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Draft Resolutions and declarations

YES SUMMER CAMP DECLARATION

Submitted by SC working group

Europe is in an emergency situation requiring an emergency response. We are in a political crisis compounded by a moral crisis. Thousands have died trying to reach Sicily where we are gathered this week, and more are yet to come. History is already judging us. Its condemnation becomes more damning with everyone we allow to drown rather than acknowledge their right to security and dignity. Last week's events in Turkey meanwhile indicate a new phase in the disintegration of society and democracy. The Brexit vote marks a new, dangerous escalation of Europe's general crisis arising from a deep loss of trust in the existing political and economic system. Nationalism and the far-right are no longer simply a "rising threat". We have run out of time – they are here now.

Young people now have a stronger European and cosmopolitan identity than older generations, as demonstrated by their strong Remain vote in the Brexit referendum. Yet the opportunity that this gives is in danger of being entirely thrown away by EU institutions. The EU and European governments pursue policies that ignore and neglect us, that not only fail to address our economically precarious situation but often worsen it.

We demand extensive and immediate change in the rules of the EU and Eurozone. They currently make not only social-democratic, but also merely democratic, policies in Europe impossible. The result of this will continue to be disillusionment with the political and economic system –strengthening the far right. We strongly condemn the recent European Commission censuring of Spain and Portugal for 'breaching' deficit requirements as not only morally and economically wrong, but politically myopic. We note meanwhile that the deep political and humanitarian dysfunctions of the Eurozone revealed by the Greece crisis have not be solved. We call for immediate moves towards fiscal integration and democratisation of the Eurozone. This should include a harmonised tax system, a common Eurozone budget and bonds, a European minimum wage and minimum standards, democratic accountability and transparency of the EuroGroup and ECB. Europe must end its negotiations of the TTIP and CETA trade agreements. A vision for Europe built around balance sheets and accounting procedures cannot succeed.

The current economic system presents enormous opportunities that we must recognise and embrace. Europe is crying out for a rational and progressive alternative path. We urgently need actions to help young people such as the Plan for Youth. Extensive fiscal stimulus and investment spending on a European-wide level has become essential, and requires only political will. On top of this, climate change poses not only an existential threat to humanity, but is already creating new unacceptable global injustices whereby those most affected, such as Africa, are those who have contributed least to the problem. The fight against precariousness and unemployment need to become an urgent and fundamental cause for our parties. Employment policy must be based on

recognition of the inefficiency and injustice of an economic system in which millions work long and stressful hours while millions of others are unemployed. The path out of this must involve an ecological transition to sustainable productive system, as well innovations in education beyond formal traditional learning.

Socialists and social-democratic parties find themselves on the wrong side of a disenchantment and desire for change we be giving voice to. The racist and fraudulent politics of nationalism cannot be allowed to hijack people's desires for democratic sovereignty and control over their lives. We must become the progressive channel for people's demands across Europe for a system that is responsive and relevant. The structure of social-democratic parties needs to be entirely uprooted. We have become little more than politicians' parties, yet we have always been at our best as truly people's parties – embedded in society and reflecting its most progressive aspirations, rather than hollowed-out structures dominated by insulated and ineffective elites. We must recognise that an ideology that comes to so constantly refer to “populism” as its enemy is likely to be on the wrong side of history and democracy. We call for the creation of a European progressive movement that goes beyond our current political family.

Social democrats have failed to provide a satisfactory answer to the recurrent question of what its future is in our current “globalized” world. The reason for the popular complaint that all political parties are the same is that it is in many respects true. However, the values that must be behind a renewal are in many respects not different from ideological principles that guided the Second International and socialist and social democratic parties after the Second World War. Only the policies are different, adjusted to a new reality.

Environmental, political and economic necessities therefore call for a meaningful vision for a new type of society and economy. This must clearly stand out from conservative policies by combatting all forms of structural oppression and violence –whether based on gender, ethnicity, sexuality or class. It must build its policies from a concrete recognition of the undemocratic domination over society by capital. It must aim strategically for a system of economic democracy; full employment; rules limiting inequalities of wealth, wages and work hours and direct worker control over the sources of their economic well-being. Ultimately, ours must be a politics that seeks to liberate people in all aspects of their daily lives, and seeks fundamental redistribution in the balance of wealth and power in society.

We as socialist and social democratic parties need to immediately and radically change ourselves, so that we can immediately and radically change Europe in order to save it. There is no alternative.