

Solidarity between North and South

83. Economic development is unquestionably a priority for the South. This is not to say that there is a simple formula for ending poverty in the developing countries, be it socialist in origin or not. Economies need a reduction in trade barriers, improved access to markets and the transfer of technology. They need the opportunity to develop their own scientific resources - for example, in the area of biotechnology - and to end dependence on second-hand technologies.

84. Where the poorer countries are concerned, traditional development assistance remains vital. Many of them, in different regions of the world, need land reforms, incentives to farmers to achieve a sustained food supply, and support for cooperative traditions within their rural cultures. But, increased food production alone will not end hunger and famine. Sadly, in some cases, an increase in export agriculture can destroy traditional patterns of food supply, at one and the same time adding to farm output and hunger. It must be the task of the political system to guarantee both the right to food and employment. 85. The debt crisis has led to a net financial flow away from developing countries to industrialised ones. The UN development target of 0.7% of GNP in official development assistance, which is twice the current rate, must be achieved without delay. Internationally coordinated efforts are urgently needed to alleviate the burden of the external debt of developing countries.

86. Programmes of cooperation with the South must support development goals which relate to economic growth as well as a fair distribution of income. Aid programmes must focus on the development of the poorest groups. They should help to transform stultifying social structures and improve the situation of women in society. Specific programmes for children are of the greatest importance. Assistance through cooperatives and popular movements serves to promote democratic development.

87. A broadly based approach to development is also an important factor in stemming the massive tide of migration to the big cities of the South, many of which are threatened by uncontrollable population growth and are becoming huge megapolitan slums.

Solidarity Continued

88. Enhanced South-South relations form an important path for economic progress. A substantial growth in trade between the nations of the South will contribute to their well-being and will enhance their prospects of dealing with the crises which arise from dramatic changes in production and occupational structures. Close economic links and rapidly growing markets in the developing world are a vital prerequisite of any positive development of the world economy.

89. An open world economy can stimulate development in the South. But it can also bring vulnerability. Thus, the North should not pursue economic and trade policies which impose drastic reductions in living standards and erode the bases of stable democracy.

90. Inequality and dictatorship are the enemies not only of human rights, but also of genuine development. Social and economic democracy cannot be regarded as luxuries which only the rich countries can afford. Rather, they are necessary for any country to make progress on the road of development. That is why the strengthening of democratic socialism in the South is so crucial. In this context the recent expansion of the Socialist International in the South, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, is a good omen for both North and South alike. 91. Ending poverty in the South is also a common project for the North. It can promote disarmament, and create both wealth and jobs in the advanced as well as the developing countries. This is central to the strategy of socialists in dealing with wide-ranging economic change during a period of crisis and transition at world level. It is also an integral part of democratic socialist proposals for new economic and social structures which can bring the world peacefully and prosperously into the 21st century..

