



UNITED FOR THE WORLD WE DESERVE
A GLOBAL VISION OF VALUES AND SOLIDARITY

HAK ETTİĞİMİZ BİR DÜNYA İÇİN YA HEP BERABER YA HİÇBİRİMİZ
DEĞERLER VE DAYANIŞMA TEMELİNDE KÜRESEL BİR VİZYON

MAY 21-25, 2025 İSTANBUL - TÜRKİYE



Özgür Özel

CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

SI SOCIALIST
INTERNATIONAL
MAY 2025, ISTANBUL - TÜRKİYE

The council meetings we held in Istanbul in May 2025 as the Socialist International will be remembered as an expression of a historic stance and a call for global solidarity for democracy. The speeches, decisions, and opinions contained in this book are documents of the collective voice rising against the deepening democracy crisis, increasing authoritarianism, and multidimensional threats to the will of citizens around the world.

The fact that this meeting was held in Istanbul at such a time is particularly important for all democrats in Türkiye. Istanbul is a city that is both a crossroads of ancient civilizations and cultures and a home to countless examples of the struggle for democracy. At the same time, Istanbul is a city whose will is being sought to be usurped today. As is well known, Istanbul's elected Mayor, Mr. Ekrem İmamoğlu, and many opposition mayors and bureaucrats in Istanbul are being held in prison unlawfully. İmamoğlu is not only a local administrator; he is also the presidential candidate of the main opposition party, elected with the support of 15.5 million citizens. The fact that the discussions on the fight against authoritarianism took place in Istanbul is therefore extremely meaningful. Istanbul is a powerful symbol that can carry the messages of the Socialist International in this period.

Opposing authoritarianism and fighting for full democracy in solidarity were among the main messages of the meetings. Today, the world is going through a period in which not only individual rights but also the fate of societies as a whole are under threat. Authoritarian regimes do not only impose oppression within the borders of the countries where they exist; they target peace and stability with wars, interventions, and disinformation that extend beyond their borders. The massacre in Palestine, the destructive war in Ukraine, the instability in the Middle East... All these developments are reflections or outcomes of the political atmosphere shaped by the same authoritarian mindset across different regions. The Socialist International's response to this situation is clear:



International solidarity is essential for democracy and peace. Global threats to democracy can only be countered with a common will, universal values, and solidarity networks. In this context, our meeting in Istanbul has also demonstrated the determination of socialist and social democratic movements to strengthen the global struggle. Combining the historical legacy of the Socialist International with today's dynamics, this meeting has also demonstrated its capacity to generate new political energy. All our members who participated in the meeting declared their determination to unite the struggle for democracy and expand the democratic front on a global scale.

Another important aspect of our meetings in Istanbul was the prevalence of a perspective that does not view democracy as limited to the ballot box. The will of the people is realized not only through voting, but also through a free press, an independent judiciary, trade unions, an organized society, and the active participation of women and young people. Opposing authoritarian regimes that reduce elections to mere instruments of legitimacy makes it necessary to redefine democracy as a culture and a form of struggle.

The stronger, more visible, and more effective representation of women and young people in politics was one of the most striking and carefully considered topics of this meeting. It was emphasized that women and young people should not only be included in political processes, but should also be fundamental constituent elements of politics. Because we know that without the energy of young people and the struggle of women, a popular transformation cannot be truly realized or sustained. The issue of representation is a profound issue that forces us to rethink our understanding of organization and our decision-making processes. When young people and women shape politics with their own words, priorities, and life experiences, it will bring not only participation but also transformation.

One of the common views that emerged at the end of the meeting was this: We have a responsibility to fight not only against external threats, such as the oppression of authoritarian regimes and anti-democratic practices, but also against our own internal shortcomings, habits, and structural problems that are sometimes overlooked. Seeking change only externally would mean ignoring the necessity of internal transformation. However, building a more participatory, transparent, pluralistic, and dynamic socialist and social democratic movement is one of the strongest responses to today's political crises. This is not only a strategic choice but also our moral responsibility.

The Socialist International, which brings together democrats from different languages, identities, and struggles on common ground, is a very important opportunity for the establishment of full democracy on a global scale. Every opinion in this book is an expression of the courage of comrades who come together around the goal of full democracy to think and struggle together.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

The Socialist International, the largest political organization bringing together 89 socialist, social democratic and left -wing parties from 81 countries on a global scale, held the first Council of 2025 in Istanbul/Türkiye on 23–25 May. The Socialist International Women Council (SIW) on 21-22 May and a Presidium meeting on 23 May preceded the Council.

The Republican People's Party (CHP) has been honored to host the Council meetings in Istanbul where we welcomed more than 450 delegates from member parties, progressive leaders, and guests.



The Importance of SI Istanbul Meeting: Future Will Be Shaped By Social Democracy

Social democracy emerged historically as the political expression of the ideal of establishing a balance between labor and capital, guaranteeing the fundamental rights of the working classes, and transforming society into a more just and egalitarian structure. This movement, which originated in the late 19th century, institutionalized itself throughout the 20th century, particularly in Europe, through trade unions, labor parties, and the welfare state, successfully transforming the lives of millions of people. Numerous policies, such as social security systems, public health and education services, the right to collective bargaining, relative justice in income distribution, and increased social mobility, have gone down in history as direct achievements of social democracy. However, today, this ideological legacy faces a major test. With the advent of global neoliberal policies, the welfare state has been eroded, social democratic parties have weakened their organic ties with the people through market-friendly transformations, the collective capacity to intervene against the global power of capital has been undermined, and as a result, social democracy has become a movement remembered only as a nostalgia of the past in many countries. Yet the historical moment we find ourselves in offers an opportunity and a responsibility for social democracy to rise again: growing inequalities, the rise of authoritarian regimes, the social devastation of the climate crisis, and the crisis of representative democracy are all powerful reasons to rebuild social democracy. However, this new construction process is possible not by repeating the models of the past, but by boldly intervening in the contradictions of the age.

Today, every political mind that wants to build the future of social democracy must analyze the global crisis, which is deepening in four areas, and develop appropriate restructuring proposals. Economic inequalities come first among these. Global capitalism, along with the precariousness of labor, subcontracting, automation, and platform economies, has given rise to a historical wage labor crisis. Poverty is no longer just a problem of underdeveloped countries; it has become a widespread social reality in central countries as well, with the rapid erosion of the middle class, housing crises, and rising debt ratios. Social democracy must redefine its discourse and policies in this context. Tools such as cooperative models that include the democratization of the means of production, basic income guarantees, universal services, and public investments—not just high taxation—should form the labor-centered policies of this new era. The re-regulation of areas of the economy that have been left to the mercy of the market is possible with a development model that prioritizes the interests of the people. At the same time, this transformation should not be limited to wage labor; it should also include care work, domestic work, migrant labor, and the invisible forms of labor of the digital age.

In particular, artificial intelligence and robots have begun to play a greater role in production. This situation has profoundly affected the current lifestyles of workers and employees. For this very reason, trade union organization models must be re-examined and solutions appropriate to the era must be developed. In addition, producers and workers must be protected through new social policies. The erosion of democracy once again underscores that social democracy is not merely an economic policy but also a defense of democratic political and social order. In recent years, authoritarian leaders elected in many countries have attacked judicial independence, media freedom, academic autonomy, and freedom of expression, systematically curtailing citizens' rights. At this point, social democracy should not adopt a political style that is confined to the ballot box, but should implement participatory models based on the direct participation of the people in decision-making processes. Neighborhood councils, citizen forums, participatory budgeting, local democracy tools, and digital



participation platforms will both restore the people's trust in politics and strengthen the social ties of social democratic parties. The response to the crisis of representative democracy can only be provided through new institutional structures based on the collective will of the people. At this point, the equal and effective participation of women, youth, migrants, and all marginalized groups in politics must be the reconstitutive power of social democracy. Because justice must be built not only economically but also in representation and cultural recognition.

The ecological crisis must be central to the future of social democracy. The fossil fuel-based growth model that pushes the planet's natural limits is no longer sustainable. Drought, climate migration, food security, disaster risks, and environmental destruction are not just environmental issues, but also class issues. The climate crisis affects the poor, workers, and vulnerable communities the most. Therefore, social democracy must organize the ecological transition on the basis of justice. Protecting the rights of workers in coal regions, creating green jobs, establishing energy democracy, and strengthening public transportation, in line with the principle of "just transition," will create a political ground that integrates both ecological and social goals. Social democracy can build social trust with a planned, fair, and participatory environmental policy instead of a green transition left to the market.

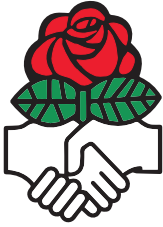
Migrations and wars are among the world's greatest problems. The migration crisis caused by wars deeply affects all countries and leads to chaos. Similarly, migrations caused by climate change are increasingly exacerbating the world's problems.

All these crisis issues necessitate coordination beyond national borders, i.e., an internationalist perspective. While capital moves on a global scale, the fact that labor movements remain limited to the national scale weakens the influence of social democrats. In this context, the future of social democracy lies in a rebirth woven through international cooperation. The Socialist International meeting held in Istanbul strongly emphasized this need, stressing the necessity of establishing global networks for joint struggle against inequality, authoritarianism, and the climate crisis. Joint campaigns, synchronized political initiatives, information and experience sharing, election security networks, digital data monitoring systems, youth solidarity networks, and the women's movement could be the building blocks of this new internationalist strategy. Such a process of rebuilding will make social democracy effective not only in parliaments but also in the streets, universities, digital media, and everyday life.

The future of social democracy lies not in merely boasting about past successes, but in presenting a vision and resolve that can regain the people's trust in the face of today's crises. This vision requires defending collective life against the individualism taught by neoliberalism, publicness against marketization, the common good against polarization, and organized hope against despair. The future will open up not to technocratic solutions but to populist and radical democratic approaches. If social democracy correctly reads this historical change and carries out both principled and structural transformations within itself, it will gain strength not only as an ideology but also as a social movement once again. Therefore, this is not a matter of choice but a matter of generation. The task now is to build a social democracy that promises hope, justice, and freedom to new generations. This is not merely possible; it is achievable through determination, courage, and organization. Social democracy can rebuild its future—provided it reconnects with the people, demonstrates transformative courage, and adopts an internationalist horizon as its compass.

Sami Doğan, President - Muratcan Işıldak, Secretary General
Social Democracy Association





SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

MAY 21–22, 2025 ISTANBUL - TÜRKİYE



JANET CAMILO

PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

Dear Delegates, Distinguished Guests, Dear Comrades,

We are eternally grateful to everyone here today and to those who are supporting us from afar.

The vice-presidents of the Socialist International Women Council are elected for a four-year term. One of them resigned during the previous term due to party duties; her place has been taken by Selin Sayek Böke, who is here with us today. We wholeheartedly believe in her contributions and applaud her together!

In Istanbul, at the crossroads of civilizations, this historic day is a great honor for all of us. Because here, we are transforming the feminist and socialist struggle into international power through transformation with faith.

Technological advances and inequalities are rising side by side around the world. Women are still subjected to violence, invisibility, and exclusion. We did not come here to accept the world as it is, but to transform it from the ground up.

The theme of our council is very clear: “How can we ensure women's rights and social justice in a constantly changing world?”

We believe the answer lies in having a strong perspective. This can be achieved by working hand in hand with political leaders, local governments, and society. Because democracy is strengthened by equal representation and gender-focused policies. Social justice is based on human rights, decent work, health, and education opportunities.



The role of local governments is critical. Municipalities directly affect daily life through issues such as the location of schools, street lighting, and baby-friendly areas in public transportation. Equality begins right here—the path to powerful social transformation is shaped by this foundation. Therefore, we need more women who are committed to feminism and social justice in municipalities, councils, and local governments.

Socialist feminism is a movement that transforms both women and society. Without feminism, socialism is incomplete; without socialism, feminism is incomplete. This is why we keep returning to the Istanbul Convention. Because this convention provides a clear roadmap for preventing all forms of violence against women. Withdrawing from it is withdrawing from civilization and human dignity!

Women are at the heart of change. We are often invisible, but the strong face you see in the mirror is the face we are searching for. Believe in yourself, smile, be strong and happy! We exist not through sorrow, but through action.

Mother, wife, politician... you are all of these things. You don't have to carry all of them at once. Choose one and succeed in that area. Success is not about individual peaks; it is about acting together.

Political parties, parliaments, and local governments should aim for 50% female leadership. Because if women are not free, democracy, peace, and justice are incomplete. Violence against women is not just individual; it is a political and cultural method of control. If we want peace, women must first be safe in their streets, homes, and neighborhoods.

Women's feminism is not elitist; it is a struggle carried out in the streets. We must carry it out with socialist values and mutual solidarity. We are here to change the rules of the game. We are working not only to give women a voice, but also to make them decision-makers.

This Council provides us with a strategic direction; it coordinates our actions; it unites parties and administrations. Let us not forget that the place where we are sitting is an area of change: we have questions to ask ourselves in our general assemblies and administrations.

Let us appreciate the symbolic meaning of Istanbul. Here, we commit to global transformation with feminist and socialist women's leadership. I would like to express my gratitude to the Republican People's Party, all delegates, NGOs, and all of you who struggle every day for making this process possible.

Our success is not one-sided; but together we gain strength. Of course, difficult paths await us—but we chose this path. We, as women, chose this struggle; thanks to us, the women who come after us will have fewer difficulties.

Finally: You can find the documents and journals offered by the Socialist International on our website. Please explore them and contribute. You can share your articles in our monthly journals.

Together we are strong. Together we will change. Let us keep our big dreams alive.



SELİN SAYEK BÖKE

**SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN**

Distinguished leaders and members of the Socialist International Women Council,

Comrades from left-wing and social democratic parties from many different continents and countries who have gathered here today in Istanbul, my dear colleagues from the Republican People's Party,

Distinguished representatives of civil society organizations and the women's movement that have kept the women's struggle alive in our country at all times,

I greet you all with respect and affection.

First and foremost, I would like to emphasize the joy and excitement we feel as the Republican People's Party for hosting the Council meeting of the Socialist International Women, which we are opening today. I would like to once again thank all of our colleagues who contributed to the realization of this program.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my colleagues who honored me by electing me as vice president of the Socialist International Women at yesterday's Executive Committee meeting.

We are hosting this program in Istanbul that is quite significant in terms of time, place, and meaning.

It is important because Istanbul is not only a city of historical and cultural significance; it is also a crucial battleground for gender equality. From the first feminist publications to global agreements and contemporary rights struggles, Istanbul continues to shape and reflect the development of women's rights movements in Türkiye and beyond.



Take, for example, the Istanbul Convention, named after this ancient city.

The Istanbul Convention, which we will discuss in the second session today, is considered the gold standard internationally in the fight against violence against women. The roots of this convention, which guarantees women's right to life, lie in our country, and it takes its name from Istanbul. And most importantly, this convention is the result and achievement of women's decades-long struggle for existence. It is not a favor from someone, nor is it an opportunity provided by others. It is a convention that emerged as a result of a great struggle for rights waged by millions of women represented here in Istanbul, Türkiye, Chile, Mexico, Spain, Finland, Pakistan, and elsewhere.

Just as the attainment of this right was based on a great and united struggle, so too does the protection and implementation of this right today require the same determination to continue that struggle.

In 2011, we were among the first signatories of this convention, which we named after this place, but in 2021, our country was removed from it by the decision of a single man. Just as women have waged a relentless and determined struggle for 10 years to ensure the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, they have been continuing this struggle for over four years to keep the Istanbul Convention alive. As the General Secretary of the Republican People's Party, I am proud to say that our party is at the forefront of this struggle and that our mayors in the municipalities we administer are working hard to keep the Istanbul Convention alive.

And now, let us turn to the present. Today, on March 19, the authoritarian mindset that openly undermined the people's will to choose by arresting Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor and our party's presidential candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu and many of our comrades is once again facing a struggle for democracy and justice spreading from Istanbul, led by women. Because women know very well that without democracy, there are no women's rights. If women's rights are disregarded, then there is no social justice. If there is no social justice, there is no prosperity or well-being. If there is no prosperity, there is no social peace or harmony. Women know that if they do not stand shoulder to shoulder in the struggle for democracy, equality, and justice, and if they do not show solidarity by fighting for each other's rights, then that struggle cannot be won.

This is precisely why millions of women who have asserted their will in the squares, universities, workplaces, and every aspect of life in Istanbul and across Türkiye in response to the March 19 coup attempt are sending a very clear message. That message is clear:

Women in Türkiye will never give up on equality, democracy, and freedom, will never compromise, and will continue to stand courageously at the forefront!



This great struggle for democracy, justice, and equality, in which women are at the forefront in Istanbul, is reflected in the title of our Council meeting today: “Women's rights, social justice, and peace in a constantly changing world.”

What brings us together today is not so much the injustices we share from these podiums, but rather the strength we draw from knowing that women's resistance, determination to defend women's rights, fighting spirit, and transformative power exist in every corner of the world.

This transformative power comes from women's understanding of the holistic nature of the issue and our definition of our struggle. Gender inequality and injustice are produced by this male-dominated system.

This holistic approach encompasses not only the complementarity of social justice, democracy, and peace in the title of our council meeting, but also the complementarity of the struggles and policies carried out at the international, national, and local levels. I would like to elaborate on these two holistic approaches.

The established order is a male-dominated order. It is a system in which those in power protect and support their own, leaving their aggressions unpunished. It is a system that degrades women and defines them by their clothing. And it is this system that makes women's greatest struggle an existential one. Because the characteristics of this system expose women to severe physical and psychological violence.

In this existential struggle, there is certainly a need for international frameworks that set gold standards such as the Istanbul Convention to prevent and eliminate violence against women, as well as national-level central government policies that meet these standards. However, local governments also have a major role to play in this struggle, just as much as the central government.

For example, we are opening a “Women's Support Line” in our municipalities to provide 24/7 support to victims of violence. We are establishing “Women's Solidarity Houses” that offer safe shelter to women who have experienced violence or are at risk. We are opening “Family Counseling and Education Centers” to intervene in domestic crises, thereby supporting women in their struggle for life. As the CHP, we are keeping the Istanbul Convention alive and well in local administrations. Of course, when we come to power, we will first sign the Istanbul Convention and make it one of the central government's primary responsibilities.

Another serious problem women face in this system is socio-economic exclusion, which has reached the level of economic and social violence. The system keeps women away from production, working life, and employment; if they do enter production, they are subjected to severe labor exploitation. The understanding that destroys the social state turns care from a service into a burden placed on women's shoulders. It is clear that this socio-economic exclusion cannot be considered separately from physical and psychological violence.

That is why we base our local administrations' employment of female managers and workers and our wage policy on gender equality.



Our employment offices give priority to women, especially young women, and strive to connect them with new jobs. We provide entrepreneurship training and legal consulting services to women who want to start their own businesses. We are creating skills and training programs, production areas, and workshops within our municipalities to enable women to have professions and incomes and participate in the economy.

We are expanding childcare services, increasing the number and quality of existing childcare centers. We are opening nighttime childcare centers for women working night shifts. We are expanding elderly care services to remove elderly care from being the responsibility of women and make it the responsibility of social municipal services. We are sharing with society our progressive, innovative public services, which demonstrate that another system is possible through many such solidarity-based municipal practices.

It is precisely for this reason that the ruling party is attacking our municipalities and the will of the people who elected these mayors. Because it is precisely because of these policies and actions that the CHP became the leading party in the March 31, 2024 local elections and has remained the leading party ever since. And it is precisely for this reason that they are striking at the will of the people of Istanbul and arresting Ekrem İmamoğlu, the mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and our party's presidential candidate, who is the strongest presidential candidate for the next election, and our fellow travelers.

As I said, the importance of holding this meeting in Istanbul today is great. It is great because a powerful message is spreading from Istanbul to all of Türkiye, and from all of Türkiye to the entire world: another order—democracy against autocracy, the social state against violence—is possible.

Both our policies and our sincere steps toward equal representation of women in politics and their integral participation in decision-making processes convince the people of the existence of another, new, more equal, more just, and more peaceful order. Today, we welcome you as the female leaders, party council members, provincial chairpersons, members of parliament, and mayors of the CHP. Our party's constitution includes quotas for equal representation. But more importantly, there is a level of equality where half of our party leadership is women and half is men, far exceeding these quotas. Because we know that democracy cannot exist without equality, and equality cannot exist without democracy. Because we know that women's presence in politics is the guarantee of their presence in every area of life. No matter what kind of masculine language, sexist attacks, or difficulties women face in politics, they will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder and say, “We are here, we were here, we are here, and we will be here.”

There is no doubt that a new order will be established. Democracy will prevail, justice will be established, and equality will exist. Because we know that women are determined, hopeful about the future, and resilient in their struggles across Türkiye and the world.





ŞULE BUCAK

MEMBER OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN COUNCIL

I would like to begin my remarks by congratulating our General Secretary, Selin Sayek Böke, on her election as Vice President of the SIW. I believe that the SIW will grow even stronger with her.

The struggles for “women’s rights” and “social justice and peace” are inseparable and have always been so throughout human history.

As time and the world continue to change, and as the advancement of human knowledge and productivity transforms human societies, the reality that no human society can achieve lasting social justice and peace without the active and equal participation of women remains unchanged.

We can expand this to include that no human society can achieve lasting social justice and peace without the active and equal participation of the communities that form it, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, or religion.

Throughout history, violence in all its different forms has been an integral part of human life and development, and physical violence has often been used as a tool by the powerful to subjugate the weak and impose their own values on them.

We must also remember that violence has been used to the extent of ending the existence of others through physical violence.



As stated in the resolution prepared for approval at this SIW Council Meeting, this coexistence must be built and sustained on the basis of equality, social justice, and peace, which are the fundamental conditions for women to have full access to the opportunities and resources that enable them to live a dignified and autonomous life.

Women in Türkiye gained the right to vote and run for public office in 1934, which is earlier than in many other countries around the world, but we are still far from achieving equal rights with men in many areas.

Furthermore, physical violence and sexual abuse against women and girls have been on the rise over the past two decades. Despite claiming to advocate for gender equality, the AKP's ideological structure views women as secondary to men. The same ideological structure underlies the AKP's unilateral withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention.

Finally, as socialists, social democrats, and progressives, I would like to emphasize that we are well aware of all the excuses that reactionaries put forward to legitimize all forms of discrimination, as is always the case with discrimination against women.

Therefore, as socialist, social democratic, and progressive women, and as members of the SIW, we must never give up the fight for equal rights for all and against all forms of discrimination, while striving for full access to opportunities and resources that will enable women to live dignified and autonomous lives.





SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

WOMEN'S RIGHTS, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PEACE IN A CONSTANTLY CHANGING WORLD

SÜREKLİ DEĞİŞEN DÜNYADA KADIN HAKLARI, SOSYAL ADALET VE BARİŞ

MAY 21-22, 2025 İSTANBUL - TÜRKİYE



SI WOMEN SESSIONS

SI Council has been preceded by Socialist International Women Council on 21-22 May, in Istanbul. Two days of SIW Council featured meetings under the theme “Women’s Rights, Social Justice and Peace in a Constantly Changing World”.

The SIW Council was held in two sessions:

- “In a constantly changing world, how to guarantee women’s rights and social justice: Role of governments and local authorities” discussed with Nazan Moroğlu (Türkiye), Sonia Guerra (Spain), Angele Ndoumbe (Cameroon), Hella Ben Youssef (Vice President of SI).
- “Istanbul Convention: Ending violence against women through national and local policies” discussed with Shazia Marri (Pakistan, Vice President of SIW), Joana dos Santo Tomas Martins (Angola), Feride Acar (Türkiye) and Karen Diaz Obregon (Chile).

At the end of the SIW Council, the resolution on “Women’s Rights, Social Justice and Peace in a Changing World” has been adopted unanimously.

Selin Sayek Böke, the Secretary General of CHP, has been elected as the Vice President of the SI Women.



First Session: “In a constantly changing world, how to guarantee women’s rights and social justice: Role of governments and local authorities”

The protection of women's rights and social justice cannot be achieved through legislation alone. Effective public policies, inclusive local authorities, and determined political will are indispensable building blocks of this process. A comprehensive, multidimensional, and inclusive approach is required to secure women's rights, establish social peace, and make equality permanent.

Ensuring social justice requires that women have equal rights in all areas, from education to health, employment to safe living, and that they can effectively access these rights.

Governments and local administrations, which are the cornerstone of society, play a key role in ensuring this equality. Equality policies implemented at the local level bring about concrete improvements in women's daily lives, strengthening their access to leadership positions and social participation.

The fundamental priority is to ensure that laws are drafted and effectively implemented in a manner that promotes gender equality. However, beyond this, legal literacy projects, awareness training, employment support for women, and social services carried out through local governments are also drivers of social transformation. It is not enough for women to participate in decision-making processes only in a representative capacity; their meaningful and effective participation must also be ensured.

As lawyer Nazan Moroğlu emphasizes, it is not enough for women's rights to be enshrined in written law; they must be reinforced with effective implementation and monitoring mechanisms. In this area, local governments must take responsibility for developing awareness training and legal support mechanisms for women.

Violence against women is one of the most serious threats to social justice and human rights. The creation of safe public spaces and the protection and support of victims of violence must be addressed as a shared responsibility at both the national and local levels. Policies that ensure women’s economic freedom are also of vital importance in this process. Women’s participation in the workforce must be increased, equal pay policies must be developed, and care work must be made a public responsibility.

Democracy gains meaning not only through elections but also through social inclusiveness. The strong presence of women in the political and public spheres is decisive for the stability and inclusiveness of democratic systems. In this context, political parties, civil society, and public institutions should support women's leadership potential and bring about structural change in this area.



Democracy gains meaning not only through elections but also through social inclusiveness. The strong presence of women in the political and public spheres is decisive for the stability and inclusiveness of democratic systems. In this context, political parties, civil society, and public institutions should support women's leadership potential and bring about structural change in this area.

The development and implementation of egalitarian policies by local governments means not only service delivery but also cultural transformation. The redesign of public spaces to be accessible, safe, and inclusive for women; the fair distribution of public resources through gender-sensitive budgeting; and the restructuring of culture, arts, and heritage policies on the basis of equality are the building blocks of this transformation.

As Hella Ben Youssef shared from her experiences in Tunisia, women's participation in public life and the provision of safe, egalitarian living conditions are among the fundamental responsibilities of local governments.

As we have seen in the examples given by Angèle Ndoumbe from Cameroon, there are significant inequalities in women's access to education, health, and economic resources in many parts of the world. In these adverse conditions, local solidarity networks and women-focused civil society play a critical role in combating all forms of violence. This should be promoted through projects that yield concrete positive results, such as “providing gender equality education from kindergarten onwards” and making male students “HeForShe” ambassadors.

As Natasha Mihalovic from Serbia emphasized, in environments where democratic participation is declining, it is vitally important that women not only be represented but also participate effectively in decision-making processes. If women are not given a seat at the political table, they must bring their own chairs and participate.

In Milan, Italy, participatory and gender-sensitive budgeting has led to direct investment in women's safety, childcare, and employment opportunities, while in Barcelona, urban planning has been transformed from a women's perspective, both of which are positive examples.

In Türkiye, various metropolitan and district municipalities are preparing local equality action plans and implementing childcare services, psychological support centers, producer cooperatives, and employment support programs for women. Although the government's withdrawal from the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention constitutes a significant step backward in the fight against violence against women, local governments continue to apply the principles of the convention and take measures to protect women.

In conclusion, the protection of women's rights, the achievement of social justice, and the establishment of peace will only be possible through long-term and sustainable strategies, not short-term programs. In this context, strong coordination is needed between governments, local administrations, civil society organizations, and international partnerships. Women's rights, lives, labor, and voices must be at the center of building an equal and just world. Democracy, social justice, and peace cannot be achieved without the participation of women.



Second Session: “Istanbul Convention: Ending violence against women through national and local policies”

In many parts of the world, women are exposed to different forms of violence in all areas of life. Violence in the family, social environment, and politics restricts women's individual freedoms and hinders their participation in society. Violence against women is not merely an individual or psychological issue but a systemic problem rooted in gender inequality shaped by cultural norms. Under conditions such as war, siege, and poverty, women are subjected to multi-layered violence.

At this point, the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention is an international treaty that defines violence against women as a form of discrimination against women and a violation of human rights, and imposes binding responsibilities on states. It is based on four fundamental principles: the prevention of violence, the protection of victims, the punishment of perpetrators, and the development of egalitarian policies.

The convention, which provides a multifaceted framework that guarantees women's right to life, dignity, and equality, imposes duties on the state in many areas, from education to housing services, data collection to legal regulations. It is not limited to European countries but is an open and universal document for all countries. Defining violence against women as a structural problem based on gender inequality, the convention makes it clear that elements such as culture, tradition, and religion cannot be used as a means to legitimize violence.

In addition to the Istanbul Convention, the Maputo Protocol in Africa, the Belem do Para Convention in Latin America, and the CEDAW Convention within the UN are important international conventions in the fight against violence against women. However, the Istanbul Convention is the most comprehensive text that defines violence against women in the most detailed manner and includes implementation mechanisms.

Türkiye was the first country to sign the Istanbul Convention in 2011 and ratify it unanimously in Parliament, but in 2021, it unilaterally withdrew from the convention by presidential decree.

According to Prof. Dr. Feride Acar, who played an active role in the preparation and monitoring mechanisms of the Istanbul Convention, the convention is not merely a legal text but also a universal commitment to guarantee women's right to life and dignity. Prevention, protection, investigation, prosecution, and the development of comprehensive policies are the cornerstones of this convention in the fight against violence against women.

Türkiye's decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention is a serious political step backward that directly threatens women's right to life and has not only legal but also severe social consequences.

However, the process of withdrawing from the convention has made the women's movement in Türkiye more resilient, visible, and effective. While women stood up for the convention, new areas were created in local governments and civil society to continue the fight against violence through solidarity networks.



In addition, the increase in the number of social democratic municipalities and female local administrators in the 2024 local elections had a transformative effect on the fight against violence. Municipalities made significant progress toward the goal of gender equality with projects that directly met women's needs in areas such as counseling centers, shelters, daycare services, and safe transportation. The increased visibility of women in local governance and the planning of women-focused projects have improved the accessibility and qualitative depth of services, contributing to social equality at the local level.

One of the fundamental areas of struggle against violence against women is education. Since violence is a behavior learned culturally rather than biologically, it is imperative that gender-based equality education be integrated into the education system from an early age.

The shortcoming in the fight against violence against women is the lack of implementation of national legislation and international conventions. According to GREVIO reports, impunity, lack of inter-institutional coordination, lack of adequate shelters, lack of training for law enforcement agencies, and the lack of legal recognition of new forms of violence (such as cyber violence) are the main problems in implementation.

The fight against violence against women is also a fight for democracy, freedom, and social peace. Sustainable, comprehensive, and participatory policies must be developed to prevent violence, empower women, and achieve equality. For the conventions to be effective and for violence against women to end, political will, the use of public resources for equality-focused education, the active participation of local governments, inclusive services, strong cooperation with civil society, international solidarity, monitoring mechanisms, and increased social awareness are necessary.

In conclusion, the Istanbul Convention is not merely a text, but a guarantee of women's right to life and dignity, and a shared commitment to the possibility of an equal, free, and violence-free life. While Türkiye's withdrawal from the convention is a serious step backward, the spirit of the convention continues to live on through the resistance of the women's movement. Under the rule of the Republican People's Party, Türkiye's return to the Istanbul Convention will be ensured immediately.





SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

WOMEN'S RIGHTS, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PEACE IN A CONSTANTLY CHANGING WORLD

SÜREKLİ DEĞİŞEN DÜNYADA KADIN HAKLARI, SOSYAL ADALET VE BARIŞ

MAY 21-22 2025 İSTANBUL - TÜRKİYE



Resolution: "Women's rights, social justice and peace in a changing world"

In a world in constant transformation, women's rights, social justice and peace are essential pillars to build more equitable, inclusive and resilient societies. The promotion of women's rights, social justice and peace are not separate causes, but deeply intertwined realities. Social justice is secured only when women are freely and fully able to exercise their rights and actively participate in building lasting peace. Peace is indispensable to guarantee security and stability, fundamental conditions for women's full access to opportunities and resources that allow them to live with dignity and autonomy; and a socially just order is critical in building peace.

Social justice is only secured through equal rights, opportunities and access to essential resources such as education, health, decent employment and political participation. However, women continue to live in contexts of structural inequality, with barriers that limit their access to basic rights such as food, clean water, adequate housing, good jobs with security and timely medical care. Equitable political participation and representation, reaching positions of power or influencing decision-making remains a considerable challenge for many women, as does fully exercising their personal autonomy.



Peace requires comprehensive and fair legal frameworks that guarantee the protection of the rights of all people, especially women. As stated by the United Nations Security Council's landmark Resolution of 1325 building peace means preventing all forms of violence against women: physical, psychological, sexual, economic, patrimonial, political and domestic violence. The Socialist International Women reaffirms its unwavering determination and commitment to women's empowerment, because there can be no peace without the full and meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision-making.

The proliferation of armed conflicts, the climate crisis, forced displacement, and growing global inequalities disproportionately impact women and girls. Women often have fewer resources to protect themselves and make up the majority of displaced people or refugees, along with their children. This reality translates into increased risks of sexual violence, human trafficking, forced marriages, and exploitation. In many contemporary conflicts, women are specifically targeted by war strategies that include sexual violence as a systematic weapon of destruction and control. The gains made by decades of feminist struggle are now threatened by the rise of extremist ideologies, ultraconservative and far right movements and misogynistic discourses. This regression weakens the fundamental principles of equality and justice, and undermines the rights that have been conquered. In the face of this, the women of the world reaffirm their determination to resist, transform and move forward with a revitalized global agenda.

We recognize that governments, both at the national and local levels, have a key role to play in promoting gender equality and social justice. The implementation of public policies with a gender approach, the guarantee of access to justice, the prevention of violence and the promotion of women's political participation are essential components for consolidating inclusive and resilient democracies.

In this sense, the Istanbul Convention, an international instrument that has been accepted as the “gold standard”, binding on the states that have ratified it, represents a fundamental milestone in the protection of women's rights and the eradication of all forms of gender-based violence. Its recognition of violence against women as a violation of human rights and its emphasis on the prevention, protection and effective prosecution of aggressors constitute a model for the design of comprehensive public policies. We deeply regret the decision of some Governments to withdraw from this Convention, and we urge States that have not yet ratified it to do so without delay. We remind that the Istanbul convention has powerful roots in the centuries-long political and social struggle of women for their rights. It was hard-won—not granted by the grace or favour of any political power or individual.

On the occasion of its Council in Istanbul, Türkiye on 21 and 22 May 2025, the Socialist International Women calls for:

- National governments, local authorities, parliaments and state powers to implement transformative public policies with a gender perspective, aimed at promoting equality, eradicating violence, empowering women and peacefully resolving conflicts.
- The international community, multilateral agencies, NGOs, grassroots organizations, feminist movements, and civil society actors to work together to ensure women's access to all their rights, ensure their representation in all decision-making spaces, and promote social justice as a basis for lasting peace.



All states, including but not limited to member States of the Council of Europe and European Union, to strengthen their commitment to the Istanbul Convention, and to promote its effective implementation as a legal and ethical standard for the prevention of violence and the promotion of gender equality, and urges governments that have not done so far to swiftly ratify the Istanbul Convention.

- Governments to design economic and social policies integrating social equity with economic efficiency, aim to strengthen women's socioeconomic rights and promote social justice through policies focusing on access to decent work, equal pay, quality education, and affordable childcare. Governments to implement legal protections against gender-based discrimination in the workplace.
- Education systems, the media and cultural platforms to promote respect for human rights, intercultural dialogue and education in equality, as essential tools to transform mentalities and build a culture of peace.

Today more than ever, we reaffirm that there is no peace without equality, there is no justice without women, there is no democracy without inclusion. United, we will be stronger today than ever.





COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 24-25, 2025 ISTANBUL - TÜRKİYE

PEDRO SÁNCHEZ

PRIME MINISTER OF SPAIN
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

Dear friends, esteemed colleagues from the CHP, my dear friend Özgür Özel, I greet you with respect.

I would like to begin my speech by remembering Jose Mujica. He passed away last week. For many of us, for socialists, he was a great source of inspiration. I believe we can best honor his memory by working to uphold our values. Thank you, dear Pepe, for introducing us to your unique vision.

I would also like to welcome the delegates of our member parties and our special guests. Thank you for coming to Istanbul. I would like to thank our comrades and friends at the CHP for hosting us. I would also like to thank my dear friend Özgür Özel once again for his strong leadership during these challenging times.

We are holding our Council in Istanbul, a city where beautiful histories and cultures meet. It is a city where people from all over the world come together. It is a city that carries very important lessons. One of these is inclusiveness, another is peace, and finally, solidarity.

First, I would like to talk about inclusivity. Dear comrades, we are witnessing the rise of the far right in many countries around the world, and we see its destructive effects and the culture of fear it creates in our countries. We see people with different views being silenced or oppressed, and our societies being isolated. We see the gains that the middle class and workers have made over the years being taken away from them. And these people are also taking action to take away women's rights. This is completely contrary to our values. We believe in democracy and justice, and we know that the only way to a better future is through the will of the majority. We are fighting for our honor. We are working for better jobs, better working conditions, women's rights, gender equality, and equal opportunities. We are working for the rights of minorities. Our ideas and principles envision an inclusive system. Democracy is one of the most inclusive systems. Of course, it is not a perfect system, but it is the best system we have. We need to encourage free participation and work to achieve the best possible results for the majority.



Democracy is a system of checks and balances that includes both the ruling party and the opposition, and requires respect for the votes of citizens. Everyone in this room has sacrificed a great deal to defend democracy. We are going through difficult times. Many of our friends are in prison. We stand with our comrades in Belarus, Niger, Venezuela, and Türkiye. Because something very important is now at risk. No political ideology can stand against this movement as we can. We are strong, and as long as we are together, we will win. This was one of the outcomes of the committee we organized in Albania last March. Global challenges require global cooperation, because none of us can overcome them alone.

The next topic I would like to address is peace. Militarism is on the rise again in many parts of the world. The socialist political family and the values that hold it together are always linked to peace. The best fight we can wage against oppression is cooperation. War is something that our host country today knows very well.

Our stance on Ukraine is very clear. It is Ukraine's fundamental right to live in peace and to ensure its security. We see the sacrifices made by the Ukrainian people and are ready to offer our full support to all negotiation processes. Peace in Ukraine is very important to us, and we will continue to work tirelessly to achieve it.

Our stance on the extraordinary situation in Gaza is also clear. This is an absolutely unacceptable situation, and remaining silent or indifferent in the face of it is something our community can never do. We cannot remain indifferent while mothers and fathers carry their dead children in their arms and children are at risk of dying of starvation. Enough is enough. Therefore, in a situation where international law and human rights are being violated so blatantly, it is impossible for us to remain silent. Our member parties, the Democrats, are always raising their voices for peace on this issue. Therefore, our message to Israel once again is to end the occupation of Gaza and the military operations in this regard. The expulsion of Palestinians from their lands is unacceptable and, to put it simply, a violation of international law. Therefore, we are calling on Israel to lift the blockade, stop preventing humanitarian aid from reaching Gaza, and stop condemning people to death by starvation. Children are dying, and medical aid is not reaching those in need. I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you that Spain and Palestine are preparing a new proposal to be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly. This proposal aims to include NGOs engaged in humanitarian activities in the process of delivering humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Many people are losing their lives in attacks on the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Women and children are losing their lives. This is one of the greatest humanitarian crises in our history. We must fight against this and not lose hope. This brings me to the final point of my speech. Solidarity: We define ourselves by our commitment to inclusiveness and our dedication to peace. Solidarity is just as important a principle for us. Our community is a community based on solidarity, and we extend this solidarity beyond our borders with the aim of establishing a global community spirit.



We are following developments in the US with concern. We see that they have abandoned their commitment to sustainable development goals, aim to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, and are putting the future of our planet at risk.

The far right is on the rise, but this rise will also have a fall. This is inevitable. When extreme nationalism is your only compass, the situation you face is always losing your way. Our task as socialists is to build bridges and foster cooperation. Solidarity is our greatest strength, and as long as we stand together, they cannot weaken us. When the era changes, the people whose eyes turn to us will be us, the socialists.

That is why we need to strengthen our ties at the local level through initiatives like the global network of local governments we are building today. We see in many cases that the solutions to global problems lie at the local level. So let us continue to follow our vision and mission. Let us continue the struggle.





Özgür Özel

CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

Dear comrades, welcome to all of you. I thank you for your solidarity. I can feel here that your strong sense of solidarity has been conveyed to Ekrem İmamoğlu and our friends in the warmest way possible. In the text read out a moment ago, he also expressed how much strength the solidarity of this hall gave him. Distinguished guests, dear comrades, we greet you from a city that has been the capital of three great empires, connecting Asia and Europe, with a sea rather than a river running through its center.

I would like to express our deep pleasure in welcoming you to Istanbul, one of the world's oldest cities. We see the Socialist International, with 89 parties from 81 countries, as the world's largest family. We are comrades who share the same worldview and are closely connected to one another. Today, we need solidarity around the common values of this great family more than ever. History is going through a very important turning point. Governments that advocate neoliberal economic policies have exacerbated economic inequalities between nations and classes to enormous proportions. While one part of the world has turned into a society of insatiable consumption, the other part has been condemned to poverty and even starvation. They have contributed significantly to the deepening of the climate crisis, the migration problem, and many other related issues. They have further wounded the already wounded spirit of the world. Today, there is a need for deep compassion to heal this wounded spirit. The source of this compassion is none other than social democracy and socialism, which have always stood by the poor and the oppressed. For this reason, the world today needs us social democrats and socialists more than ever. To restore balance in the world and put an end to regional wars, we need the unifying hand of social democracy, not the irrational rhetoric of right-wing populist movements. The will represented in this hall is the very force that will bring about this unification. What we need is not intense emotions fueled by unrealistic rhetoric, but genuine solidarity and the courage to stand up for our fellow citizens who have been victimized by authoritarianism and the neoliberal order. It should be understood that if this hall takes a step back from solidarity and courage, it will lead to the suffering of billions of people in our countries who are victims of injustice.



Dear comrades, the geography we live in is, unfortunately, a region where almost every kind of multiple crisis and conflict is taking place. To the north of this city, in Ukraine, there has been war, conflict, and occupation for nearly three years. Just beyond our southern border, in Gaza, there is ongoing massacre and genocide; in Syria, our neighbor, there is uncertainty and conflict; further south, in Yemen, and to our east, in Libya, there is increasing instability... Our region is one of the geographical areas with the most uneven distribution of income, as well as the most intense climate- or conflict-induced migration. In addition, this vast region is grappling with some of the most pressing and severe challenges of our time, such as terrorism, proxy wars, and hybrid wars. One of the sources fueling authoritarianism is security concerns. Increasing crises and conflicts around the world are being used by authoritarian regimes as a tool to strengthen their power. At this point, it has become even more important for social democratic and socialist parties to maintain the balance between security, democracy, and income distribution and to develop their discourse in line with these new conditions. We hope that the ongoing conflicts, including the bloody conflicts in Ukraine, will result in a ceasefire and then a permanent solution accepted by both sides. I consider all efforts in this direction to be extremely valuable.

Once again, I call for an end to the massacres in Gaza. The number of Palestinians killed in Gaza has exceeded 50,000. In the last week alone, 370 Palestinians have been killed. Children, women, 370 Palestinians... Right next door to us, 370 women and babies have been killed in the past week. All comrades must raise their voices and speak out about this in all regions and at all meetings. Today, US President Trump is laughing and mocking the project to expel the Palestinian people from Gaza and turn that region into an entertainment and casino center. Unfortunately, the world is listening. I would like to emphasize once again in your presence that Trump is not joking, but he is also not unaware of the existence of hydrocarbon reserves off the coast of Gaza that would suffice for all of Europe for a century. I would like to reiterate in your presence that we will stand against this evil plan to the end and that we will defend the Palestinian cause with the same and increasing courage, in line with our historical consistency. We argue that the solution lies in the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital within the 1967 borders. We must continue to uphold this United Nations resolution. Our dear President Pedro Sanchez is providing sincere and exemplary support for the Palestinian people's just struggle. For this, I congratulate him once again from here. I call on the Socialist International to take a much more effective stance against this massacre. I believe it is important for the Middle East Committee to visit the region, prepare a report on this issue, and urgently bring it to the agenda.

Dear comrades, we have entered such a period that the American President can say without hesitation, "He is my favorite dictator" about some leaders. Or, while hosting them, he can say on live television, "It's not a problem for me that you are a dictator." In Türkiye, President Erdoğan can imprison his strongest rival to prevent him from running in the election, and before doing so, he can get approval from Trump, who does not care about the concept of dictatorship. He can inform him. The Trump administration is laughing sarcastically at these injustices in Türkiye. One of the most important figures in Trump's team, the person most interested in the oil off the coast of Gaza, the person expected to start oil exploration in Türkiye in a few months, said yesterday when asked about the events in Türkiye, "These things happen in third world countries. Lock up the opposition, get rid of them. The problem is solved. There are active protests in Türkiye, but the government still appears stable." Unfortunately, a radical right-wing, racist party in Germany achieved unprecedented success in the elections. Last week, an extreme right-wing party in Portugal failed to form a government but received a historically high number of votes. In other words, the wave of right-wing populism and authoritarianism around the world is becoming increasingly dangerous. We entered the second quarter of the 21st century with machines and robots that communicate with



each other and learn from one another under the influence of artificial intelligence, and we discussed these risks. However, we entered this period with authoritarian populist leaders who communicate with each other, collaborate, and learn from one another. I believe that the greatest challenge and the main area of struggle in the coming quarter should be this very issue. We must never forget that only organized goodness can overcome organized evil. The antidote to organized authoritarianism is our solidarity. Well-organized democratic forces around the world must act in solidarity. The reason our Socialist International meeting this year is based on the theme of “solidarity” is because of this common observation we have made. Solidarity is no longer a choice for democrats, but an inescapable responsibility. For this very reason, the slogan of the meeting has been set as “For the world we deserve; either all together or none of us.” The slogan we are using in Türkiye during this period, inspired by the German poet Bertolt Brecht, is: “There is no salvation alone. Either all together or none of us.”

Dear comrades, today authoritarians are abusing the approval they received from the people and violating the fundamental principles of democracy. They are eroding the opportunities provided by democracy. They are taking over and monopolizing traditional media outlets. They are using social media as a tool for oppression and censorship. They are controlling the legal system. They create enemies both internally and externally to fuel anxiety. When the people's wall of anxiety is breached, they see it as an opportunity to build a wall of fear. They resort to bullying to manage consent and intimidate to suppress dissent. It is as if they have not been pressured, but they all have the Authoritarian Handbook at their fingertips. As I mentioned earlier, they learn from each other, teach each other, and support each other. In such a process, when you try to tell the world about the oppression and wrongdoings in a country, the democrats of that country try to create psychological pressure and barriers by saying, “You cannot complain about your country abroad.” The situation in Türkiye is no different. When the coup was staged against this government on July 15, Erdoğan knocked on our door the next morning and said, “Your relations with the world are very good. Help us explain to the world that this is a coup against democracy.” We did not withhold that help. When his party was being shut down, he knocked on each of your doors with the committees he had formed and explained how anti-democratic it was to file a lawsuit to shut down his party. He received support. We have always been against party closures. When Erdoğan's party first started out, they went to the European Court of Human Rights and obtained results in their applications in the face of the difficulties they experienced. We all defended the implementation of the ECHR's decisions. Today, the Republican People's Party, which does not implement the ECHR's decisions, keeps elected members of parliament in prison despite the Constitutional Court's decision, stands by him when a coup is staged against him, opens the closed parliament and resists in front of tanks, stages a coup against its elected mayor, a coup against our future presidential candidate, and a coup against the country's future government, and then they are so brazen as to say, “You can't talk about this anywhere.” I have spoken out boldly and without hesitation to the high-circulation newspaper printed on the train in Japan, to The Guardian in response to what the British Labour Party did, and to more than 40 media outlets around the world, and I will continue to do so. Surrendering to the mediocrity they have created, remaining within the climate they have created, and staying behind the walls they have built only strengthens them. The walls must be torn down, the climate must be abandoned, and we must not surrender to the mediocrity imposed by dictators. This is the first remedy.



Mr. Erdoğan, who came to power through elections but does not want to leave through elections, has staged a coup against his greatest rival. Thus, Türkiye awoke to a civilian coup on the morning of March 19. Mr. İmamoğlu was targeted by the judiciary on political orders after announcing his candidacy for the presidency. Ekrem İmamoğlu, the three-time elected mayor of our city, Istanbul, and our party's presidential candidate, was taken into custody on March 19 after his home was raided by hundreds of police officers. In addition, five more of our mayors in Istanbul have been arrested. Two of our municipalities have been placed under trusteeship. The co-chair of the DEM Party is also here with us in this hall. We will hear from him shortly. In the previous term, 49 mayors elected with very high votes were replaced by trustees on the grounds of terrorism. In this term, more than 10 mayors have been replaced by trustees. We stood in solidarity during that process, and we will continue to do so during this process. In Türkiye, there is currently a process underway under the slogan "Türkiye without terrorism," but we have announced that we will support it as "Türkiye without terrorism and with democracy." There is hope that this process will end terrorism in Türkiye, prevent conflicts, and ensure that no Kurdish or Turkish mother will shed tears again. Despite all the difficulties we have experienced and all the pressures we have faced, we are making the most positive contribution to this process, as befits social democrats, and we will continue to do so. I would like to put this on record.

Erdoğan, who came to power through elections but does not want to leave through elections, had his diploma revoked by a board of directors tasked with painting the walls of the university, despite the faculty's objection, 31 years after receiving the university diploma required in Türkiye for a person to become a presidential candidate, 31 years after receiving it from Istanbul University. Dear Ekrem İmamoğlu, who held administrative rather than academic positions, was responsible for the ring lines within the university, and the painting of walls. Even if he does not receive any punishment, if the Administrative Court does not revoke this decision, Ekrem İmamoğlu cannot run for president. This shows how afraid they are, and that while Ekrem İmamoğlu's diploma was revoked after 31 years of service, the diplomas of 28 of his classmates were also revoked; one of these individuals holds a doctorate from the Sorbonne and is the dean of the business department at Galatasaray University, one of Türkiye's most prestigious private universities; I would also like to note that the dean's diploma was revoked simply because he was a classmate of Ekrem İmamoğlu and feared him, and that the dean of Türkiye's most powerful business faculty is now a high school graduate. Erdoğan may have calculated everything, but he failed to account for our people. Because all democrats in Türkiye stood up against this coup. Mass protests against this injustice began in all 81 provinces. However, the government wanted to suppress these protests with violence. Thousands of our people were detained, and hundreds were arrested. In the first few days alone, 302 university students were arrested and spent the 10-day holiday away from their families in Silivri prisons. Millions who believe in democracy did not give up the struggle. From that day until now, we have continued to keep the protests alive by holding night rallies in a district of Istanbul every Wednesday and large provincial rallies in a province every weekend. In Türkiye, political opposition and social opposition are united. Because if palaces belong to authoritarian leaders, then squares belong to the people. Mr. Ekrem İmamoğlu has been detained for 67 days. His indictment has not yet been written. The prosecution has failed to prove any of its allegations. More than 70 percent of citizens in Türkiye believe that this investigation is political, not legal. We see these figures in the polls. During this process, our already struggling economy has suffered a major collapse. Our Central Bank was forced to sell \$60 billion in reserves to prevent the rise of the exchange rate. The 86 million citizens of Türkiye are paying the price for the ruling party's political ambitions by becoming even poorer.



It should be noted that representative democracy is an incomplete form of democracy. However, the alternative to incomplete democracy is never autocracy. The alternative to incomplete democracy is participatory democracy. The alternative to politics in crisis is not apoliticism or submission. The alternative is more politics, more participation, more struggle, and more solidarity. We do not aim to survive against authoritarianism, but to defeat authoritarianism with the support of the people and come to power. At the end of all these processes, we see that our party, just as it became Türkiye's leading party after 47 years in the March 31 elections, is today Türkiye's leading party by a wide margin in the polls. At the beginning of my speech, I said, "We are a family united by a common value." Being a family comes with responsibilities. For this reason, I would like to sincerely thank all our comrades who have stood in solidarity with us during this process. I am grateful for the official statements of the Socialist International and our sister parties, represented by Pedro, the statement of the Party of European Socialists, their visits of support, and I must also mention the German Social Democrats for their intensive participation in all delegations that came to Türkiye, their separate visits, and the fact that Germany is the country where the issue is most on the agenda after Türkiye. On this occasion, I congratulate our sister party, the SPD, on the recent elections and the new responsibilities they have undertaken. I congratulate my comrade Lars on his new position. I invite the SPD once again to return to the Socialist International family, its big family, from Istanbul and to end this separation as soon as possible. Last night we were with the esteemed Secretary General of the PES, and today they honored our hall with their presence. His speech yesterday was very valuable. I find his assessments regarding solidarity and the need for sister parties to stand together in every environment, to strengthen solidarity, and to unify structures to be very valuable. I would like to thank him once again for this. I would like to express our sadness at the fact that some of our comrades have chosen to remain silent during this difficult period we are experiencing. When everything is over, what we will remember is not the loud and harsh words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends. I would like to reiterate this to our friends, those friends, those we consider friends.

There are equations in Syria, there are equations in the world, and there are huge interests of huge countries. But looking at these equations and seeing Britain's interests in Erdoğan is not right. If Britain has an interest, it is in a stable Türkiye, a stable Syria, and a stable Middle East. But the path to stability in Türkiye lies in the rule of democrats. The stability of autocrats is the most fundamental instability. That is why we have never accepted remaining silent in the face of a coup against democrats under the pretext of "supporting stability," and we will not accept it in the future either. Dear comrades, Türkiye is a great country. And this country is not just about Erdoğan's rule. As the Republican People's Party, our goal is to ensure income justice, judicial justice, and social justice in our country. Our goal is to maintain full democratic competition. Our goal is to build a Türkiye where the Kurdish question is completely resolved and there is no terrorism or violence. Our goal is to remove Türkiye from being a refugee dumping ground and to resolve the migration issue in cooperation with Europe. And our goal is to make our country a full member of the European Union. We are continuing this struggle with determination.

Of course, not everything was bad during the 23 years of AK Party rule. There were good things too. They were few, but there were good things too. In Türkiye, if you value something very much, you can give it an evil eye charm as a gift. May nothing bad happen to it. I say this as the leader of the main opposition. If there were an evil eye charm and I had to give it to Erdoğan for some reason, I would do so for the Istanbul Convention. The Istanbul Convention, named after Istanbul, is a very powerful text that prohibits violence against women, commits to taking the toughest measures in this regard, and defends gender equality and the fight against inequality. It was decided in Istanbul. With our support, it was quickly brought to the agenda in our parliament. All members of parliament voted unanimously to bring it into force. On that day, the Republican People's Party raised both hands to support



the ratification of the Istanbul Convention. Erdoğan withdrew from the Istanbul Convention with a signature he signed alone in the middle of the night before the last elections in order to gain the support of a strange group of voters who did not want to pay alimony to women, who reacted to women being removed from their homes for being beaten, and who considered violence against women legitimate within certain limits. That is why there is no evil eye charm left to pin on Erdoğan's lapel.

However, within the first month of coming to power, the Republican People's Party will reinstate the Istanbul Convention in Türkiye and will be a champion of its best possible implementation worldwide. I would like to reiterate this in the presence of the esteemed members of the Socialist International Women, who held a very successful meeting here a few days ago.

As I conclude my remarks, we must remind everyone that democrats are either the target or the potential target of authoritarianism. It is our inevitable responsibility to stand together in the fight against it. As a family of the Socialist International, we will always remain committed to the values of freedom, justice, and solidarity. The challenges we face will be overcome by the resolute will of our comrades, who must act with a sense of solidarity in the face of every problem. I am fully confident that with the support of our valued members, we will defend democracy, peace, and social justice even more strongly. From here in Istanbul, we are speaking out together to the whole world. We will not surrender to authoritarians. Democrats will win. We will win. There is no salvation alone—either together or none of us. I greet you all with respect.



SELİN SAYEK BÖKE

SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

Distinguished guests, dear comrades,

We are thrilled and delighted to host the Council meeting of the Women's Socialist International, which we held two days ago, and today's Council meeting of the Socialist International. Welcome to Türkiye and Istanbul!

I would like to once again thank all our comrades who contributed to the realization of this program.

We are hosting this program in Istanbul that is quite significant in terms of time, place, and meaning. On March 19, a coup was staged in this important city with the arrest of Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, the mayoral candidate of our party, and many of our comrades. In response to this authoritarian move, a loud and determined cry for democracy, justice, and equality rose from Istanbul. The young people, women, retirees, and workers who are the foot soldiers of the struggle for democracy and justice became the vanguard of a great popular struggle that spread from Istanbul to Anatolia.

Everything is constantly changing, and these great changes bring destruction. We, all of us, demand the justice and prosperity we deserve, and we show our determination to establish an economic order in which we will all prosper together. We know that the world we deserve and salvation from today's great destruction can only be achieved through a struggle waged shoulder to shoulder, in solidarity and unity. We know and we say, "There is no salvation alone. Either all together or none of us." For this very reason, we sincerely thank the President of the Socialist International, Mr. Pedro Sanchez, for accepting our call and invitation to gather here as a large family, and for showing their determination to grow our shared excitement about the world we deserve.



I said earlier that it is significant that this meeting is taking place in Istanbul. It is significant because we are here as a crowd that will send a very powerful message from Istanbul to all of Türkiye, and from all of Türkiye to the entire world. Another order is possible. A more just, more equal, and more peaceful order is possible, one where democracy stands against autocracy and the social state stands against violence. And there is no doubt that this hall confidently and assuredly tells us that this order will inevitably be established. Democracy will prevail, justice will be established, and equality will inevitably exist. Because we know that, just as in this hall, the democratic will of the millions represented here continues to grow with determination, resistance, and hope all over the world. Welcome to Istanbul, to Türkiye, where the heart of the great struggle for democracy and justice beats today.

Now I will share with you a message from Ekrem İmamoğlu, the elected mayor of this city and our party's presidential candidate, sent to you from Silivri.

This message is much more than a greeting and a statement of solidarity; it is the common will and common voice of tens of millions of people who are determined to put an end to the darkness that is enveloping every aspect of life. The owner of this voice is the people of Türkiye themselves, who are determined to build enlightenment, that is, democracy, justice, and freedom. The representative of this will, who may not be physically with us today, but who is always with us in spirit, thought, and soul, is our Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor and Presidential Candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu.

What you will see in the documentary you will watch at noon, the trailer of which you will see shortly, is the story of this people's struggle for democracy against those who seek to stifle their will.

Our Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, our Şişli Mayor Resul Emrah Şahan, our Beylikdüzü Mayor Mehmet Murat Çalık, our Beşiktaş Mayor Rıza Akpolat, our Beykoz Mayor Alaattin Köse, and our Esenyurt Mayor Ahmet Özer are in prison today because they are partners in this struggle.

From here, we send our greetings to each of them with the slogan that is also the title of our Council meeting, "There is no salvation alone, either all together or none of us," and I am sharing the speech text of our Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor and Presidential Candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu, who represents the hopes of millions of citizens in Türkiye, on his behalf.



EKREM İMAMOĞLU

Imprisoned Presidential Candidate and Mayor of Istanbul

Dear Members of the Socialist International, Dear Comrades, Welcome to Istanbul.

Though I cannot greet you in person with a handshake, my heart, my will, and my unwavering belief stand firmly with the friendship and solidarity in this hall.

It is profoundly meaningful for me to welcome you to my city, for Istanbul is not only a crossroads where cultures have met throughout history, but also a city that keeps making history.

Istanbul is the city of those who do not bow to oppression or imposition; a city where the heartbeat of independence, freedom, and significant change has always pulsed.

Great transformations have always found a home in this city. From the powerful May Day gatherings in Taksim, to the Gezi Park resistance, and today's rallies in Saraycane and across its neighbourhoods — Istanbul's citizens have always raised their voices in the public squares, asserting their rights.

And now, once again, we hear that voice — in the courage of our youth, in the determination of our women, and in the unyielding conscience of the people.

Today, democracy, equality, and social justice are under fierce assault across the globe. Human rights and freedoms are increasingly threatened — even in countries once thought immune to democratic backsliding and authoritarianism.

The latest and gravest stage of Türkiye's long-running democratic backslide is the outright disregard for the national will; manifest in the politically motivated arrests of our mayors and many of our colleagues, including myself, on baseless legal grounds.



Just yesterday morning, a new wave of detentions targeted several of my close colleagues. These operations are designed to paralyze our municipal services and erode the trust that the people have placed in us.

But they will not succeed.

As a mayor elected three times by the people of Istanbul, and as a presidential candidate chosen by 15.5 million citizens in the nationwide primary held on March 23, I am under political arrest. I have not been imprisoned for any crime, but because I stood with millions to demand democracy and justice. I am imprisoned because millions believe in and trust us — because our struggle has made it clear that a change in power is approaching.

This process is a direct attack on democracy and an open attempt to override the will of the people. My university diploma was unlawfully annulled. My home was raided. Our municipalities have been encircled by investigations.

But this pressure does not target me alone — it targets everyone who dares to dream of a freer and more just future. This is not only an attack on today's democratic will; it is an effort to obstruct tomorrow's — to block fair elections before they even take place.

Let no one doubt this: they cannot take away our determination to build a free and just future. Nor can they suppress the will of the people through force.

In Istanbul, we showed that participatory democracy is possible — that we can build a city together that is inclusive, fair, environmentally responsible, and sustainable. And the people made it clear: what happened in Istanbul is what they want to see across Türkiye.

The fact that the Republican People's Party (CHP) became the leading party in the 2024 local elections, the fact that millions have kept the squares full since March 19 — this is what the government fears.

What they fear is our new political approach — and the power shift that now seems inevitable.

History teaches us a simple truth: autocracies are not invincible. They have been defeated before — and they will be defeated again.

The Socialist International knows this all too well. From Chile to Portugal, from South Africa to Belarus, those who resisted oppression were always united by a shared sense of solidarity.

Today, in places like Syria, Ukraine, and Gaza, people continue to suffer under the weight of war and deprivation. In Gaza in particular, the Palestinian people have not only been stripped of their fundamental rights, their land, and their homes — they are once again facing hunger and death as humanitarian aid is blocked.

Authoritarian populist regimes pose a danger not only to their own societies but to global peace as well.

In the face of this threat, those who believe in democracy must raise their voices — together — and stand in solidarity.



Today, Istanbul once again finds itself on the frontlines of the global struggle between democracy and authoritarianism. This is a fight between those who uphold the rule of law and those who weaponize it against their opponents; between those who strive to keep democratic institutions alive and those who hollow them out from within, between the will of the people — and a narrow circle of oligarchic interests.

As the CHP, we do not only stand against repression — we also offer a clear and tangible vision for the future.

As the founding and oldest party of our Republic, and one of the largest social democratic parties in the world, we are committed to rebuilding a strengthened parliamentary system, achieving gender equality, establishing a rights-based social welfare state, fostering a productive society, and delivering sustainable, just, and inclusive development.

These are not abstract promises or goals left hanging in political rhetoric. They are the strong, people-centered policies we have already implemented in the cities we govern.

We are living in an era of profound global transformation, marking a historic turning point.

And at this turning point, the authors of the future are clear: young people, women, workers, producers, the people. In short, us.

What we need in this moment is visible both in the title of this Socialist International Council meeting — and in every corner of Türkiye. Türkiye today echoes with the unified voice of youth demanding a free future, of women standing firm for the Istanbul Convention, of farmers forming democracy convoys with their tractors, and of workers rising to claim their rights against injustice.

It is the voice that is inspired by the unforgettable line of Bertolt Brecht:

“No salvation alone— all of us or none.”

And we know this much:

As long as millions raise this voice, insist on democracy, stand up for justice, build a future grounded in development and social fairness and fight side by side for a better tomorrow - everything will be beautiful.





COUNCIL MEETING

United for the world we deserve - A global vision of values and solidarity

The Presidium and the Council meetings of the Socialist International were held on 23-25 May, in Istanbul. Over the course of two days, participants from around the world held sessions on topics including the safeguarding democracy in the digital world, local governance, the protection of civilians against violence and conflict; the multiple crises of global development, and their impact from Latin Africa to Latin America.

The first theme of the Council discussions was “Safeguarding Democracy in the Digital World”, and speakers, with their contributions, enriched the discussion started in the Ad Hoc Committee that took place in Tirana at the beginning of the year.

Tülay Hatimoğulları, Co-Chair of the DEM, an SI member party, presented current challenges to democracy in our era, emphasising the need to build inclusive societies with respect for human rights.

Mahamadou Issoufou, former President of Niger and Executive Director of the Issoufou Foundation, presented the challenges related to democracy and peace-building in Africa, analysing in depth the situation in the Sahel.

Namık Tan, Vice Chairman of CHP, addressed the multifaceted threats posed by digital technologies to democratic systems, emphasizing that algorithm-driven manipulation and disinformation undermine public trust and electoral integrity. He underlined the importance of transparency, digital literacy, and cross-border collaboration in safeguarding democracy in the digital era.



Paul Magnette, Chair of the SI Europe Committee, emphasised the need to contain the rise of populist leaders in Europe and expressed his solidarity with those fighting for democracy in Türkiye, and in particular with Ekrem İmamoğlu. Solidarity with the Mayor of Istanbul and all those detained without proof of guilt was also expressed by the leader of the Democratic Party of Italy, Elly Schlein, and delegates asked for his immediate release.

The Chair of the SI Latin America and the Caribbean Committee, Manuel Vargas, presented the extensive discussion on democracy and the rule of law in the region as addressed at the SICLAC meeting in Panama, 9–11 May 2025.

The second theme was “Addressing Violence and Conflicts, Protecting Civilians”.

The absolute necessity to end without delay the arbitrary bloodshed in Gaza, to stop the displacement of Palestinians from their homeland, and to provide urgently needed humanitarian assistance through proper channels, was expressed by many speakers following a keynote speech by the representative of Fatah, Afif Safieh.

It was also stressed that it is of paramount importance to strengthen the peace camp in Israel and work with our member parties, Fatah and the Democrats, for the implementation of a two-states solution as the only way to guarantee security for Israel, Palestine and the broader region.

The extreme toll on civilians, particularly women and girls, from proxy conflicts in Africa was presented as a very serious matter of concern by speakers from Africa and beyond, in relation also to the role of regional and international organisations.

The current situation between Armenia and Azerbaijan was described by SI Vice-President Mario Nalpatian.

The third theme was “The Global Development Polycrisis and Its Implications from Africa to Latin America”.

The current cuts in development assistance and humanitarian aid by the United States and their implications for health, population movements, poverty, democracy, and the implementation of the SDGs were discussed in a very lively panel that included speakers from Africa and Latin America.

Professor Yalçın Karatepe, Vice Chairman of CHP, argued that the current global development system has failed to deliver fairness, especially to countries in the Global South. He urged for a complete rethink of this model—calling for a development approach that respects sovereignty, supports local needs, and puts human dignity at the center.

SIW President Janet Camilo presented the conclusions of the SIW meeting organised before the Council, with the support of the host party CHP, emphasising the backlash against women’s rights registered in many countries.

The General Coordinator Chantal Kambiwa presented a comprehensive report of all SI activities since the Rabat Council, including regional committee meetings, ad hoc committee meetings, special missions and reports.

An important SI initiative launched during the Istanbul Council was the setup of a Socialist International Network of Regional and Local Authorities. The network was launched during a special working lunch chaired by SI President Pedro Sanchez on 24 May. The first Chair of the Network will be Ahmet Aras, Mayor of Muğla Metropolitan Municipality.



On 24 May, a special ceremony took place, dedicated to the Jose Francisco Peña Gomez Awards. The 2025 Francisco Peña Gomez Awards were given to

- **Zülfü Livaneli**, a great intellectual, author, composer and politician from Türkiye;
- **Mikola Statkevich**, the opposition leader in Belarus who is a political prisoner since 2020;
- **Oscar Arias**, the former President of Costa Rica, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize 1987;
- **Maria Isabel Allende**, the Former President of the Chilean Senate and the Honorary President of the Socialist International.



First Theme: “Safeguarding Democracy in the Digital World”

Democracy is under heavy attack and in decline globally. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2024 Democracy Index report, only 6.6 percent of the world's population is governed by full democracy, while 40 percent is forced to live under authoritarian regimes. As democracy retreats worldwide and faces intense attacks, it has become an inescapable responsibility for all socialists and social democrats to act in solidarity.

Indeed, the strong support given to the struggle for justice by Ekrem İmamoğlu, the imprisoned mayor of Istanbul and presidential candidate of 15.5 million citizens, at the Socialist International Council meetings in Istanbul is the most concrete example of this solidarity.

Today, political processes are shaped not only in parliaments or squares, but also on social media and various platforms in the digital world. This situation presents both great opportunities and serious threats for democracies.

The widespread use of the internet and social media platforms around the world has the potential to facilitate the participation of citizens from different countries in democratic processes, their interaction with each other, and their access to information. However, factors such as the rapid and easy spread of misinformation and the instrumentalization of digital technologies for manipulation threaten democracy and accelerate authoritarianism.

The misuse of digitalization for authoritarian purposes or to manipulate voter behavior is increasingly drawing attention. Misleading campaigns conducted on social media during the Brexit process, interventions aimed at influencing voter behavior through bots and fake accounts in the US elections, social media campaigns fueling anti-immigrant sentiment, and discrediting operations against opponents in Turkey are recent concrete examples of the misuse of digitalization.

Democratic resistance to the growing trend of authoritarianism in the digital environment is possible not only through technology but also through values. For this, there is a need to continuously defend fundamental principles such as peace, equality, and freedom of expression in the digital environment.

From Latin America to Europe, from Africa to Asia, authoritarianism and populism are taking advantage of the possibilities offered by digital technologies in many countries across different continents. In many countries, AI-powered fake content and unregulated access to personal data are being used to influence election results. Populist and authoritarian movements are using technology as a tool for disinformation and polarization.



The widespread misuse of the opportunities provided by digital technologies around the world has made it necessary to fight for democracy not only through traditional methods but also in the digital world. Social democratic and socialist organizations should work together to build a democratic digital order against the rising digital authoritarianism in the world. This solidarity should not only aim to combat authoritarianism but also to complete the missing aspects of participatory democracy. In this context, it would be beneficial to build platforms that will facilitate the spread of successful practices aimed at both combating authoritarianism and strengthening participatory democracy.

At the same time, numerous “constructive” measures are needed to eliminate threats to democracy and increase opportunities for building participatory democracy:

While developing control mechanisms to prevent manipulation and disinformation, it is essential to ensure freedom of expression. The principle of transparency must be applied against the misuse of digitalization, and it must be possible to clearly monitor how digital platforms shape public opinion. Algorithms must be made auditable, misleading political campaigns must not be allowed, and it must be possible to clearly know who is influencing public opinion and how. On the other hand, the development of digital literacy should also be considered within the scope of constructive measures. Citizens, especially young people, should be able to critically evaluate the content they see. As digital literacy increases, societies become less susceptible to deception and more resistant to polarization.

Digital democracy also requires international cooperation and solidarity. At the global level, it is necessary to support pioneering steps taken to make the internet safer, more transparent, and more accountable, and to protect individuals' personal data. It is important to establish a global monitoring, observation, and response mechanism for democratic rights and to determine common standards between countries on digital rights, data security, and cyber resilience. International legal norms must also be valid in the digital environment.

In conclusion, social democrats and socialists should not view technological progress and digitalization solely from a defensive perspective. On the one hand, they must combat political movements that use the possibilities of digitalization to consolidate authoritarianism; on the other hand, they must take a constructive approach and engage in initiatives that increase citizens' democratic participation. Digital technologies will either create a great opportunity for the development of democracy or become one of the tools used by authoritarians against democracy.

Second Theme: “Addressing violence and conflicts, protecting civilians”

Today, from Palestine to Ukraine, from Lebanon to Yemen, from Pakistan to Sudan, the circle of fire is growing all over the world. And the biggest victims of this circle of fire are civilians, women, children, people with disabilities, and disadvantaged groups.

The international social democratic movement has a great responsibility to ensure a lasting and just peace, to establish and maintain an order in which people's rights are protected and they feel safe.



Although international law principles, particularly the Geneva Convention, define the protection of civilians in armed conflicts as a fundamental obligation, in practice we are witnessing the erosion of these principles with each passing day. At this stage, the social democratic approach requires not only ending conflicts but also taking concrete steps to actively protect civilians and keep humanitarian security at the center.

Today, populist authoritarianism emerges as one of the fundamental factors fueling violence, conflicts, and war. These authoritarian regimes weaken democratic institutions in their countries, attempt to criminalize opposition, and deepen social polarization. In foreign policy, they often adopt a stance that fuels violence and conflicts, presenting peace as pragmatic negotiations. Today, we see that many ceasefire and peace initiatives related to various conflicts have been tainted by this pragmatism, deepening the lack of resolution.

The most painful example of this is unfolding in Palestine. As frequently mentioned throughout the session, the events in Palestine, particularly in Gaza, have transcended a humanitarian crisis and have turned into a systematic and planned genocide. The international community's silence in the face of this massacre is neither ethically nor politically acceptable. Today, an increasing number of states and societies around the world are speaking out for Palestine. The demands for the recognition of the fundamental rights of Palestinians and the State of Palestine, an immediate ceasefire, and the application of international law are not only political but also moral imperatives. The Socialist International, led by the President and Vice-Presidents of the Presidium, has taken an active stance in solidarity with Palestine from the very beginning.

The bombing of civilian areas, the paralysis of health services, and the inaccessibility of basic necessities paint a picture that is contrary to human dignity. Similarly, in Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it was children, women, and the elderly who paid the heaviest price for the war. These examples show that conflicts are no longer confined to the front lines but are being waged in civilians' homes, schools, and hospitals.

People with disabilities are always the most vulnerable victims of all war and violence. They are among the first groups to suffer in conflicts and are also the most excluded from access to humanitarian aid. Social democrats need to take the initiative in developing inclusive protection policies, ensuring that humanitarian aid plans take people with disabilities into account, making infrastructure accessible, and establishing psychological support mechanisms. The statement, "Protecting civilians means protecting those who are doubly invisible," makes it imperative to integrate this sensitivity into policy.

Another prominent issue when it comes to conflict and war is migration. The waves of migration and the experiences of millions of people in this context are one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies of our time.

Radical right-wing policies that portray migrants as the main cause of economic problems and social tensions also fuel xenophobia and discrimination. It is clear that the burden of migration must be shared fairly around the world. Today, the lives of millions of people and the burden of migration flows are the subject of shameful bargaining and negotiations. Protecting everyone fleeing death and desperately seeking refuge in other countries for their right to life should be the shared humanitarian responsibility of every nation, not just certain countries. In the medium and long term, it is essential to end conflicts, instability, and socio-economic destruction, and to protect the right to life of victims in order to stop migration flows and enable refugees to return home safely in accordance with international legal standards set out in the United Nations Geneva Convention.

In the 21st century, violence is not only experienced on battlefields, front lines, and in the shadow of weapons. Institutional collapse, economic inequality, digital manipulation, gender-based discrimination, and multifaceted injustices are emerging as multi-layered forms of violence that threaten the safety of civilians.



Economic violence, one of the unequal outcomes of neoliberal globalization, is also one of the fundamental forms of violence against the people. While the redistribution of wealth was necessary in the post-pandemic period, the further concentration of wealth in the hands of a small group left millions of people in social vulnerability and poverty. Basic demands such as equal pay, universal health care, fair tax systems, and public education have now become political necessities for protecting democracies, beyond being mere social rights. This analysis shows that social democracy is not only an ideology of social justice but also a guarantee of social peace and political stability.

In the face of all these developments, left-wing social and democratic-socialist internationalism cannot remain silent in the face of conflict and violence. The protection of civilians is one of the most fundamental principles of social democratic policies. This is not only an ethical obligation; it is also a prerequisite for sustainable peace, democratization, and development based on social justice. Civil society, the media, and social democratic movements must continuously exert pressure to ensure that states and international institutions take this responsibility seriously.

The Socialist International is not merely a movement with historical memory; as a force with the will and responsibility to transform the present, it must take on the mission of reestablishing peace, justice, and equality in the world. For it is not those who remain silent who write history, but those who speak out courageously for justice.

Third Theme: “The global development polycrisis and its implications from Africa to Latin America”

As the first quarter of the 21st century comes to a close, the world is witnessing a period of unprecedented multiple crises. Climate change, income inequality, migration waves, demographic shifts, pandemics, food and energy security issues, democratic backsliding, and rising authoritarian trends have not only existed separately but have also created a compound crisis environment that triggers, reinforces, and structurally threatens global development. These multiple crises have not only exposed the limits of neoliberal growth paradigms and market-driven globalization, but have also clearly revealed the need for a new paradigm centered on social justice, equality, and sustainability.

Social democrats and the international social democratic movement, the Socialist International, assess these global challenges not only in their economic dimensions but also from the perspectives of democracy, social justice, and human development. Because multidimensional crises can only be resolved through multidimensional policies.

At the current stage, the global development discourse has largely been reduced to the axis of “growth,” while fundamental human issues such as poverty, income inequality, and the exclusion of women and youth have been relegated to secondary importance. However, the social democratic approach emphasizes that development is not only possible through economic growth indicators, but also through the universal provision of living conditions befitting human dignity, social rights, and public services. In this context, sustainable development is only possible with social justice; a development approach based on harmony with nature, peace with society, and democratic values is of vital importance.



In this new era, technological innovations have emerged as a fundamental component of the struggle for hegemony among global powers. Competition is intensifying in advanced technologies and critical materials. Digitalization, artificial intelligence, green transformation technologies, and the transformation of the manufacturing industry with a new energy are some of the key areas. Innovations have a high potential to positively impact our lives, but new technologies can pose risks to democracy and development when they spread without established management rules and rights frameworks.

Climate change, one of the fundamental dynamics of global crises, is creating deep socio-economic inequalities, particularly in the Global South and among vulnerable segments of society. Climate disasters, water scarcity, and food insecurity directly threaten the livelihoods of the poor, trigger migration movements, and fuel social conflicts. The Socialist International views climate justice as an integral part of social justice. A fair transition to a green economy is not only an environmental necessity for us, but also a social responsibility.

On the other hand, the health and education crises that have deepened with the pandemic have clearly demonstrated the fragility caused by the commercialization of public services. The neoliberal model's surrender of public services to market dynamics has had devastating consequences. A social democratic approach aims to make essential services such as healthcare, education, housing, and social security accessible, free, and of high quality for everyone. The Socialist International emphasizes that people are the subject of development and that the primary duty of the state is to ensure the well-being of its citizens.

The global decline in democracy and the trend toward authoritarianism constitute another dimension of the development crisis. Democracy is not merely a form of government limited to the ballot box; it is a form of social life in which the people's participation in decision-making processes is guaranteed, the press is free, the right to organize is protected, and the rule of law is upheld. This aspect of development can only flourish within a democratic political structure. The construction of a public sphere in which citizens are not only consumers but also decision-makers, supervisors, and rights holders is a prerequisite for democracy. Democratization is a precondition for sustainable and inclusive development.

The exclusion of women and young people from economic and political life is a major structural problem that hinders the inclusiveness of development. Without gender equality, neither social welfare nor development can be sustainable. It is important to ensure equal representation of women in all areas and to guarantee the rights of young people to education, employment, and participation in governance.

The global crises we face today, with their transnational structures, necessitate solidarity-based international cooperation. However, the current international system is structured in such a way that it reproduces inequalities, even in the allocation of development aid, based on geopolitical interests. The social democratic foreign policy approach advocates solidarity mechanisms that will eliminate global inequalities on the basis of justice, human rights, and peace.

Development is not merely a matter of “economic growth”; it is also a political and moral response to the question, “What kind of society do we want to live in?” In line with the universal principles of social democracy, a people-centered and public-oriented development approach that prioritizes human dignity, social justice, and environmental sustainability has become not only a necessity but also an imperative for the world and humanity. The Socialist International will continue to defend this development approach against multiple crises around the world.



Istanbul Declaration

The first semester of 2025 changed radically the global landscape. The political shift in the United States following the presidential elections has already a tangible impact on the multilateral system of the last decades, creating a big debate over the best way to move forward and adapt the world to a new era that includes big societal changes brought by the rapid advances of science and technology.

It becomes more and more evident that in our globalized world the 1% of the most wealthy as well as the big tech are expanding their power challenging the limits of our democratic safeguards. Furthermore, beyond borders, odd alliances are being set up with the participation of extreme right or a-political parties and politicians. This is a wakeup call that brings also an opportunity for our political family as the ideological differences are stunning, leaving behind the narrative that nowadays there is no difference between right and left. In this transitional and fluctuating phase, the multilateral system faces enormous pressure affecting three essential aspirations related to the progress of the nations: democracy, peace and development.



In this context the Socialist International member parties participating in the Istanbul Council underline the following:

1. To create inclusive societies, we must defend democracy

Part of the strategy of extreme right and a- political parties is to undermine the idea of democracy. From stressing that it is not an efficient system, to reducing it to ballots or tweets or even sometimes refusing to recognize the results of democratic elections. One such last attempt is the politically motivated arrest of the Presidential Candidate of our member party CHP, Mr. Ekrem İmamoğlu, also the elected mayor of city of Istanbul which gives it's name to this declaration. In all continents we notice a backlash with an increase of authoritarian practices , persecution of political opponents, use of law fare, limitation of freedom of expression, contempt of constitutional provisions, violation of basic human rights. This trend goes together with a non-acceptance of labor rights and a regression in women's rights. It results in bad governance, corruption and increasing inequality.

Democracy cannot exist without checks and balances that prevent the unconstrained exercise of power, the possibility of one institution, one party, one individual to exercise total control. A democratic government can be called so only if it gives legitimate space to the opposition. Checks are the mechanisms allowing political institutions to limit one another's power. Balances ensure that a wide variety of views and interests are represented in the democratic process.

Democratic backsliding is a very dangerous process that we are committed to fight against. Ethical principles are of paramount importance in the exercise of power. Business and politics must be clearly separated. Political opponents cannot be persecuted, arrested without serious causes and jailed indefinitely without proofs of guilt. Media and social networks cannot be used for misinformation. Moreover, countries in democratic transition cannot dissolve political parties, substitute political dialogue by « pseudo civil society assemblies » and deny the right of a different opinion.

The societies we progressives are fighting for are diverse, inclusive and human centered. We want all citizens to enjoy the right to decent work, education, health, clean environment, safety, shared quality of life but also freedom of expression, media literacy, respect of all rights.

2. To build peace we must show solidarity in practice

According to existing data, conflicts surged around the world in the last year. In 2024 political violence increased by 25% globally in comparison to 2023 with one in eight people exposed to conflict.

From Gaza to Ukraine, there is a huge increase of fatalities and the UN estimates that 305 million people will require humanitarian assistance in 2025. The continuous violence in Africa - DR Congo, Sudan, Mali, the extreme tension between India and Pakistan, the situation in Myanmar add to this very bleak picture.

For us fighting for peace is more than a moral duty, it's an existential necessity. The existing situation shows a collective failure undermining an international order based on principles and rules that seemed inviolable such as respect of sovereignty, political interdependence and territorial integrity of countries. Lasting peace cannot be built without respect of the people, solidarity in practice and knowledge of history.



The meta- world we live in creates new vulnerabilities requiring a total different perception of security. The advance of technology creates new, unregulated lethal weapons. Hybrid and terrorist attacks threaten human security. We commit to include these issues in our future agenda with proposals for a modernization of existing treaties.

Investing in peace, may be long and difficult but it is the only way forward and our organization has historically contributed in this endeavor in all continents. We will continue in a systematic way to raise our voice for all the anonymous victims as for us every human life has the same value.

3. Supporting SDG's, avoiding a global development crisis

The COVID 19 pandemic highlighted the problem of global inequality and following a period of economic volatility and caused reversals in development. Emerging countries are struggling on the issue of debt as burdens become unsustainable. There is a need to reform and update international financial institutions and the multilateral development banks. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development that will take place in June 2025 is an opportunity to reach a consensus on specific measures that can mobilize all resources and policies for promoting sustainable development.

In times when the international far right puts into question key global issues like climate change, health cooperation, international development priorities, as Socialist International we stand in support to the agreements and efforts of the United Nations, and we will continue our contribution to the implementation of the Global Development Goals.

We believe in the necessity to keep on the efforts for mitigating climate change as determined by the Paris agreement as a duty to the generations to come.

The US withdrawal from many multilateral agreements, as well as from the SDG's should be reversed, as it can put the world in a poly crisis and disrupt efforts that have already produced many achievements in reducing poverty, save lives and limit epidemics, respond to man made hazards, improve literacy and protect the rights of women and girls.





Resolution on Unjust and Unlawful Arrest of Ekrem İmamoğlu

The Socialist International strongly condemns the unlawful arrest of Ekrem İmamoğlu, the elected Mayor of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and the presidential candidate of our member party CHP. This unjustified arrest has no legal grounds and was preceded by an escalating series of judicial harassment aimed at removing him from political life. Most recently, this includes the sudden revocation of his 31-year-old university diploma on March 18, which is a constitutional requirement to be a presidential candidate in Türkiye. Lastly, he was detained on March 19 and arrested on March 23, on charges that are evidently legally baseless.

Ekrem İmamoğlu was elected in 2019 as Mayor of Istanbul and also re-elected by a large margin in 2024. As of March 2025, he was confirmed as the presidential candidate of CHP, based on the votes of 15.5 million citizens in his party's primary elections.

His arrest is an anti-democratic intervention against the will of the people; who have elected him as the Istanbul Mayor and furthermore as the presidential candidate for the next election.

Upon all these considerations, The Socialist International Council strongly urges for the immediate release and reinstatement of Ekrem İmamoğlu.



Resolution on Palestine

Taking into account that :

- The ongoing onslaught in the Gaza Strip is totally unjustified and appears to be politically motivated by the extreme right government of Israel
- The humanitarian catastrophe is dreadful and has breached all international treaties. Blocking aid, using starvation as a weapon, targeting schools, hospitals, holy places and refugee camps violates international humanitarian law. In Gaza Strip 70% of children are currently suffering from malnutrition, and women are enduring severe violations of their physical, psychological, and economic rights. The impact of the war is disproportionate on women and children,
- It is necessary to uphold the rights and dignity of all civilians, particularly the most vulnerable, in times of war.
- The international community has a responsibility to prevent further violations and to end impunity for war crimes in Gaza Strip and all Palestinian territories.

Accordingly:

We demand an immediate end of the war in Gaza that is threatening to displace the Palestinian people from their homeland and aims at the reoccupation of the Gaza Strip.

We call on the Israeli government to allow full entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza Strip through the internationally recognized humanitarian bodies and urge international organizations and UN bodies to intensify their efforts on the ground. Allowing UNRWA to carry its mission with the necessary guarantees that are necessary for addressing the needs of the more than two million civilians trapped in a dire situation.

We strongly condemn all forms of violence targeting civilians and reiterate that the use of force must comply strictly with international law.

We believe that all projects and attempts to forcefully displace the Palestinian people or manipulate demographics in Gaza, West Bank or East Jerusalem are crimes and a major breach of international law. The Gaza Strip is part and parcel of the Palestinian geography and political system in one unit with the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

We reject the expansion of colonial settlements in the West Bank and the Israeli Cabinet recent decision to facilitate annexation of Palestinian land in the West Bank. These settlements pose a major obstacle for peace and the two state solution.

We reaffirm our support to the Two State solution as the only viable and internationally recognized path for a sustainable peace in the Middle East and call all countries to multiply efforts for reaching this goal. The Two State Solution Conference organized by the UN and co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia is an excellent opportunity for achieving a breakthrough.



In this context we call on the countries that haven't recognized the State of Palestine to do so without delay. Also for the implementation of all relevant UN resolutions including UNSC 242, 238, 2334 and UNGA 194, 3236 and A/ES-10/Rev.1.1 which demand on Israel ending its occupation within 12 months based on the ICJ's advisory legal opinion.

We call for the release of all the hostages detained by Hamas. We call also for a fair and legal trial of Palestinian detainees under Humanitarian Law and Geneva Convention.

We support the Israeli peace camp that represents a growing number of citizens and express our full solidarity to our member party in Palestine, Fatah, and our member party in Israel, the Democrats.

We commit to take initiatives and make all possible efforts for uniting and reinforcing the movement for the implementation of the two state solution recognizing the rights of the Palestinians people for self determination in an independent and sovereign state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. It is the only way to guarantee peace and security not only for both peoples of Israel and Palestine but also the broader region.





The Socialist International Network of Regional and Local Authorities

During the Istanbul SI Council on 24 May, in a special working lunch, the Socialist International Network of Local and Regional Authorities was launched. The SI President Pedro Sánchez, in his speech, highlighted the growing importance of regions and cities in creating human-centred societies. He also reiterated that global challenges are felt more than ever in our daily lives and that regional and local authorities can bring a number of practical solutions easily perceived by citizens. Chantal Kambiwa, the SI General Coordinator, stated that this is the first global progressive network of regional and local authorities, an initiative that will facilitate the exchange of good practices and networking among elected representatives of different continents.

Özgür Özel, CHP leader, described the big success of his party in the last local elections in Türkiye and the challenges faced by opposition mayors through a series of unlawful prosecutions.

Participants agreed to nominate Ahmet Aras, Mayor of the Muğla Metropolitan Municipality, as the first Chair/Coordinator of the Network.

Ahmet Aras happily accepted to take over this role and promised to do his best to make the network a success. He also added:

“As local governments governed by the CHP, we are responsible for managing 65% of Türkiye’s population. Today, we are the leading political party in Türkiye, and we increasingly feel the strength of our people’s support with each passing day.

We will further strengthen our power through the Local and Regional Authorities Network we have established under the umbrella of the Socialist International, of which we are a member. This network is not only a platform for inter-municipal cooperation, but also an international line of struggle that defends peace, democracy, the environment, human rights, and the will of the people. As the Socialist International Local and Regional Authorities Network, we will raise our voices against any interference with the will of the people, wherever it may occur in the world. We will stand for democracy, equality, and free cities.

Dear friends,

Unfortunately, democracy in Türkiye is going through a serious test today. Our elected mayors, especially the Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Mr. Ekrem İmamoğlu, along with their colleagues, are being subjected to unlawful and politically motivated trials, and are being deprived of their freedom. The appointment of government trustees in place of elected mayors is a blatant blow to the will of the people expressed at the ballot box.

The strongest voice against this unlawfulness and injustice is rising right here, in this very hall. The solidarity and resolute stance shown by the members of the Socialist International is not only felt in this hall, but also serves as a source of hope for all those fighting for democracy in regions where authoritarianism is on the rise. I sincerely thank you all for this powerful show of solidarity.”

Participants expressed once again their full support for the Mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem İmamoğlu, and promised to continue the efforts for his release.



Global Solidarity Call from the Local Governments for Democracy & Rule of Law

We, as mayors, council members, and democratic local governance representatives united under the umbrella of the Socialist International, strongly condemn and reject;

- The arbitrary, undemocratic and unlawful interventions against democratically elected mayors and council members,
- The systematic disempowerment of municipal councils through appointed trustees,
- The transformation of judicial institutions into instruments of political pressure on local governance.

Democracy is a system where the will of the people is respected at all levels. The rule of law must be independent, and governance must be shaped by participation and transparency. Local democracy is the cornerstone of social justice, civic engagement, and sustainable development.

In an environment where the law is suspended and the public will is disregarded:

- Political freedoms deteriorate,
- Economic stability is undermined,
- Social justice and peace suffer deeply.

It must be underlined that, any assault on democratic gains is never merely a domestic issue but a threat to universal democratic values.

We firmly believe that:

- There can be no peace without justice,
- No trust without the rule of law,
- No sustainable development without democratic legitimacy.

Therefore, as the Socialist International Network of Local Authorities, we publicly declare our firm commitment to protecting democratic values and the sovereignty of the people.

Based on all these considerations, we call out to all authorities of all states and underline that:

- Immediate reinstatement of all elected local officials and release of those imprisoned without any legal grounds, including recently imprisoned mayors, council members and civil servants in Türkiye is of utmost importance.
- The practice of appointing unelected trustees is unacceptable.
- Decriminalization of those who demand democracy by exercising their very democratic rights is unacceptable. Independence of journalism and freedom of speech should be guaranteed.
- Guarantee of judicial independence and the rule of law, and unconditional respect for the will of the people and democratic processes have to be guaranteed by all authorities.

We believe that local governments are not only the frontline providers of public services, but also the foundations of democracy itself. Participatory governance is only possible through defending national will and democratic gains.

We stand united with the people. United with all who believe in democracy, who demand justice and peace, united for the world we deserve, one of peace, prosperity and democracy.

A voice rising from the local level can change the world.



Özgür Özel

CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

Dear comrades, distinguished guests of this beautiful city, as your hosts, we are delighted to welcome you to Istanbul. Together, we have held very productive meetings. We unanimously adopted very powerful texts that were carefully drafted and meticulously worked on, reflecting the collective wisdom and conscience of the Socialist International. I would like to thank all the speakers and everyone who contributed to this meeting. I would like to express my gratitude to each and every one of you for the strong solidarity you have shown.

The Socialist International has a wonderful team. I would like to thank all the professionals and managers, represented by Chantal and Paulina, as well as the members of the Presidium, the vice-presidents, and all the members of the Socialist International, who are also members of the Presidium, who worked together under the chairmanship of Pedro Sanchez, who came here from all over the world, who not only contributed to the Socialist International meeting they are members of but also showed solidarity with us during the challenging process we are experiencing in Türkiye.

We hosted 89 parties from 79 countries, worked together, and made them feel at home. As I have stated in my previous speeches, I feel it is my responsibility to reiterate this point as I conclude. Today, Istanbul is a city whose will has been usurped. A year ago, 16 million Istanbulites thought about who should govern the city, moved, and looked at the services provided over the past five years. They went to the polls and, with more votes than ever before, entrusted Ekrem İmamoğlu with governing Istanbul for another five years, with the support of more than half of the voters. Unfortunately, we have never been the first party since 1977. Though we could not accept coming in second, third, or sometimes even failing to meet the threshold, we always found the fault within ourselves. We said, "We must work harder, we must engage in self-criticism." We said, "We must rejuvenate ourselves, we must give women more opportunities." We said, "We must analyze the winds of change sweeping the world correctly, adapt them to Türkiye, and use the right language." We never blamed the voters and never sought help from undemocratic sources.



During the period when we were in the most intense conflict and debate with the AKP, a community that actually worked together with them in politics, supported each other materially and spiritually, and gave them whatever they wanted, clashed with them and attempted a coup. They said, "The coup is targeting the first party; we are getting rid of the AK Party. Erdoğan, who has caused so much hardship for this country, will be overthrown." On the contrary, we reached out to them, saying, "Open the parliament. Let's come together, talk, and stand in solidarity. Those who come through the ballot box will leave through the ballot box." We said, 'We will stand behind whoever the people choose, whoever the public chooses.' In my speech at midnight in Parliament, I said, 'We are the main opposition party. A coup is naturally carried out against the ruling party. But everyone turns and looks at the opposition. They look into the eyes of the main opposition party.' I said, "I am telling those who look into my eyes: we will remain the main opposition party until democratic elections are held and our people, our nation, give us a new task. We are aware of our duty, and we stand behind democracy and the elected parliament." Those who applauded us that day should have shown the same patience for 47 months after the election, as we had shown for 47 years. There were 47 months until the presidential election calendar began. They couldn't even show 47 days of patience. In the first election they lost, in the first election they fell to second place, they attempted a coup, and they planned such a coup that... Coups are always carried out against the current government. The current government attempted to stage a coup against the future. They attempted to stage a coup against the government that will come to power, against the president who will govern Türkiye in the future. They also staged a coup against the elected officials of past local elections. But they primarily attempted to stage a coup against our future, against what is to come, against Türkiye's future hope.

We are the people who vouch for the innocence of Ekrem İmamoğlu and all our friends in prison, and who fight alongside them because they are being held for political reasons. Sometimes it is difficult to explain this to the world. They thought we couldn't explain it. First, they said, "You can't explain it, you can't complain about Türkiye abroad." Then they said, "The European Union cares about the Greco criteria. They keep their distance from corruption and theft." They made up a lie about Türkiye 'supporting a terrorist organization' and thought that nationalist voters would turn their backs on us. 'After a few weeks, no one will be able to look us in the face,' they said. But today, I am here to show solidarity with Mayor Ekrem; to show solidarity with the babies, children, mothers, and spouses who lost their lives in a hotel fire; to commemorate those who lost their lives, to make those reactions visible, to make violence against women visible; and to make the demand for gender equality visible, I ran a marathon early this morning and came here. I will leave here and go to Bursa, Türkiye's fourth largest city, to hold a rally that we hold every weekend, which we moved to Sunday evening this week because it coincided with the Socialist International. In front of tens of thousands in the morning, hundreds of thousands in the evening, and millions, I am telling all my comrades in Europe that Türkiye is undergoing a civil coup. Ekrem İmamoğlu and his friends are under political arrest. We are all vouching for them and will stand by them until the end.

For five days, we were together in an ancient city, a city that has been the capital of three empires, a city that is the fruit of the labor of our ancestors and of all of us; in the capital of peace, democracy, art, and tourism; in Istanbul, which, according to one writer, would be the capital of the world if the world were a single country. Such cities are the enemies of such gatherings. The halls may empty, but with such full participation, with such seriousness, while Istanbul's straits and beauties call to you, while history calls to you, you discussed texts aimed at solidarity here; solidarity with Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe, and Türkiye. You conducted a very valuable discussion together. I thank you for that. Even Istanbul's beauty did not dampen your spirit of solidarity and kept you in these halls. I would also like to thank you all for your discipline during this meeting. The common idea in this hall is this...



We listened to and voted on many powerful texts. “If there is autocracy in the world, the only structure that will say ‘stop’ to autocrats, regardless of language, religion, or identity, is us democrats.” The number of those democrats is not small. Moreover, no matter where in the world those democrats live, they are not alone. All the democrats of the world are determined to stand shoulder to shoulder and fight together. This determination and resolve to fight together is a source of courage and hope for the millions, even billions, of people who are resisting poverty, political oppression, war, and all forms of exploitation.

Dear comrades, we have discussed many topics in depth at our meetings. We have talked a lot about the current state of democracy, which is one of our main agenda items. We are faced with obstacles and insecurity regarding women's participation in the workforce and pensioners receiving their pensions. Young people are facing high unemployment and despair. Workers and the rural and urban poor are facing greater hardship than ever before. The middle class is struggling with the threat of dispossession. Income inequality is deepening day by day. All of these are serious problems that require urgent solutions. Ensuring equal representation of women in the workplace and in politics, combating gender inequality, and promoting the active participation of young people in politics and the workplace... All of this will be possible through the active efforts of social democrats around the world. On the other hand, we certainly had the opportunity to discuss international developments. We talked about the massacre carried out by Israel in Gaza. We discussed the occupation in Ukraine, which has cost tens of thousands of lives. The uncertainties in Syria, the conflicts in Africa, the refugee crises, the climate crises... These are crises that are both fed by and feed into the current order. The world we live in is an interconnected world. The painful consequences of wars, poverty, and many crises are spreading from one country's borders to another. In other words, they are circulating throughout the world.

In my opening speech, and in our separate conversations with each of you during yesterday's meetings and dinner, we discussed a difficult situation. We had concerns. “In the second quarter of the 21st century, will robots that communicate with each other and learn from each other through artificial intelligence threaten humanity?” Unfortunately, this debate continues on one side. But the greatest threat facing the world today is that we are dealing with autocrats and dictators who communicate with each other, cooperate with each other, and learn from each other, and the only power that can defeat them is the solidarity that this hall will produce. We know that if the problems of societies have global effects, then the solutions must also be global in scope. Therefore, it is more essential than ever to fight together against poverty, war, the climate crisis, labor exploitation, and gender inequality. The Socialist International, which has made this observation, is heralding a bright and hopeful world to the world from Istanbul, despite all this darkness. The thing that opens the door to that bright and peaceful world is the solidarity among us. Thanks to this, we will continue to fight against poverty, injustice, and autocracy. We will continue to support the Palestinian people's just resistance under occupation and heavy oppression. We will support all efforts to stop the bloodshed in Ukraine and to build a sustainable climate of peace in every part of the world, especially in Syria. The duty of social democrats and socialists is undoubtedly not only to strengthen solidarity among the leadership of our parties. Today, threats to democracy are also deeply affecting local governments, that is, our municipalities. As the leader of a party whose elected mayors are being held in prison, I must say this. Moreover, according to all public opinion polls, the party I lead is still the country's leading party by a wide margin. It is the party that enjoys the highest level of support from society. If democracy is also under threat at the local level, then solidarity among our local administrations must be taken to the highest level.



The messages of support received from mayors around the world during the coup attempt on March 19 were very valuable. At that time, our Mayor of Athens, who rushed here, our Mayor of Paris, our Mayor of Athens, who is also present at this meeting today, our Mayor of Paris, who expressed the strongest support through a video message, the Mayor of Nicosia of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the valuable Deputy Mayor of Vienna, the Mayor of Soria, the former Mayor of Florence, and the Mayor of Coullaines, whose presence here has strengthened our resolve. On this occasion, I would like to request a heartfelt round of applause from all of you for all the local administrators who have not hesitated to express their solidarity. At the same time, strengthening the relationship between our local administrators, sharing experiences, and transferring innovative practices are very important issues. We have been discussing and refining these issues for years.

In this context, we are very happy and feel a great sense of responsibility that the Socialist International's local government section has been refined at our meetings this year, activated at yesterday's meeting, decided upon, implemented, and that Türkiye's most important tourist city, which is known to all of you for its holidays in Bodrum, Marmaris, and many other districts, We are both delighted and deeply responsible that this role is being taken on by Ahmet Aras, the Mayor of Muğla Metropolitan Municipality, who owns the city where you all spend your holidays. The effective emergence, operation, and sharing of experiences of the Socialist International's local government network, as well as its involvement in important projects, is a responsibility we have taken on as the Republican People's Party and one of our most important tasks ahead.

Today, we are leaving here with more hope than yesterday and more determination for tomorrow. As we depart, we must keep this in mind and in our hearts: Despite everything, democracy, justice, equality, and a peaceful world can be built through our joint efforts. It must be emphasized once again that the prerequisite for such a world is solidarity. I sincerely believe that by joining hands, we will make this world more just, more prosperous, and more democratic. I am honored to walk shoulder to shoulder with you, to be your comrade. We are now heading to another major city, Bursa. And we will hold our seventh major provincial meeting since the March 19 coup. Every Wednesday in a district of Istanbul, every weekend in a province of Anatolia, we will continue to meet with our people, not for rallies, but to take action with them to achieve results. With the strength we draw from your solidarity, we will fight without pause for our country and our future. Once again, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your participation. When you return to your countries, I would like you to convey warm greetings and love from Türkiye to the members of your sister parties and to all the citizens of your countries, and to convey the best feelings from here to there. I would like you to see the homes of each and every one of us here in this hall as your brothers' homes in Türkiye and Istanbul, and to welcome anyone who comes here with a phone call, a WhatsApp message, we will welcome them as if they were our own family, and treat them as we would our own brothers and sisters. We love you all very much, and we are ending as we began. We will continue to repeat this sentence until we achieve this goal. There is no salvation alone; either we all succeed together, or none of us will. I greet you all with respect.

FOR THE WORLD WE DESERVE A GLOBAL VISION OF VALUES AND SOLIDARITY
İN YA HEP BERABER YA HİÇBİRİZ DEĞERLER VE DAYANIŞMA TEMELİNDE KÜRESEL BİR VİZYON
MAY 24-25 2023 İSTANBUL - TÜRKİYE





We respectfully commemorate our comrade Ferdi Zeyrek, Mayor of Manisa Metropolitan Municipality, who passed away in an unfortunate accident shortly after attending the Socialist International Council Meeting in Istanbul.

