leadership of the conference, One as the First Deputy of Conference ~~the~~ Secretary General another as decider of conference presidency, 6 members in the conciliation committee, and 3 deciders in the 9 teams.

Ladies and Gentlemen: the participation of our party in the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference is founded on two reasons:

- 1) To promote a national people's uprising which resulted in the struggles of the Southern Movement and the peaceful popular youth revolution, and they have brought together the presence of the political effect of the civil political powers, and reliance on them to meet the requirements of the balance of power in support of the National Dialogue Conference and its outputs, in addition to making the Southern issue more prominent at the political level at its various dimensions.
- 2) The support of the international community for Yemen, which manifested itself in the GCC Initiative and its executive mechanism.

This is how the party came to its position regarding the National Dialogue Conference. It bases its position on the national merits and basic principles of the Gulf Cooperative Council's Initiative, and the final provisions of its executive mechanism, which state:

- That the agreement meets the aspirations of the Yemeni people for change and reform.
- That the transition of power be smooth and safe, according to national consensus, and avoid taking Yemen into chaos and violence.
- What was in the item regarding the National Dialogue Conference in the executive mechanism of the GCC Initiative regarding finding a national solution to the Southern issue that preserves Yemen's unity, stability, and security, in addition to its mention of the Peaceful Southern Movement as a political actor.
- What was mentioned in the tenth point of the executive steps of the GCC Initiative that the GCC countries, the United States, the European Union, Russia and China are witnesses to this agreement.

- What is stated in the final provisions to ensure the effective implementation of the points mentioned above, and that the countries of the GCC, the Security Councils, and the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the European Union, as well as international and regional powers be members in the implementation of the GCC Initiative, and in support of its implementation.

Our party has presented its opinions regarding the roots and content of the Southern issue, and it has reached the conclusion that this issue is now in the tense region somewhere between unity and secession. Our party has concluded that the existence of common understandings in the range of visions that have been discussed on the issue of the south are as follows:

- That the case of the south is the result of the 1994 war that led to cancellation of the peaceful unity agreements, and their replacement with oppression and dominance. This made the Southern issue a political one, and it confirms the peaceful unification between the two states (the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic).
- The south, as a people and a land, was subjected to systemic violations since the war of 1994. These violations have occurred on the political, economic, cultural, social, and identity levels, especially as expressed by local heritage.
- That the common ground in the social, cultural, and political history between the Yemeni people in both the north and south has many overlapping eras and various historical stages, and on the basis of controversial geography and population in their different historical, natural, and political manifestations. One cannot ignore these facts when searching for solutions.
- When presenting our solutions for the South, our party stresses the need to get away from conceptual frameworks that impose a vision of one state and do not pursue other ways, or have a flexible system that is tied together by social and historical contexts.

These solutions should be far from any simplification and reductionism, and should take into account the following issues:

- The national interest and political will that it represents.
- The topical knowledge of the policies of international and regional powers.
- The interests of the dominant local forces, whether in the economic or political fields in the country.

The central committee of our party has reached, during its last meeting from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2013, the decision confirming the choice of a federal state of two regions that keeps the south as one entity that is united and ensures its stability non-disintegration. In relation to that issue are relevant issues of the political geographical history of the south, which grew into one unified state for the first time in its history Since November 30, 1967, which was the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and it lasted until the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 1990. Any division of the south risks the survival of its parts within the framework of Yemeni unity under any type of state. We must take into account the politicization of the local cultures in a number of the southern provinces, especially the ideas of a South Arabia, and these are not in favor of a unified Yemen.

Ladies and Gentlemen: the experiences that Yemen has been through confirm that the lack of links between the dialogue and guarantees to the implementation of its outputs is the reason that dialogue has become, in the eyes of the people, just chatting and a way of getting around any problem faced by the country. The general opinion is that any dialogue will most often lead to wars and bloody conflicts. Because the dialogue this time is not just a desire of the elites, but came as an expression of the national popular need as a result of the peaceful revolution for change. For the Dialogue Conference to work, it must be given all of the full guarantees to achieve the will of the people for change, building a state, and solving the outstanding issues that have flooded the country with their endless problems. As the political process, and the achieving of its goals, were given a time period during the second phase of the transitional period (February 2012-2014), and its objectives of lifting the country out of conflict, chaos, and

division, disintegration of the armed forces, and lack of security. The goal was to save the country from the deterioration at all levels and prepare it for the free and fair elections. A National Dialogue Conference should be run between all of the political and social forces, where a new constitution for the country will be drafted to resolve all national issues. This period ends with general elections according to the new constitution, and the appointing of a new head of government according to the new system of government, a federal government. That is why our party has presented its vision under the title of "Safeguards for the Implementation of the Outputs of the National Dialogue Conference", considering that the general elections will take place only after the legislation for the building of the state has been completed, including the division of the regions and creation of laws for each territory.

Conclusion: We have given what we see is in line with the subject of this important meeting (Current Crises Relating to Democratic Struggles, Especially in the Middle East and North Africa, and the Conflicts that Threaten Peace and Security). Our party is confident that the success of the political process in Yemen, starting with the transfer of power, the success of the National Dialogue Conference, the adoption of safeguards that are agreed upon by all parties to implement the outcomes, and the survival of a unified Yemen under a federal state of two regions will help the country avoid all wars and fragmentation. If these wars and problems were to happen, and we hope that they do not, this will threaten the peace and security in the region, because of Yemen's strategic location and importance for regional peace and international security. We assure you, our friends, that our party will make every effort to build a new democratic Yemen that is unified and stable, and preserves human rights, freedoms, and dignity in all walks of life. I wish success for this meeting and thank you for your kind attention.

Yemeni Socialist Party Speech to the SI Council Meeting in Istanbul 11-12 Nov 2013 Delivered by M.G.Ahmed – Head of International Relation Dept- YSP