

### The Nature of Socialism

23. Democratic socialists have arrived at the definition of these values in many different ways. They originate in the labour movement, popular liberation movements, cultural traditions of mutual assistance, and communal solidarity in many parts of the world. They have also gained from the various humanist traditions of the world.

But although there are differences in their cultures and ideologies, all socialists are united in their vision of a peaceful and democratic world society combining freedom, justice and solidarity.

24. The national struggles for democratic socialism in the years to come will show differences in policy and divergences on legislative provisions. These will reflect different histories and the pluralism of varied societies. Socialists do not claim to possess the blueprint for some final and fixed society which cannot be changed, reformed or further developed. In a movement committed to democratic self-determination there will always be room for creativity since each people and every generation must set its own goals.. 25. In addition to the principles which guide all democratic socialists, there is a clear consensus among socialists on fundamental values. Despite all diversity, it is common ground that democracy and human rights are not simply political means to socialist ends but the very substance of those ends - a democratic economy and society.

26. Individual freedom and basic rights in society are the preconditions of human dignity for all. These rights cannot replace one another, nor can they be played off against each other. Socialists protect the inalienable right to life and to physical safety, to freedom of belief and free expression of opinion, to freedom of association and to protection from torture and degradation. Socialists are committed to achieve freedom from hunger and want, genuine social security, and the right to work.

27. Democratic socialism also means cultural democracy. There must be equal rights and opportunities for the different cultures within each society as well as equal access for everyone to the national and global cultural heritage.

### Peace - A Basic Value (28-30)

28. Peace is the precondition of all our hopes. It is a basic value of common interest to all political systems and necessary for human society. War destroys human life and the basis for social development. A nuclear holocaust could spell the end of human life as we know it.

29. A lasting peace cannot be guaranteed through nuclear deterrence nor through an arms race with conventional forces. Therefore disarmament and new models of common security are imperative.

30. What is now essential is the achievement, not merely of military stability at the lowest possible level of defensive weapon systems, but also a climate of mutual political confidence. This can be developed through cooperation on projects for our common future and a new emphasis on peaceful competition between societies with different political, economic and social structures.

### Peace - A Basic Value (31-34) (cont)

The establishment of a New International Economic and Political Order is an essential contribution to peace. This should involve respect for national sovereignty and the right to national self-government, negotiated settlement of conflict, and suspension of arms supplies to the parties in conflict. There must be both global and regional systems for cooperation and peaceful conflict resolution in all parts of the world. These could be brought about through the action of the UN, complementing agreements between the Superpowers.. 33. Peace is equally a necessity within nations. Violent ways of handling conflicts destroy opportunities for development and human rights. Education for peace and disarmament must be intensified.

34. The militarisation of relations between nations of the South has become a serious threat to the future of humanity, as are the tensions between East and West. In some cases the major powers, with their tendency to globalise conflict, have engaged in proxy struggles in countries of the South. In others, the arms merchants of both East and West have contributed to raising the level of violence in the South as they sought political advantage or profit. It is undeniable that every war in the past four decades has been fought in those regions of the world. Social, economic and other causes of conflict in the South must be eliminated..

### Initiatives for Peace

35. Democratic socialists reject a world order in which there is an armed peace between East and West but constant bloodshed in developing countries. Peacekeeping efforts must focus upon putting an end to these confrontations. Europe has a unique role in this process. For decades it has been the most likely battlefield for armed conflict between East and West. Europe can now become the area in which a new climate of mutual trust and restraint can develop and grow.

36. Initiatives for peace require that different socio-economic systems and nations cooperate with one another on projects for confidence building and disarmament, justice in the South and protection of the planet's biosphere. At the same time, they should engage in peaceful competition in the fields of wealth creation, welfare and solidarity. Societies should be prepared to learn from one another. It must become the norm for the different systems to trade, negotiate and work together. There should also be a place for frank and open exchange of views, in particular where issues of human rights and peace are at stake.. 37. East-West cooperation in the common struggle to close the gap between North and South and for the protection of the environment are perhaps the areas of greatest potential for fruitful action to build human solidarity regardless of frontiers and blocs.

## Peace - A Basic Value (31-34)

31. Peace is more than the absence of war. It cannot be based on fear or on ephemeral goodwill between the Superpowers. The fundamental economic and social causes of international conflict must be abolished by the achievement of global justice and by the creation of new institutions for the peaceful resolution of conflicts around the world.

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By **[deleted]**  
[cheatography.com/deleted-2754/](http://cheatography.com/deleted-2754/)

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