

CONGRESS VOICES...

Leaders of the Socialist International and its member parties from all over the world took part in the XX SI Congress. These are some extracts from their speeches.



Angelo Palma

■ **Pierre Mauroy**, president of the Socialist International, opened the Congress

How to prepare the Socialist International for the twenty-first century at a time when a new world is emerging before our eyes and a new socialism is coming into being everywhere - such is the challenge that we are called to take up.

Could we, after more than 100 years of existence, dream of anything better than to be undergoing a crisis of growth such as traditionally marks the passage from adolescence to adulthood? This is the situation - a demanding and exciting one - in which the Socialist International finds itself today.

In many ways the Socialist International is stronger than it was only four years ago in Berlin... In 1992 we took great pleasure in the advance made by democracy but we were worried by the difficulties encountered by social democracy, especially in central Europe. The balance had tipped towards nationalism in one place, ultra-liberalism in another, and everywhere to the right. Today social democracy has become the leading political force in central Europe, the left has successfully undertaken a gathering together that that region's history made more difficult than elsewhere: in many places the trust of the people has been won...

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To say that we live in a new world is not enough. We must understand what is really new and above all draw the political consequences of that. The speed of change is without doubt something new. Think back to 1986, when Mandela was still in prison, Gorbachev had only just come to power, the Berlin Wall was in place, Reagan's conservative revolution was in progress, Chile was still under the Pinochet dictatorship, Central America still deep in conflict and the one-party state the norm in Africa. That was ten years ago. It could have been a century ago...

Today the East has imploded, the South has exploded and the alignments on which our world was built have disappeared. Democracy has made advances on a scale without precedent in the history of humanity. But disorder remains in the world and indeed sometimes gets worse.

Inequality still cries out for attention: a recent UN report has shown that the personal wealth of the 358 richest people on earth today exceeds the annual income of the poorest 45 per cent, that is 2,600 million women and men.

The movements of international capital, by their very power and swiftness, are transforming national currencies, even those of the great industrialised countries, into so many corks floating about on the ocean, at times rendering valueless the sacrifices accepted by our people. In one recent symbol of deregulation, we have seen the stock exchange fall sharply here in New York after the announcement of a reduction in unemployment...

Our parties are, moreover, engaged with new questions which touch on the environment, or the emergence of new diseases, or drugs, or migration, all these questions being concentrated in cities.

Everywhere it is the consequences of economic, financial and cultural globalisation, opening a new age of capitalism, which have the weightiest and most decisive political consequences for us. This new world is still an unequal world, but has become a 'global' world. All, or almost all, the problems have taken on an international dimension and we must therefore revise our modes of thought and action...

Whether we are in government or opposition, in whatever continent, we are convinced that it is urgently necessary to take the offensive once again...

I am convinced that the Socialist International can have an important role in inventing a new future, if we have the will for it and give ourselves the means to achieve it. It is a profound change that we must be able to envisage and to bring to reality.

Despite all the advances that I have alluded to, much still remains to be done. Let us forget the constraints for a moment: we must overcome them, in particular the financial constraints whose solution, everyone knows, is the first step to any real reform...

We know that the most important thing is the political content of our message and the symbolic strength of our organisation. I will characterise in four ways this new Socialist International of the twenty-first century: an organisation more on the offensive politically, more widespread geographically, more coherent ideologically, and more powerful electorally...

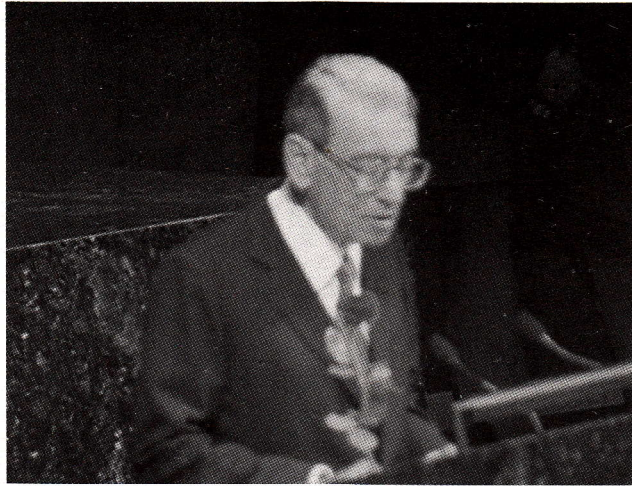
Let us take on the task, keeping always in our minds the lesson that Willy Brandt taught us throughout his life - that we can do more than we can foresee. Then we will be in a position to prepare the Socialist International for the twenty-first century.

■ **Boutros Boutros-Ghali**,
secretary general of the United
Nations, welcomed the SI
Congress delegates

Welcome, all of you, to the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Meetings such as yours are not frequent in this House. But your request to hold the Congress of the Socialist International here, at the United Nations, seemed symbolic in a number of ways.

First, beyond any ideological considerations, the social issues with which you are concerned are also fundamental concerns of the United Nations. In its preamble, the Charter of the United Nations affirms the Organisation's determination to 'promote social progress and better standards of life in greater freedom'.

Second, I welcome your presence here today because of my understanding of the increasingly important role of the new international actors in international affairs. Sovereign states are not the only actors in the international system. The international community now includes actors that must confront international issues. The international system can no longer be seen as a static political system. It must now account for a world



in constant movement. Movements of wealth, movements of persons, movements of capital and the dissemination of ideas and skills are as crucial to an understanding of the world as the study of the dynamics of territorial conquest was in earlier times.

We must therefore now conceive of an international system shaped by the policies of States, the behaviour of economic agents and the aspirations of social actors. In other words

non-governmental organisations and institutions such as yours constitute a key element of today's world. The new international actors have, I believe, a three-fold mission to accomplish. They must be simultaneously a mobilising force for international public opinion; a stimulus for the work of the United Nations and an element in the international system. Mobilising international opinion is a vital aspect of working for peace, development and human rights. I therefore congratulate you on your choice of themes for your deliberations here.

As you know, the end of the cold war has, in some cases, led to perverse consequences. Some parts of the world have suddenly lost all strategic interest for the great powers. The latent world crisis has aroused national self-interest and encouraged, on the part of some industrialised states, an inward-looking temptation. The terrible sight of civil strife and dissension in the poorest countries has often discouraged developed states from pursuing their assistance. The result has been that today, some feel greatly tempted to allow the poorest regions, left to their own devices, to sink into economic under-development or political chaos...

The Socialist International has long made plain the interest it has in the work of the United Nations. Your consultative status at the Economic and Social Council is the clearest testimony of this. And on many occasions you have shown your attachment to the principles and objectives of the Charter. Today, too, as you think about and work towards the reinforcement of the objectives of the UN, you are demonstrating with great clarity your attachment to our international organisation.

We are living at a crucial moment when it is essential to renew our faith in the ideas of the Charter and our trust in a strong and independent international organisation, an organisation whose objective is to exalt the ideals of peace, development and solidarity.

■ **Gro Harlem Brundtland**, first vice-president of the SI and until shortly after our Congress prime minister of Norway, also made some introductory remarks

How can we take advantage of the immensely innovative potential of the world economy? And how can we do so in a way that benefits all and not only the advanced few?

Never before have we had so much knowledge. Never before have we had greater capacity. New technologies offer products, services and jobs that we could only dream of even a decade ago. But where there is no vision, people perish. We need that broader vision, our vision, to shape a future where every woman, every man, every child in every community on every continent can unleash their potential. The market holds no broader vision. However good market mechanisms are at allocating resources effectively, the market alone will never provide for employment, environmental excellence or social justice.

Social democracy believes that the market is the tool, not a goal in itself. We search for workable compromises between capital and labour that can keep our society just and united. Social democracy believes that society as a whole benefits from a fair distribution

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of wealth and opportunities. Social democracy believes that nobody stands to lose from policies aimed at making health, education and welfare available to all. On the contrary we all gain. And social democracy believes that democracy in each country is only half the job. We know we must build democracy between states. Our vision is to build a civilised world on law and contract where solidarity and social responsibility stretch across continents...

We must speak for social innovation. We must speak for the silent majority: children, minorities, women and the billions who have their stake in the global village of the 21st century. We will struggle to expand the arena where democratic rules apply.

We face difficult challenges. We see a new faceless and anonymous capitalism operating all over the world. Ownership changes daily, jobs vanish, forces of technology, of finance and of electronic communication bypass the traditional task of democratic decision-making. Is power vested in our elected representatives or in the bond markets of London, New York and Tokyo? We need to drive home that no growth and no progress can be sustainable if democratic checks and balances do not work...



UN/DPI Photo by Evan Schneider

One billion people still live in absolute poverty, and the number is still growing. Poverty is still the greatest insult to human dignity. Who is speaking out for the poor? Who is to point out the terrible facts that financial flows go from South to North and not the other way? Who is holding governments in the richer parts of the world responsible for making a mockery of the agreed target of allocating 0.7 per cent of GDP to

development aid? We must speak out for those who have no microphone... And we must set the example where we are in power by showing that our social democratic model is the most efficient, the most innovative and the most liberating... No multinational company is going to run our primary schools. The equity gap cannot be bridged without an effective public sector, civil servants and politicians who are held accountable by their own people...

We don't know today when today's non-democratic countries will become democratic. But I am convinced that we will live to see the day... We must build a civilised world on law and contract. An international society where the strong are just and the weak secure... we need an international public sector and a conscientious human rights watch here in the United Nations... We the parties here represented, we, if anybody, must take the social and economic goals and aspirations hammered out under this UN symbol and give them life in all our own countries. We must ensure that democracy grows strong and that democracy takes command of our common future.

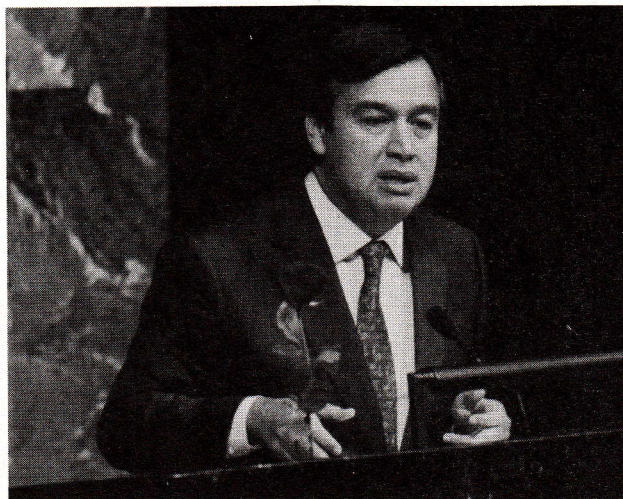
■ **António Guterres**, leader of the Socialist Party, PS, Portugal, prime minister of Portugal and chair of the SI Committee on Economic Policy, Development and the Environment, SICEDE, introduced the Congress discussion on 'The world economy'

We need to put solidarity and equality again in the forefront of the political agenda. And this is precisely the central objective of the report we are tabling under the heading, The Need for a New System of Collective Responsibility.

Globalisation of the international economy is a reality we cannot ignore. It gives new impetus to trade. People, capital and technologies travel now more and more quickly and easily. It boosts productivity growth and the increase of the world's wealth. But at the same time well over a billion people are now living in absolute privation and the gap between the affluent and the poor has widened even in the most prosperous countries.

Unregulated globalisation necessarily means the globalisation of poverty and social exclusion and the downgrading of social rights to the lowest level.

But there are several ways of pursuing sound economic policies, at both national and international levels. We are for policies that care for the needs of people, mainly the most vulnerable, policies that aim at social justice and employment for all.



UN/DPI Photo by Evan Schneider

No single country can pursue, on its own, traditional Keynesian policies any more. But the world as a whole can and should implement a global recovery programme...

The globalisation of the world economy has weakened the capacity of elected governments to make a stand on their own against purely speculative foreign exchange transactions, tax evasion and money laundering. We need better international coordination mechanisms. They could

take the form of an Economic Security Council, an enlarged Group of Seven within the United Nations framework, as Jacques Delors has suggested. That new structure would have the advantage of being more representative of today's world realities and become a forum for the exercise of collective responsibility.

Another important task we face is the promotion of free and fair trade, avoiding protectionism without creating a ruthless competition for jobs.

■ **Franz Vranitzky**,
leader of the Social
Democratic Party of Austria,
SPOe, and chancellor of
Austria

Economic globalisation must be guided and shaped by politics. The new developments open up a greater number of opportunities for newcomers - but they also threaten to set in motion a downward spiral in which the pressure exerted on wages and social expenditures could lead to significant declines in the incomes and living standards of large segments of the working public.

In contrast our social democratic values demand that world trade translate into fair trade, with adequate social provisions. Industrialised countries focus on creating jobs that are new and different - but also highly productive and well paid. Simultaneously the developing countries - which are striving to close the gap in affluence between themselves and the more highly developed countries of the OECD - should pursue stable successive rises in the income levels of their peoples.

In the long run only democratic and just societies can be wealthy ones. And what holds true for each nation is also of value in the



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■ **Alexa McDonough**,
leader of the New Democratic
Party NDP/NPD, Canada

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context of world trade. The promotion of democracy, the re-distribution of wealth, social justice in every country and among countries has always been and will remain the main goal of our social democratic family.

In Canada, my country, and the nation the United Nations rates as the best country in the world in which to live, over a million children live in poverty, many of them in families with a single female parent. One in ten people are out of work. Infant mortality rates among aboriginal populations are a national disgrace. Education, health services, and the

social safety net are eroded daily by governments committed to the notion of a global economy and unfettered freedom for corporations and capital.

In the United States, from 1969 to 1989, the real income of the poorest fifth of wage earners declined by about 25 per cent, while the richest 1 per cent managed to increase their after-tax incomes by well over 50 per cent...

We, as the peoples of the world, stand at a

crossroads, with the lifting of the enormous psychological, social and financial burdens of the cold war and the great promise of scientific and technological innovations encourage hope and opportunity. Our challenge is to ensure that the hope and opportunity is felt around the world, in every town and neighbourhood.

■ **Gyula Horn**,
leader of the Hungarian
Socialist Party, MSzP, and
prime minister of Hungary

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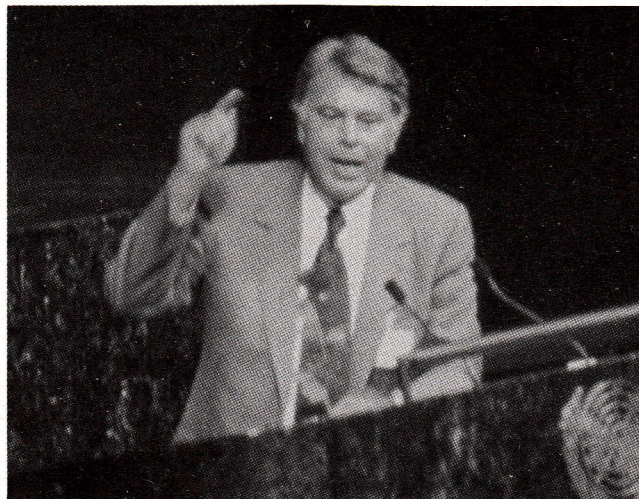
It is an enormous challenge to social democracy to make the masses of the advanced countries and regions understand that it is in their own interest to include the backward ones in development. Unfavourable tendencies will not be contained within frontiers. It is a proven fact that the influences reach neighbours, the adjacent regions and also the decisive global processes. Nowhere in the world can one turn a blind eye to these phenomena, sit back and do nothing...

International social democracy must pay special attention to the specificities of the regions in transformation. It is clear that capital must enjoy absolute freedom of movement in the world. However, investments aiming at the infrastructure and at the enhancement of the role of human capital need state encouragement on both national and international level as well as state participation in the movement of capital...

New resources should be guaranteed for the improvement of education, as differences in development cannot be reduced without it. We have to study urgently the phenomena unfolding all over the world by which the financial resources for social expenditure are continuously diminishing. This is a new challenge for the Left.

■ **Felipe González**, leader of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party, PSOE, and former prime minister of Spain

What does globalisation mean? We are the Socialist International. We believe in relationships of international solidarity. We try to analyse the interdependence which that presupposes. We meet at the United Nations. That internationalisation which we call globalisation has been understood and implemented or made use of much better by the transnational corporations and by the financial capital which flows through the exchange markets of the world...



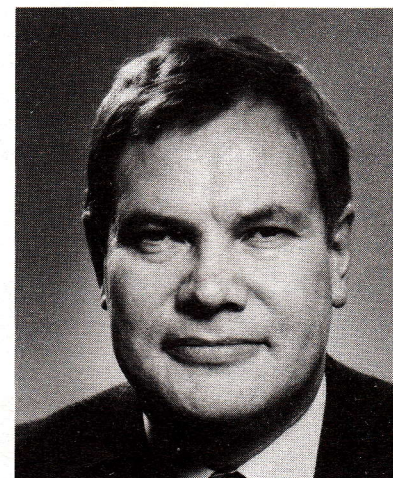
Angelo Palma

We have to rethink the role of the state. I do not want an overblown, inefficient, bureaucratic, much less a corrupt state. But I do not want a weak political power, a feeble state which may not be able to be independent of the growing pressures of the economic groups within this free market which of course produces

great concentrations of power. I would prefer to see a strong state, a state capable of intervening. Not intervening in the manufacture of blue jeans but intervening to ensure services for all; to defend the position that investment in human capital is not only a market-based obligation but the best possible mechanism to offer equality of opportunity and to improve social justice, a state that understands that health is not a business, that it is a problem that has to be faced and solved by public authorities.

■ **Paavo Lipponen**, leader of the Finnish Social Democratic Party, SDP, and prime minister of Finland

We need concrete progress to get rid of child labour and discrimination against trade unions. On the other hand, a WTO social charter must not become a tool for protectionism. In Europe we must address the problem of competitiveness not by maintaining protectionist practices, but we have to analyse the significance of globalisation, technical development, structural changes in the labour market and economic policies. We need a whole new analysis...



The idea of an Economic Security Council may help us to take the debate one step forward on a global scale but, in this building, we must underline that the whole question of the functioning and feasibility of multilateral institutions is at stake.

In Europe, in America, in many parts of the world we are witnessing a surge of new nationalism, a regression to the past, in this country to the time of the cold war and in Europe to the nineteenth century. We see an attempt at a new kind of projection of national power just when we need global cooperation.

■ **Pauline Green**, leader of the Group of the Party of European Socialists in the European Parliament

International relationships cannot be managed by a world policeman or world bankers or be based on oppressive economic policies. Rather they must be developed on the basis of collective and cooperative responsibility.

Today the world is moving towards a new system of geographical organisation, spurred

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■ **Lionel Jospin**,
first secretary of the Socialist
Party, PS, France

on by the demands of the information society and the globalisation of trade. We are seeing an inevitable pull towards regional groupings. We as a movement should embrace these events. We are nothing if not internationalists. We have defended internationalism through the worst periods of the cold war. Now is the moment to recognise a new international reality, but to put our stamp on that reality.

Regional groupings make economic sense in the current climate. But we should be clear as well that, with our emphasis on the value and dignity of the individual, we want those groupings to be based on the diversity of cultures and the strengths and the traditions within each regional grouping.

The socialists who built the International in some sense anticipated this globalisation of the world when they invited the forces of progress and the world of work to come together internationally....



There is no economy outside of humankind. The economy is the product of human activity. There are no economic laws as there are laws of physics. It is a science made by human beings for human beings. It makes clear that it is possible to modify the course of events, to change economic mechanisms and put them into action...

We must modernise socialist doctrine and our understanding of the economy, its trading relationships and the balance of power in the world but, above all, of the movement of capital in the economy which is the foremost characteristic of this stage of capitalism...

The globalisation of the economy means for socialists the globalisation of regulation, a return to a stable international monetary system, an Economic Security Council, a social clause in trade negotiations, action against financial speculation, including taxation to limit financial speculation, aid to developing countries, especially with reference to their debt. Our governments and not just our parties must fight for these ideas in international fora.

■ **Massimo D'Alema**,
leader of the Party of the
Democratic Left, PDS, Italy

A modern left which intends to attract new young forces and energies cannot lag behind, hanging on to noble but conservative analyses and positions.

We need to redevelop a universal vision and set of aspirations for a socialist, democratic culture. This is what this Congress will do by opening the SI to forces and movements from Africa, Latin America and central and eastern Europe.



The focus of such a project should once again be political, the ability of politics to influence real processes, to reduce inequalities, to restore significance to the noble words of our tradition - individual freedom, equal opportunity, solidarity as the driving force of

■ **Takanobu Nagai**,
Social Democratic Party, SDP,
Japan, minister of labour

social citizenship.

One word more than any other defines the identity of this modern left: democracy. It describes the possibility of a virtuous compromise between the rationale of an economic perspective and that of a human and political perspective.

In April this year a Group of Seven summit meeting on employment was held in our president Pierre Mauroy's city, Lille, and I attended it on behalf of the Japanese government. Discussing the overall issues and exchanging useful ideas, delegates agreed that the mid- and long-term macro-economic environment had to be kept stable by cutting financial deficits; the economies and societies reshaped to better accommodate the economic globalisation and technical innovation so as to create new job opportunities and special attention to be given to young and unskilled workers.

At the summit I shared with other delegates a Japanese perspective of the employment issue, and proposed an international conference to be held in Japan in order to discuss the employment of workers young and old which undoubtedly required special attention. This proposal was accepted by the delegates at the summit.

■ **Herta Daubler-Gmelin**,
vice-chair of the
Social Democratic Party of
Germany, SPD

Globalisation not only changes the role of nation states, it weakens the politics of nation states, the influence of politics...

Felipe González was right in citing Adam Smith... Adam Smith of course was right in fighting against the feudal state's meddling in economics in the 18th century. The feudal state was regulating everything, and without the rule of law. Nowadays we are, I would say, in the reverse situation. We can see that the primacy of politics in international and globalised economies is disputed...

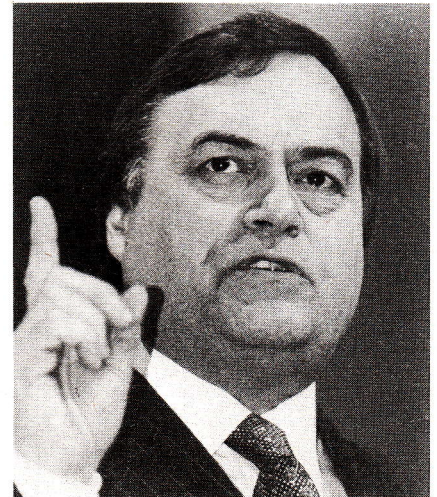
Beyond balancing budgets, we have to explain our values to the public. They will not support us unless they know our values and realise we have values and that we are trying to make value-oriented politics in our everyday lives.

■ **John Prescott**,
deputy leader of the British
Labour Party

In this global economy capital has become even more mobile. Money no longer respects national boundaries. The threats to our environment recognise no frontiers. And the weapons of mass destruction which now exist exempt no nation. The opening-up of a so-called global economy has improved prosperity. It has encouraged cooperation by raising our dependence on one another. It has also intensified competition and increased our vulnerability...

Let anybody who opposes a social clause [in the WTO] explain why they defend forced labour, the suppression of workers' rights and child exploitation...

I believe that there are few greater common issues facing all the countries of the world than how to tackle the evil of unemployment. Employment opportunity is a major component of achieving social justice. We believe, as democratic socialists, that cooperation between the nations to combat unemployment is essential and can be fruitful.



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■ **Navin Ramgoolam**,
leader of the Mauritius Labour
Party and prime minister of
Mauritius



■ **Bill Jordan**,
secretary general of the
International Confederation of
Free Trade Unions, ICFTU

■ **Rodrigo Borja**,
leader of the Democratic Left
ID, Ecuador, and former
president of Ecuador

■ **Pierre Schori**,
Swedish Social Democratic
Party, SAP, deputy minister for
foreign affairs

A re-assessment of the practice of democracy is vital if we want the system to improve and be more effective. We must keep high on the agenda our determination to help in ensuring that elections are fair and free throughout the world.

On the economic front all developing countries have had to adapt to a highly mutable world. The winds of change buffeted from all directions and we have to change course and trim our sails constantly. If we are not vigilant the new world order will drive the wedge even further between the poor and the rich, and the development gap will be accentuated. The twenty-first century must not be allowed to bring with it any more exploitation and suffering in the name of the gods of free trade.

When we look at this world after the free-marketeers have shaped it in their own image, what do we see? Prosperity? Contented societies at peace with themselves? No, we see a world of growing insecurity and instability, the fertile ground of exploitation. We have witnessed a revolution as ruthless in its consequences as any in recent history...

The recent ICFTU Congress decided it was time to fight back. And I know this Congress believes it is time for socialists to go on the attack. World events are proving that the things that we believe in are needed more than ever...

The time is right for an international forum embracing the socialist and trade union movement. Its task would be to turn our common ideals into practical policy in the world of the global market. We must seek a policy objective of nothing less than sustained growth capable of delivering material prosperity, but with a social dimension.

Under the misleading labels of modernising the state, reducing its size, rationalisation, decentralisation, liberalisation, deregulation - some words from the luxuriant dictionary of neo-liberalism - are hidden the indiscriminate privatisation of public assets, the dismantling of the state, the pillaging of the faculties to guide the state, the supplanting of the state by the market, the surrender of the economy into private hands and the handing-over of the economy to free competition...

Globalisation is not new. Each and every empire that has existed throughout history has aimed for a kind of globalisation. That was true of the Roman empire. It was true of the British empire, the Spanish empire. Each tried to create a global system of economy and trade, built in its own image. Globalisation is a return to the old, international division of labour, as conceived by the classical economists...

Today we are almost six billion on earth. How many more can we be? Ten billion? Or fifteen? How great is the ecological capacity of Earth? This question depends among other things on how many of the family of mankind travel first-class. The middle-class and upper-class groups of the OECD nations are already seated on the upper deck, and they regard it as the most natural thing in the world for them to travel in this fashion. The nouveaux riches in the developing countries copy the lifestyle of Western nations. Regions in Asia and Latin America are in the process of developing a Western market economy, often with a much higher growth rate than we have in Europe...

Ecology and economy - we must succeed in uniting them in long-term sustainable development for all the peoples of the world. It is at heart a question of solidarity and mutual compassion. At heart it is an issue of deep respect for the short lives we live on this fantastic spaceship Earth.

■ **Raúl Alfonsín**,
Radical Civic Union, UCR,
Argentina, former president of
Argentina

■ **Thorbjørn Jagland**,
leader of the Norwegian
Labour Party, DNA, and
now prime minister of
Norway.

■ **Jan Pronk**,
Netherlands Labour Party,
PvdA, minister of
development cooperation

■ **Deniz Baykal**,
leader of the Republican
People's Party, CHP, Turkey

According to the World Health Organisation the most effective and pitiless murderer or executioner, which is also the principal cause of suffering on earth, is poverty.

At the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 it was pointed out that although poverty affects households in general, women, because of the division of labour between the sexes, bear the greater burden.

We can be sure that of the 5,700 million inhabitants of the world 1,500 are desperately poor and this figure increases by at least 25 million every year.

According to recent estimates there are perhaps 100 million street children. There could be 40 million in Latin America, 25 million in Asia, and 10 million in Africa as well as 25 million in other regions, including in the developed world.

A phenomenon which is becoming increasingly common is the concentration of wealth. In 1980 the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia had 58 per cent of the world's production. At present they control 68 per cent.



The most successful and significant achievement of the last half of this century is economic growth. Global economic output expanded from 4 trillion dollars in 1946 to nearly 20 trillion dollars this year. This means that on average we have added more to global output in each of the last four decades than was added in all the centuries before. But still we have mass poverty, mass unemployment, so it obvious that we have to focus more on distribution of wealth and income, and to that end we need adequate mechanisms for managing our common economy.

One thing is certain: we have to look into the devastating consequences of speculation which is going on in the world economy today. It has been estimated that for every dollar circulating in the productive sector of the economy fifty dollars are circulating in the financial sector. There is no link any longer between world trade and currency transactions needed to run this trade.

We are discussing a report with a good message; we need a system of global responsibility as an answer to globalisation. I very much agree. Globalisation is good for some, but bad for many. It is good for those who are strong already. It is bad for those who tend to be excluded from society. And we know, social exclusion at the end of the twentieth century is an even greater evil than economic exploitation at the end of the previous century. This indeed is our greatest challenge.

But to overcome this challenge we need more than a message. We need a mechanism, a piece of machinery, a system of countervailing power. And the only way to build such a political force in the interests of the poor, the weak and the vulnerable is to take our own message seriously, to really coordinate our policies.

The social democratic movement is suffering from its own success. We changed the world considerably in the direction of our principles. The task before us today is to further change the world that we helped to shape...

Unfortunately what we have been preaching about social justice and solidarity has not sufficed to create a balanced distribution of wealth either within countries or among the nations of the world. Inequality and poverty are increasing at an alarming rate. More than



■ **Lewis Pérez,**
Democratic Action, AD,
Venezuela

■ **Alfred Sant,**
leader of the Malta Labour
Party and now prime
minister of Malta

■ **Madhu Dandavate,**
Janata Dal, India

one billion people today are living in absolute poverty. The gap between rich and poor has never been greater. Every year twenty million people die of hunger or related causes. Almost one million children over five years of age are dying every year in Bangladesh alone...

We need to reassert the importance of politics. Politics, in essence, is to say, 'we do care'. Politics is to assume public responsibility and to act in solidarity.

The development of science and technology is a fundamental basis for well-being, but only in so far as we are capable of channelling political action towards a higher stage of democracy...

Our actions should be aimed at replacing social exclusion with social cohesion, at structuring a modern society capable of facing the economic, scientific, cultural and political challenges of the future...

On the national [as well as the international] level, we have to make serious changes to the economic system... The articulation of macro-economic measures with micro-economic policies is one of the spheres where the state must cooperate with the private sector, encouraging production and strengthening market mechanisms in favour of economic and social progress in our country and our region.

Despite the increasing scale of economic globalisation I also believe that policies to ensure fair and free competition must provide especially for the promotion of the small enterprise. Entrepreneurship on a small scale should not be swallowed up by the huge centralised bureaucracies that drive global markets.

Rather, in the interests of democracy itself, it is important to promote the conditions that will allow small firms and self-employed people to operate profitably, not simply in traditional fields of activity, but also in new, high-technology areas. Again, such an approach would need to be applied both within national societies and internationally...

Education, the environment, the promotion of a free and fair economy, and the defence of the security and integrity of the human person - these constitute an agenda for which extremely meaningful proposals can be made, proposals that cut across the prevailing neo-liberal orthodoxy.

Willy Brandt once said 'In order to have genuine globalisation we must have a global mind and a global vision'...

In our country, and in different parts of the world, there is a distorted version of globalisation... I would like a genuine globalisation and restructuring of the United Nations, so that it becomes a genuine instrument of collective security. I want genuine globalisation of the Bretton Woods financial institutions. They must change their traditional outlook regarding quotas and representation. And, in order to respond to the

■ **Kalevi Sorsa**,
chair of the SI Peace, Security
and Disarmament Council,
SIPSAD, introduced the debate
on 'Making peace, keeping
peace'

feelings and aspirations of the developing countries which are heavily burdened with debt, I would like the IMF and the World Bank to think in terms of relieving the burden of the loans under which the small developing countries are being crushed.

We want a globalisation of both the developed and the developing world.

In questions of international peace and security, no credible alternatives [to the United Nations] are in sight. Socialist International members would like the UN to do more rather than less, and increase its efficiency. Regional mechanisms based on the UN Charter should be further developed...

The main method proposed in our draft resolution is preventive action: taking notice of early symptoms of conflicts and acting resolutely to prevent them from breaking out. This method is no novelty. But it has often been too late to prevent a conflict. Still there are quite a few positive examples as well... Regional organisations working for peace and security are often suitable primary or supplementary forums for conflict prevention. Their activities should be fully supported. Europe was badly divided for decades and therefore the healing work done by the OSCE, the EU and other organisations attracts a lot of attention. There are many positive experiences also in other regions: Central America, South Africa, the Middle East and Asia...

The SI has consistently worked for nuclear disarmament. The activities of the SI Peace, Security and Disarmament Council, SIPSAD, have focused on nuclear disarmament more than any other single issue, since its creation in 1978. We all have reason to rejoice at the achievements in this field. But let us not forget that the ultimate aim is a nuclear-free world. Some people say that this is unrealistic. Well, a vision is always unrealistic. The task of political movements is to make it come true. We will do it, I am sure. The UN Headquarters here in New York will be the scene of the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which will hopefully become a reality without further delay. It is an important step forward towards our ultimate goal..

In addition to nuclear weapons other categories of weapons of mass destruction threaten mankind with untold horrors - but, more than any other weapons conventional arms, large and small, day after day, in conflict after conflict. We should therefore strengthen our efforts to restrict the arms trade and create a sense of responsibility among arms-exporting governments. Military dictatorships, armed oppression of peoples, warfare on ethnic and religious grounds, aggression on neighbours destroy annually hundreds of thousands of human lives. They are an excessive price for a temporary increase in employment in the countries selling arms. And in the long run investment in destruction never promotes sustained growth anywhere...

Peace is the sine qua non of human development. Peace is the supreme goal of social democracy. Peace is a necessity and a growth ground for democratic socialism. Establishing and safeguarding peace will be our most important task also in future.

■ **Michel Rocard**,
Socialist Party, PS, France,
former prime minister of France

At the end of the cold war the field was left open to so many local conflicts that we don't even know how many of them are going on. And despite the fact that we have a non-proliferation treaty there is proliferation which threatens us. This creates conditions which are more favourable and which are perhaps a window of opportunity for a diplomatic point of view for us....

Preventive diplomacy consists of acting before you have a pile of dead bodies, which bring in the media, which bring in the cameras and of course influence public opinion.

So far as preventive diplomacy is concerned this means that permanently, non-stop, we have to be able to keep an eye on potential crisis situations and try to discover where a crisis is likely to arise...

We must think about the concept of the right to intervene and we have to say this from an ethical point of view. We are peace-loving peoples. It is our duty to do so.

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■ **Gianfranco Schietroma,**

general secretary of the Italian Democratic Socialist Party, PSDI

We are in agreement with the idea of SI President Mauroy that peace may be attained by forestalling conflicts rather than by the use of force. These conflicts are foreseeable and a policy of foresight is always possible and could avoid the massacres of men, women and children. That implies a greater capacity for action by the United Nations, greater financial resources and greater authority which could be put in place by a greater democratisation of the organs of the UN....

Economic progress in some parts of the world does not automatically bring about increased respect for human rights. On this point the SI must muster its forces with determination, using all possible instruments of pressure including economic boycotts, in order to see the advance of freedom all over the planet. As we approach the end of the century the SI can emphasise with pride our action for the globalisation of social justice and peace. The principles which inspired us in the most difficult times of this century are freedom, tolerance and solidarity.

■ **Shimon Peres,** leader of the Israel Labour Party and former prime minister of Israel

The Socialist International traditionally played a tremendous role, moral as well as political, in trying to solve one of the most complicated issues in this century, namely the conflict between the Palestinians and us, between the Arabs and Israelis, and trying to reach an agreement, not by force but by the force of understanding. The job is not completed. Furthermore it is not an easy road to travel.

If you want to make peace, contrary to what we are used to in economic life, you don't have a credit card where you have the commodity first and then you pay the cost. You pay the cost and then hopefully you may get the goods, if indeed you are to get them.

There are things that we have not yet done. We know that we have to make peace with Syria. There is no sense in postponing it. We know that peace has a territorial price and we are ready to pay for it. We can postpone it for ten years: the price will not go down but time will be wasted. And more people will lose their lives and their opportunities. We have to make peace with Syria and make peace with Lebanon and to make peace comprehensively with all the countries in the Middle East - and right away. What was shown in the peace conference is that we do not need superpowers to impose peace on us. We need clear logic and honest analysis to understand there is no alternative to peace in the eyes of our people and others.

You know, many people ask me if I am an expert on Arab affairs. I am not - because I do not believe that there are Arabs or Jews, black or white. I believe there are human beings. And if you want to make peace, don't forget that all of us are human beings, no matter what the colour is and no matter what the past is. All of us have children and women and responsibilities...

I would like to thank the Socialist International for its ongoing moral and political support.

■ **Nasser Al Kidwa,** Fatah, head of Palestinian delegation

The achievements of the camp of peace have been huge. The road, however, is long and the mission is difficult. We need assistance from the international community to build our economy, our national institutions and, more importantly, to guarantee that the will of that international community, which is based on international law and justice, is heeded...

We look forward to the establishment of a comprehensive and permanent peace in the region, on the basis of the principle of returning land for peace. It should be a peace which will include all states in the region, moving towards a truly prosperous and new Middle East, free of all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons...

We are counting on you to stand firm in your support for justice, principles and the current peace process. With your sustained efforts we hope that the peace process will be proven irreversible.

■ **Vassos Lyssarides,**
EDEK Socialist Party of Cyprus

All the regional problems of the area should be solved on the basis of international law if we want really to have a permanent peace in the Middle East. I believe that Cyprus can play a catalytic role for positive development in the region... if the problem of Cyprus is solved on the basis of the United Nations resolutions and international law.

Democracy is a multi-dimensional approach. Democracy is incompatible with occupation. This should be our first priority if we are to be taken seriously, if the socialist movement is to be a protagonist for a new world order based on respect for the human rights of all peoples, large and small.

■ **Makoto Tanabe,**
chair of the SI Asia-Pacific
Committee

For the peoples of this [Asia-Pacific] region, tension between China and Taiwan and unknown future developments in the Korean Peninsula will remain the primary concern. But if analysed from the perspective of human security, the most important questions the region must face squarely within the coming century are issues related to the 'economic miracle'...

In the eyes of the people of the Asia-Pacific region, issues of environmental degradation, energy crisis, population growth and food shortages constitute the most serious threat to the security of the region.

Present generations may not notice the deepening of the crisis. But undoubtedly it is future generations that will be forced to pay for the cost of the ongoing crisis. Social democrats and socialists in this region must not be self-satisfied with the present good performance of Asian economies. Let us all imagine how future generations will shoulder the cost and anguish.

■ **Ousmane Tanor
Djeng,** first secretary of the
Socialist Party, PS, Senegal

Africans are avid partisans of peace. The word 'peace' is evoked in all the greetings we exchange throughout every day. I would also like to mention the active role of African women in keeping peace. They know that it is they and their children who will pay the highest price in war...

Obviously, the social progress which we seek to bring about in our developing countries is a necessary condition for peace. Equally, peace is the sine qua non of social progress...

In Africa in particular, the fall of the Berlin Wall gave rise to hopes of a world of peace and stability. But these hopes were short-lived. Conflicts of a new and pernicious kind appeared in Africa, erupting usually within states. These threaten the stability of surrounding countries and of the whole region. Questions of nationality and ethnicity, identity and exclusion - not unique to Africa - are posing a great challenge to peace.

■ **Hocine Aït-Ahmed,**
leader of the Socialist Forces
Front, FFS, Algeria

Forty years ago in this very building, as a representative of the Algerian revolution, I was fighting for peace, democracy and respect for human rights in Algeria. Forty years later, there is no peace, no democracy and no respect for human rights in Algeria. My country has suffered decades of violence... and all Algerian politicians now have a duty to accept compromise...

An overwhelming majority of Algerians want peace. The presidential candidate of the army campaigned on the issue of peace, his emblem was the dove. But nine months after the presidential election we are still at war in my country...

As a number of our speakers have said, after the adoption of broad principles, we must move on to their application. We need concrete initiatives to get our country out of the dramatic situation it is faced with.



■ **Peter Jankowitsch**,
chair of the SI Committee on
Human Rights, SICOHR, opened
the discussion on our third
agenda item, 'A human rights
agenda for the twenty-first
century'

Our agenda for human rights in the twenty-first century is based on our view of human rights which is now we hope universally accepted, namely the view of their universality, their indivisibility and their interdependence... It should be possible in the next period to reach a much higher degree of awareness, a much refined, stronger, safer procedure, and thus we hope a new and unprecedented degree of human rights security...

There remains a stark contrast between the many documents and treaties proclaiming a universal rule of human rights and day-to-day reality in many countries and regions of the world. And next to the old problems of enforcing and implementing human rights and fundamental freedoms in societies around the globe new challenges, not least those linked to the progressive process of globalisation that we debated yesterday. It is particularly the displacement of authority over economic and political decisions from the nation state to the international realm, to the now anonymous forces of the market, that makes an ever greater need for more stringent international standards and international legislation...

While we were celebrating in the past years the victory of democracy in many parts of the world, new challenges, new threats have appeared... And even in some of the most developed societies of today's world where human rights and fundamental freedoms have a long tradition and are protected by manifold guarantees and mechanisms, there remains a long list of inequities. There remain armies of underprivileged, excluded, marginalised and forgotten. In many of our nations xenophobia, racism, anti-semitism continue to challenge fundamental values of civilised society...

Democratic socialists cannot accept a new international economic order from which universal labour standards, high universal labour standards, are absent...

These and all other issues of human rights and fundamental freedoms must be given the highest priority. They must be the underpinning of any new and just order for peace and freedom. Nations, to an increasing degree, must be judged by the respect they show for human rights, and not only on economic performance. The alliances of the future should not be based on military interests or the defence of purely national goals, but on the common interest in the promotion of human rights.

■ **Radnaasumberel
Gonchigdorj**,
president of the Mongolian Social
Democratic Party, president of the
parliament of Mongolia

Our opponents and critics argue that democracy and human rights are not for the low-income, backward, developing countries. They allege that Western democratic values are not appropriate for Mongolia and generally for Asia. They argue that initially you need economic development and only afterwards can we talk about democracy and human rights. They argue that the people are unenlightened and they question their ability to

■ **Camilo Escalona,**
president of the Socialist
Party of Chile, PS

govern themselves. They argue that democracy cannot guarantee the stability and security of a nation. They also dispute the indivisibility and the inter-relationship of world developments.

It is gratifying to note that our Congress and its decisions will help to forge a common understanding and belief in democracy and human rights by inter alia, rejecting the above arguments.

We recognise that there is still much that we have to do. We must consolidate a democratic rule of law, remove the enclaves of authoritarian conduct, normalise relations between the civilian and military world and close the gap which opened between them. We must guarantee the unrestricted exercise of citizens' freedom. We must change the attitude of confrontation imposed by the logic of war and assure full respect for human rights, as well as advancing towards sexual equality in our society.

We aspire to a situation in which no citizen of our country, male or female, shall be the victim of violence, abuse or degrading treatment at the hand of the agents of the state.

We want to put away for good the idea that 'the end justifies the means'.

■ **U Win Khet,**
chair of the National League
for Democracy (Liberated
Area), Burma

Is the situation in Burma hopeless? No, it is not hopeless. In spite of the increased repression, in spite of encouragement for the State Law and Order Restoration Council from abroad, the Burmese people and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi are determined to press for democratic reforms. Domestic support for the democracy movement is growing. People are becoming more outspoken and even the ethnic armies that have signed cease-fires with SLORC are beginning to coordinate their calls for political dialogue and democratic reforms. The Burmese economy is also adding to the generals' problems. Continued massive military spending is draining the economy and contributing to inflation. Social and health problems are on the rise. Many children do not even finish primary school and Burma now has one of the world's fastest growth rates for HIV infection. The excessive export of basic commodities to obtain foreign exchange is also creating serious shortages. Arbitrary taxes, confiscation of private property, extensive use of forced labour for infrastructure and tourism projects are all adding to the problems faced by the Burmese generals who have no idea of how to solve them.

The situation in Burma today is not hopeless. But it is very tense and dangerous. If allowed to fester unchecked it will affect not only Burma's future but the security of the Asia-Pacific region.

■ **Abel Goumba,**
president of the Patriotic
Front for Progress, FPP,
Central African Republic

The end of the cold war which was expected to usher in an era of peace, stability and security is giving way to the development of tragic regional or local conflicts often inspired by ethnic or religious considerations, as witnessed by the shocking events in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and Burundi, to cite but three examples.

But, despite everything the ideal of democracy and non-violence is gaining strength in the conscience of all as the way towards a shining future.

In these circumstances the Socialist International, which has always put democracy and non-violence at the top of its concerns, is today recognised by progressive people the world over as the only world force which is the bearer of these ideals.

■ **Sushil Koirala,**
general secretary of the Nepali
Congress Party

We in Nepal undertook a journey enduring many hardships and many of our valiant soldiers of democracy had to lay down their lives for freedom and the protection of basic human rights.

When we talk about human rights we feel it is our duty to express our solidarity with Aung San Suu Kyi and her comrades. We believe all the prisoners who are lodged in Myanmar jails because of their political beliefs should be released immediately.

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■ **Lim Kit Siang**,
secretary general of the
Democratic Action Party, DAP,
Malaysia

■ **Philippe Busquin**,
leader of the Socialist Party,
PS, Belgium, and chair of the
SI Committee on Local
Authorities

■ **Piero Fassino**,
co-chair of the SI Committee
for Central and Eastern
Europe, SICEE

■ **Leonel Brizola**,
leader of the Democratic
Labour Party, PDT, Brazil

The countries where Asian values are talked about most are those countries where governments seek to perpetuate themselves in power by restricting political and civil liberties and by calling such practices Asian values.

Although the advocates of Asian values present false choices between prosperity and freedom, development and freedom, stability and respect for human rights, economic success is a very powerful and persuasive tool.

This is why the advocates of Asian values have been so eloquent in justifying widespread restrictions on political and civil liberties - not only to their own electorates but in international relations.

The gulf is deepening between the well-off and those on the margins of society and this phenomenon is particularly visible in towns and cities. It is naturally in towns and cities where the questions of the reduction of inequalities, and also the preservation of the environment, of the maintenance of the quality of life, the preservation of public safety without which citizens cannot live their lives in harmony are posed most sharply.

We must remember that soon half the world's population will live in towns and cities. We then can take better account of the importance of the thought and work that we are carrying out in the context of our SI Local Authorities Committee. This work is all the more important since it is at the level of the municipality that contact between citizens and their elected representatives is, or at least should be, the easiest and most direct. The building of democracy starts there - as does the building of social justice.

The first meeting of our SI Committee for Central and Eastern Europe in London in 1993 saw the participation of 21 European parties of which only seven were from eastern and central Europe. Today over fifty member and non-member parties take part in the Committee's activities, some 35 of which are from central and eastern Europe.

In Budapest in 1994 we held an SI Council meeting which defined the SI's strategy for eastern Europe. In many of the region's capitals - Warsaw, Moscow, Bratislava, Prague, Bucharest, Ljubljana and Sarajevo - the SI has held meetings, sent missions and established ongoing contacts and cooperation with all of the region's parties. Today, here, we see the results of our work - twelve social democratic parties become members of the SI and now our socialist family will in all count 25 parties in central and eastern Europe.

This Congress therefore closes the first phase of the SI policies launched by the Berlin Congress. Now this Congress needs to initiate a second phase with as its goal the growth of social democracy and of its representative parties in Russia, the CIS and the other countries of eastern Europe. The objective is ambitious but we can pursue it with renewed strength and determination.

This Congress will take its place as one of the most important in the history of social democracy, particularly because of the circumstances of the time. The Socialist International is prepared to take up new challenges....

We suffer isolation in the face of the world's gigantic communications establishment. We have a peaceful way of working and we seek change through parliaments and governments, with elections... and we are to some extent held in check because of a lack of communications. Today's techniques mean that we are to a large extent excluded from talking to the mass of people, the people we want to serve... That is a challenge we have to take up...

I would like to point out the emergence of a whole new generation of leaders who are to be seen at this Congress. The Socialist International is renewing its leadership in a way which is at the same time clear and full of hope. At the same time women are taking a more important place here than they have traditionally taken before.

■ **Raimón Obiols**,
chair of the SI
Mediterranean Committee

In the next twenty years, either the Mediterranean will become a sea of peace, of shared prosperity, of cultural and religious harmony, or it will be the scene of growing and very serious social, political and religious conflicts...

There is a worrying, perhaps even a growing distance between a rich North which has undergone a demographic transition, and a poor and demographically very young South. If the extreme and violent symptoms of fundamentalism have become disproportionately important and dangerous in the region, that is basically the reason.

But we do not share the historic pessimism of the conservative view which prophesies the clash of civilisations as the inevitable destiny of the twenty-first century. Great as the tensions and conflicts are, we look to the future of the Mediterranean region not only with concern but also with optimism, for alongside the imbalance which I have described there is also a growing interdependence.

■ **Jacques Baudin**,
Socialist Party, PS, Senegal,
minister of justice

Every event has its own measure of symbolism. Our Congress symbolises, in my eyes, our common will to realise throughout the world the arrival of a durable and balanced development in an atmosphere of real and lasting peace through the firm commitment to uphold human rights in the fullest sense of the word.

■ **José Francisco Peña
Gómez**,
chair of the SI Committee for
Latin America and the
Caribbean, SICLAC

Our Socialist International has made a decisive contribution to the democracy of our region. Since the last Congress our parties have carried off important victories in Jamaica, Costa Rica, Panama, St Kitts-Nevis, Barbados and Colombia. In Chile our three parties participate in the coalition government and we can say the same about the People's Government Party in Uruguay. In Argentina the Popular Socialist Party is a member of the Frepaso alliance which took a worthy second place and the Radical Civic Union of Argentina won the local government of the capital city. Our friends in Haiti won power and in our own Dominican Republic we won the parliamentary and municipal elections and are running at this moment the government of the city of Santo Domingo.

■ **Luis Ayala**,
secretary general of the Socialist
International, presented to the
Congress his report on the
International's work since the
Berlin Congress in 1992



Democratic socialism is today inspiring and shaping political life on all continents...Through our many activities around the world, we are deepening and strengthening the exchanges between our member parties, as we work to evolve and develop our common platform and to bring the social democratic message to more and more places. We are convinced that many issues can today be tackled effectively on an international basis or not at all. This gives a new importance to the work of our international, whose founders were inspired by a vision of a global society and the ideals of worldwide solidarity. ■