

Towards a Democratic World Society

92. At a time of rapid internationalisation, the goals of democratic socialism cannot be attained in just a few countries. The fate of people living in many different parts of the world is more interlinked than ever before. The various socialist parties of the world must therefore work together, both in their individual national interest and in their common international interest. The Socialist International, whose history dates back to 1864, was re-established in 1951 to serve this purpose.

93. Although it unites movements with long-standing national histories, the Socialist International is not a supranational, centralised organisation. It is an association of independent parties with common principles whose representatives want to learn from one another, jointly promote socialist ideas and work towards this objective at international level.

94. The purpose of the International is to facilitate this work of solidarity and cooperation, while being aware of the fact that there are different ways of promoting the basic values of a pluralist democratic socialism in different societies. Each member party is itself responsible for the manner in which it puts the decisions of the Socialist International into effect in its own country.

95. In recent years, the membership of the Socialist International has become more genuinely international, with very marked growth in Latin America and the Caribbean, and new members in other continents. It is the goal of the Socialist International to cooperate with all democratic socialist movements throughout the world.

96. Since the Frankfurt Declaration of the Socialist International in 1951, the world has become closer in economic and social terms, but not in terms of democratic community and solidarity. It is now clear that the socialist movement - as it looks towards the 21st century - is becoming more truly internationalist in outlook and in practice.

A New Democratic Order

97. The international challenge is nothing less than the beginning of a new, democratic world society. We cannot allow blocs, nations and private corporations to shape the political structure of the planet as a mere by-product of their own self-interest.

98. Strengthening the United Nations is an important step in the creation of this new, democratic world society. Where there is a consensus among the major nations, significant peace-making and peace-keeping initiatives are possible. The UN specialised agencies, like the WHO, and UN organs like UNDP and UNICEF, have demonstrated that the governments and citizens of various nations can work effectively together in pursuit of common international goals.

99. It is unrealistic to assume that justice and peace can be legislated in a world of fundamental inequality where many millions barely cling to life while a favoured few enjoy a standard beyond the dreams of most of their fellow human beings. Socialist struggles in the original capitalist nations made gains in welfare and solidarity, which in turn made the extension of democracy possible in individual countries. Likewise the work of abolishing international inequality will be a crucial step forward on the road to a democratic world society..

100. There is no illusion that this ideal can be quickly accomplished. However, the creation of a pluralist and democratic world, based on consensus and cooperation, is a necessary condition for the advance of humankind. This is both a challenge and an enormous opportunity. The Socialist International is ready to meet the challenge and to strive for a world in which our children can live and work in peace, in freedom, in solidarity and humanity.

We are confident that the strength of our principles, the force of our arguments and the idealism of our supporters will contribute to shaping a democratic socialist future into the 21st century. We invite all men and women to join us in this endeavour.

