

Strengthening the Party of European Socialists

The 5th PES Congress,

Recognises that the Party of European Socialists has gained ground over recent years, especially in its role as a co-ordinating mechanism and discussion platform for Socialists and Social Democrats in the European Institutions.

Notes, however, that this development has not coincided with a more public role of the PES, nor with a greater involvement of the individual members of PES member parties.

Considers that a number of steps have to be taken to integrate the associate parties from the enlargement countries, to promote an EU statute for European political parties, to strengthen the profile of the PES within the national parties and to reinforce the democratic basis of the PES.

These steps are:

Co-operation with and integration of the PES parties from EU accession countries

Stresses the need for the PES to prepare for the full membership of those associate parties from the EU accession countries by allowing representatives of the associate parties to attend all PES bodies; Congress, Council, Leaders meetings (at least once a year); Presidency (at least twice a year); and coordination team.

Stresses the fact that within a few years the relative weight of Social Democracy within the European Union will depend on over 30 member parties instead of the current 20. The PES and its member parties are urged to give full support to the enlargement parties in their forthcoming national election campaigns

Invites the parties concerned, in line with PES policy during the previous enlargement of the EU, to submit a request for full membership directly after the negotiations between their country and the European Commission have been successfully concluded. As a consequence the parties will become full members of the PES before their countries will officially become EU Member States.

Towards an EU Statute for European political parties

Urges the PES, its Parliamentary Group and its representatives in the European Council to work for the adoption of a regulation for European parties as foreseen in Article 191 of the Treaties as amended in Nice last year.

Stresses the need for European parties to have a status compatible with national law and provisions, and to enable them to organisationally and financially separate themselves from their respective political Groups in the European Parliament

Demands that the party statute assures the highest standards of transparency and accountability and stresses, therefore, the need for regulation of the acceptance of gifts and sponsorship and regulation of the future organisational and financial relations between European parties and their respective political groups in the European Parliament.

Highlights the need for the European party statute to incorporate the condition for the respect of fundamental democratic values as well as a mechanism for the screening, evaluation and imposition of sanctions in such cases where these values are breached.

Recognises that the PES, on the basis of the work plan submitted to the Congress and within the context of a European party statute, will require an increase in contributions from the member party over the next few years.

Invites the PES Presidency to urgently elaborate a plan for the organisational and financial basis of the PES and discuss this with the leadership of the PES parties and the Parliamentary Group.

Strengthening the PES within the national parties

PES in party statutes: Urges those PES member parties who have not yet done so, to incorporate a reference to the PES in their party statutes referring to the co-operation among European Social Democrats and Socialists in general and their co-ordination of EU policy in particular.

PES and its logo on material and web sites: Recommends that PES member parties refer to the PES and use its logo on basic material such as party membership cards and web sites.

A mandate for PES Congress: notes that a majority of PES parties have formalised the selection procedure for PES Congress delegates, which has had a positive impact on the organisation, preparation and democratic mandate of the PES Berlin Congress.

Urges PES parties to further strengthen the mandate of their Congress delegates by formally electing or nominating them by party organs.

Proposes to the future PES Presidency to look into the possibility of having permanent party delegations to the PES Congress.

Serving individual members: Urges the PES, its Parliamentary Group and the national parties to pool their resources and work towards an integrated web site structure which will help individual party members and the wider public in their search for information and an exchange of views on European affairs.

Urges all PES parties to follow the example of some of their sister parties and to offer members of other PES parties living in their country an automatic, free and additional party membership. By the time of the next PES Congress a link between European Social Democrats and Socialists living in another European country and the PES party of their host country should be established. This would promote their participation in local elections in the Member States they live in as well as in elections to the European Parliament in the country of their choice.

Preparing for the 2004 elections to the European Parliament: (see also PES activity plan 2001-2003/2004) urges the PES and its member parties to make a better use of the comparative advantage of being part of the biggest and most cohesive European political family in national and European election campaigns.

Stresses the need to start, at an early stage, with the elaboration of a PES plan for the preparation of the elections to the European Parliament of 2004 with the aim of regaining the position of the largest political group in the European Parliament, taking into consideration the renewal of the European Commission in the same year.