

## **MALAGA DECLARATION**

### **A call for hope against resignation: For greater solidarity with refugees, towards the 'Mediterranean Pax'**

Democratic socialist parties from the Mediterranean region gathered for a meeting of the Socialist International Mediterranean Committee in the city of Malaga on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2016, with the goal of discussing and seeking solutions to the current challenges in the Mediterranean, eventually aiming to ensure the attainment of democracy, freedoms, human rights and peace in the region.

This meeting is taking place at a critical time for countries on both shores, stressed by several crises that question our stability and future. This Committee is not only very concerned about the evolution of the various conflicts affecting our area, but also remains distressed by the European Union's self-absorption in recent months.

For this committee it has become self-evident that we can only address the problems in the Mediterranean by considering it as one single entity. We are completely interdependent, and firmly believe that peace, prosperity, democracy and equality will not be accomplished, without tackling problems together and from a shared vision.

The war in Syria shames us all. We recall with dismay that it is estimated that around 400,000 people have died in 6 years, that 6.6 million Syrians are internally displaced and almost 5 million have sought shelter in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey and Egypt. In contrast, most countries in Europe have not even hosted the refugees that reached their shores after dangerous journeys aspiring to a safer and better life, failing to fulfil their own commitments, as well as their moral and legal obligations. For this reason we appreciate the efforts of those few European countries, like Italy and Greece, which have opened their doors to them.

On the other hand, five years after the so-called Arab Spring, it is obvious that those democratising processes that inspired the region with hope have not evolved as we would have wished. Far from it, we have noted with great concern major setbacks in human rights, civil liberties and the rule of law in several countries, not only on the southern coast of the Mediterranean, as is the case in Egypt, but also in countries such as Turkey.

Moreover, we are horrified by all the terrorist attacks that have taken place in the last years throughout the Mediterranean, from Istanbul to Paris, from Brussels and Cairo to Tunis. We express our outrage and condemn the recent terrorist strikes by PKK that hit Turkey in the last weeks, where dozens of innocent people have lost their lives. Our governments should confront these threats from a global perspective, not only fighting terrorists on the ground but also tackling the causes of radicalism.

We are aware how old problems in the region remain entrenched, as is the case of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict or the Western Sahara issue, although we await with hope that the negotiations on

Cyprus will soon be concluded with success. We express solidarity with the member parties of the Socialist International in government in the Mediterranean countries of the South Eastern Europe, and welcome the new government in Montenegro.

In this context, the member parties of the Mediterranean Committee of the Socialist International propose the following conclusions and measures to advance the pacification of conflicts in the region and achieve a fair *Mediterranean Pax*, based on the principles of equality, justice and democracy:

1. We ask the international community to stop the war in Syria and bring peace and stability to the country, thus allowing the refugees to return to their homes and begin the reconstruction of their homeland.
2. We call for greater solidarity among the countries of the European Union to welcome the number of refugees previously agreed. Not only is it a commitment undertaken, it is also a moral obligation, in line with the founding values of the EU, as well as a legal imperative, in accordance with the Conventions on Human Rights.
3. We condemn all terrorist attacks and show our deep support to all their victims. We call on all governments in the region for greater cooperation, to join forces and share resources and intelligence to fight the scourge of terrorism. In addition, we appreciate all those forces fighting terrorism on the ground.
4. We are extremely concerned about the rise of populist and extreme right parties that inflame our societies with hate speeches and xenophobia. Social democratic forces around the world should unite to stop the emergence of these new actors, combating their simplistic responses to complex problems, as well as their intolerance, with a renewed discourse capable of putting forward an alternative to austerity policies that foster inequality and discontent in our societies.
5. We condemn the attempted military coup in Turkey on July 15<sup>th</sup>, but also deeply regret the authoritarian and undemocratic shift of the Turkish Government since then. We express our strong support and solidarity to all the Turkish people, their civil society, their journalists and human rights defenders, and also to our colleagues in the CHP and the HDP, who are being repressed for defending democratic values and ideas.
6. We welcome the French initiative to restore the peace process in the Middle East and we urge a return to the negotiating table, with full respect for International Law and United Nations resolutions, in order to achieve a just and lasting peace, based on the two-state solution, with the recognition of the State of Palestine on the basis of the 1967 borders, and ensuring that the State of Israel can live in peace and security.
7. We call on Morocco and the Polisario Front to resume the process of dialogue on the question of Western Sahara in a constructive spirit under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union, and we ask the UN Secretary-General for his personal involvement. We will continue to support a just and lasting political solution accepted by both sides that can bring stability and development to Western Sahara and the region as a whole.
8. In the framework of the current negotiations between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, who will meet in Geneva on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, we call on both sides of the island and all related parties to continue working to reach a bizonal, bicomunal federal

solution for Cyprus as soon as possible. We cannot miss this important opportunity, we wish success to the International Conference on Cyprus that will take place on 12<sup>th</sup> January and we hope that the island of Cyprus will soon become an example of peaceful coexistence, cooperation and prosperity in the Eastern Mediterranean.

9. We closely follow the consolidation of democratic processes in Tunisia, and we call on the international community to help this country to tackle the economic and social crisis which threatens the only successful example of the Arab Spring.
10. We request the international community to deploy all its efforts to foster the internal dialogue in Libya in order to reach a political solution which would bring stability and security to the country and the whole region.
11. We congratulate António Guterres, former President of the Socialist International, on his appointment as the new Secretary-General of the United Nations, and wish him success in his efforts to advance the solution of the serious problems affecting our region.
12. We wish to emphasise the need to effectively support all sectors of the population that struggle, too often risking their lives, every day for more democracy, more freedom, more economic development and more equality between men and women. We want to keep alive the hopes and illusions of these groups, that are too often cornered by extremes.

Tackling all these challenges is our main task as Socialists and as members of this Committee. We must not give up. We must keep on fighting, day by day, shoulder to shoulder, so that this fragile, but at the same time unique area that is the Mediterranean, becomes more just, secure and prosperous for all.

Málaga, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2016