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**Draft PES Work Programme
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Spring 2004 : new challenges for the PES

Change is in the air. This is the Spring of European social democracy. The resounding victories of PSOE in Spain's general election and the PS in France's regional elections shows the way for all PES member parties in their next elections, in particular at the June European elections. The Parliamentary Group of the PES must regain the position of the biggest political group in the new European Parliament which will welcome elected representatives from 25 European countries. The PES will support all of its member parties to enable them to approach these elections in the best possible conditions. The joint PES manifesto, which draws on a series of PES policy documents, will give candidates the possibility to propose and defend the values, principles, and policies of socialist, social democrat and labour parties across the enlarged Union.

In fact, this is also the Spring of EU enlargement. At its Congress in Brussels, the PES and its member parties celebrate the accession of 10 new countries. In anticipation of this historic event, the PES welcomed its sister parties from these countries and granted them full member status after the conclusion of accession negotiations. They participate fully in the debates and decisions of the different bodies of the PES. Their contributions have already proved very fruitful.

Furthermore, on 11 March 2004, international terrorism has developed beyond being merely a threat to a brutal reality on our continent. More than ever before, the PES has to defend its political and strategic direction on the world stage, to stimulate co-operation between the different actors who lead the fight against terrorism and to ensure that the Union is an area of democracy, liberty and shared security. The PES has started two major dialogues: the first with progressive American forces and the second with representatives of the Muslim world.

Finally, this is the Spring of a new independent PES which is stronger and more transparent. With the strength of its 28 full member parties and 13 associate and observer members and with the impetus and direction of its new President (elected at its Congress in Brussels), the PES will have to tackle political, organisational and financial challenges in the new framework of the Council and Parliament Regulation regarding the statute and financing of political parties at European level. In its consideration of different issues, the PES will give priority to political co-ordination, joint positions and co-operation between member parties on issues central to the European project.

In accordance with the mandate that the Congress confers on it, the Presidency (the true engine of the PES, responsible for executing the decisions of the Congress and shaping political direction) will propose concrete initiatives in different areas, within the limits of the

human and financial resources available, in order to attain the objectives which the PES sets itself.

The immediate political priorities of the PES

▪ Enlargement

From the 1st May, in close co-operation with its member parties, especially those from the new Member States, the PES must ensure that this historic enlargement is a political, social and economic success and that its member parties' representatives integrate within the different EU institutions and bodies.

The PES will continue to prepare the accession of Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey with its sister parties in those countries.

▪ Winning the European elections

Within the financial limits and in accordance with the rules of the new regulation, the PES (in close co-operation with its Parliamentary Group) must give maximum support to all of its member parties, in particular its sister parties from the new Member States which will participate in the European elections for the first time. The PES must underline the divisions between the parties of the EPP group which is composed of federalists and anti-Europeans and characterised by major disagreements on fundamental European issues. The PES and its Parliamentary Group will have at their disposal different instruments established for these elections: the PES manifesto, the ELYSO programme, the different instruments of the Willy Brandt programme and the work of the PES campaign network. The PES will also encourage the exchange of views between speakers at meetings during the electoral campaign.

▪ Leaders' meeting prior to the next European summit

This meeting, which takes place between the European elections and the European Council in June, is of particular importance. Without ruling out other important items on the Summit's agenda, certain crucial issues will have to be tackled by our leaders:

- The PES will have to tackle the issue of the President of the European Commission and establish a common strategy. At the meeting prior to the 17 June European Council, in line with this strategy, PES leaders could choose a candidate or support different candidates from our political family whose experience and qualifications would make each of them an excellent President of the Commission.
- The leaders will also have to the work carried out by, amongst others, the socialist members of the Convention and the IGC and concentrate on ensuring the adoption of the European Constitution at the Summit.

Delivering on the commitments of the manifesto and pursuing strategic planning regarding the issues central to the European project

▪ Boost growth, fight poverty and create more and better jobs

The objective of full employment and the strengthening of the European Social Model in a social market economy will continue to be the central focus of the PES. The PES will ensure the revival of the Lisbon process, which it initiated, in particular with regard to the development and strengthening of the social dimension. It will seek to accelerate social convergence across the European Union, to invest in education and lifelong learning, research and development, and to preserve high-quality public services.

In follow up to the documents, "Promoting investment, sustainable growth and full employment" and "Momentum for recovery in Europe promoting public and private investments", the PES will formulate its propositions in this domain for the coming years.

The PES will follow closely the evolution and reinterpretation of the Stability and Growth Pact. By following very closely the adoption of the next financial perspectives, the PES will support an EU budget which is balanced and able to carry out the Union's ambitions. The PES will work towards economic and social cohesion between all countries and regions of the enlarged EU.

▪ **Bring the EU closer to its citizens**

The PES played an active role in the drafting of the European Constitution. After its adoption by Heads of State and Government, the PES will follow closely its ratification in different Member States and will offer support, where necessary, to those member parties that have to defend it in a referendum.

The PES will listen to citizens' major concerns and will give priority to participatory democracy by inviting representatives from parts of civil society to some of its activities (roundtables, seminars etc.) It will further develop its relations with trade union representatives, in particular from the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

▪ **Immigration**

The PES working group on immigration will continue its work. The PES has developed a positive approach to immigration based on a frank and open discussion and supports a multicultural, multiethnic and tolerant society which accepts legal immigrants. The PES supports a common immigration and asylum policy (based on the Tampere Summit conclusions), a policy of active co-operation with the countries of origin and reinforcing the fight against illegal immigration and human exploitation. The PES will, in particular, encourage the co-operation of home office ministers from member parties by offering them the possibility of meeting on the eve of the Justice and Home Affairs Council meetings.

▪ **European Union: an area of democracy and equality**

Although article 2 of the draft European Constitution grants equality the same status as other values, equality is the intrinsic, central value according to which the PES develops all of its policies.

PES members of the Convention staunchly defended the inclusion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution. The PES will pursue the fight against extreme right-wing populism and reject all forms of discrimination based on race, religion or belief, gender, disability, age or sexual orientation. The PES will continue to denounce the monopoly control of the media, the manipulation of information and the abuse of power.

▪ **Promote a more secure, fair and sustainable world**

Concerns regarding the current international situation represent a serious challenge to which the international community must respond. The PES wants to contribute to the response of global progressive forces to these concerns. The Iraq crisis has demonstrated the necessity of reforming and strengthening international organisations. The PES will contribute to strategic considerations about multilateralism in order to resolve the existing conflicts and to respond to new threats to international security, such as international terrorism. The EU has to speak with a clear voice in international forums.

▪ **Globalisation**

The PES continues its deliberations on globalisation and will further develop the proposals in its paper, " Europe and a New Global Order - bridging the global divides". It will also refer to its political declaration "Changing the future", drafted by the PES's High Level Group on Globalisation, in which it puts forward the universal values on which

globalisation should be based, the vision of which progressive forces should modify and control it, as well as the measures necessary to govern the process in the interests of all.

The PES will continue to participate actively in the development of the Global Progressive Forum established last year in collaboration with the Parliamentary Group of the PES and Socialist International. In co-operation with SI, the PES is financing the Forum's website.

▪ **Transatlantic dialogue**

The PES, its Parliamentary Group and SI have started a high level dialogue with American progressive forces. The joint initiative "Building global alliances for the 21st century" is a result of this dialogue. It involves two pilot projects which were the subject of a first meeting in Stockholm at the start of April. The first project is about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the second the environment and sustainable development. There will be additional initiatives and projects in the coming months, in particular at the next meeting scheduled for the second half of this year.

▪ **Euro Mediterranean dialogue**

After the atrocities of 11 September and 11 March, the strengthening of relations and dialogue with the Muslim world, in particular from the Mediterranean basin, is more urgent than ever.

The Working Group responsible for strengthening this dialogue and for the revival of the Mediterranean policy of the PES proposes three areas of work: reinvigorating Euro-Mediterranean policy through the Barcelona process; further political commitment from the PES regarding the Middle East issue; stronger relations with our Mediterranean partners.

The PES and the French PS will organise this year in Toulouse a meeting similar to that which took place in Grenade in 2002. The objective of the meeting is to further strengthen the dialogue with partners from political parties and from civil society from the southern Mediterranean area and those from other parts of the Muslim world.

The Working Group will prepare a follow-up document which will bring together the political positions, direction and proposals of the PES. The paper will be presented in 2005 at the 10th anniversary of the launch of the Barcelona process.

▪ **Beyond the borders of the European Union: good neighbourhood policy**

The PES will pursue its deliberations outlined in its document "Europe's new neighbours - A post-enlargement strategy for European foreign policy". It will reinforce its partnership and co-operation with parties from its new neighbouring states, in line with joint initiatives with the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, and will develop its contacts with different civil society representatives.

▪ **Security and defence**

The PES Working Group on Security and Defence will continue its consideration of the approach of progressive forces to global security issues. In particular, it will consider the development of an effective common security and defence policy which is democratic, sustainable, encompasses humanitarian, civilian and military aspects and involves conflict prevention and crisis management. PES proposals, actions and responses regarding global security issues will be incorporated into a document to be submitted to the PES Presidency in the near future.

Strengthening the PES

▪ **Consolidation, democratisation et independence of the new PES**

The new PES will commence its activities in July. All of its bodies will actively participate in the development of the PES according to the Parliament and Council Regulation adopted on 29 September 2003. These bodies will have to be rigorous in setting themselves high standards of transparency and sound financial management. The PES will also have to redefine its relations with its Parliamentary Group, establishing new forms of cooperation in accordance with the new regulation.

The PES will introduce each year its political programme and a request for financing to the European Parliament and ensure that it acts in accordance with the regulation. Moreover, the PES must establish a non-for-profit organisation to secure its legal personality.

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The PES will implement the measures adopted in its Brussels declaration "Strengthening the PES".

Its communication policy will have to be pursued and developed, using all available means (press, website, meetings with civil society etc.), in order to enhance the visibility of the PES with its citizens. The quality of its current website must be maintained.

▪ **Establishing a foundation**

In co-operation with its Parliamentary Group, the PES plans to establish a European Foundation, a genuine European think tank which will fully contribute to the development of policies, direction and strategy of the PES. Initially, the PES and its Parliamentary Group will organise a meeting of representatives of national foundations to jointly prepare this initiative. It will then be a question of obtaining the necessary funds from the European Community's budget. Amongst other responsibilities, the Foundation will take charge of the annual "Yearbook" of the PES and its Parliamentary Group, the first edition of which proved to be a particular success.

▪ **PES Summits**

The PES will continue to encourage its Prime Ministers and leaders to discuss and co-ordinate positions on policies and issues of major importance. Many leaders have explicitly acknowledged the importance of the meetings on the eve of each Summit for parties in power and those in opposition. The PES will encourage its member parties to ensure the participation of high level figures in order to preserve the nature of these meetings.

Moreover, it also necessary to rise the profile of these meetings. For example, the PES will recreate the fruitful experience of Brussels (2001) and Barcelona (2002) by proposing that leaders meet with civil society representatives regarding European issues of major importance around the time of Summits.

These meetings will continue to be prepared carefully by the advisers of Prime Ministers and leaders who meet before the European Council, in principle at Brussels airport, in order to exchange their points of view and information regarding the main issues on the agenda of the Summit.

▪ **Ministerial co-ordination**

Over the last few years co-ordination between different ministers has decreased alongside the gradual loss of power of several national governments. However, the PES commits itself to stimulating and reviving this co-ordination.

▪ **PES Council**

Created at the Berlin Congress, the PES Council took place for the first time in Warsaw in November 2003. This meeting gave a political signal to our two sister parties from Poland, the SLD and Unia Pracy, during the final stages of accession negotiations. It also

considered in detail the global responsibility of an enlarged Union and the future of European social democracy. Building on the success of this first meeting, the PES should use this body to its full potential, securing its contribution to the shaping of PES policies and preparing its next meetings in great detail.

▪ **The Presidency**

The Presidency plays a crucial role in the implementation of the decisions of the Congress and in carrying out PES activities and initiatives. It will continue to ensure the continuity, coherence and profile and the PES's work and will be ready to react quickly to events of major importance, as it did, for example, after 11 September.

▪ **A new secretariat**

The PES will initiate an open and transparent procedure to recruit a competent new team which will have to be supported by resources, within the defined budgetary limits, of communication and administration necessary for its daily work.

Moreover, the new PES secretariat should develop certain types of initiative, such as the current secretariat's welcome of a delegation of permanent members of the PS last February. The resulting exchange of information and debates proved very fruitful, allowing each of the two secretariats to better understand each other's working methods and establishing stronger links.

▪ **Co-ordination Team**

The co-ordination team is the link between the PES secretariat and the PES Presidency. Its meetings ensure detailed and careful preparation of the PES Presidency meetings. Members of the committee are an effective direct link which strengthens relations and facilitates the daily work of the PES and its member parties.

▪ **The house of social democracy**

In the first instance, the PES, ECOSY and the PES Women's Standing Committee will take up office in this house. The PES will continue its discussions and negotiations with Socialist International to ensure that the latter moves into the "Anna Lindh house" in Brussels as soon as possible. This communal house of European social democracy will produce significant economies of scale for SI and PES member parties.

▪ **The PES Women's Standing Committee**

The PES will continue to cooperate closely with the PES Women's Standing Committee to allow the latter to pursue independently its principal objectives. The participation and contribution of the Committee's representatives to all the bodies of the PES have proved very valuable.

▪ **Strengthening of the solidarity between generations**

ECOSY: Co-operation with the youth organisation of the PES will continue on the same excellent basis as has been established over the last few years. The PES will continue to organise the Summer University, which enables its future political leaders to meet, to get to know each other and to debate the main issues relating to the European project. They also have the opportunity to discuss the internal and external challenges that European social democracy will face in the years to come. The next PES Summer University will take place in Lithuania.

PES/ESO: In close co-operation with the SPÖ, the PES will continue to co-operate with the European Association of retired people (ESO), based in Vienna, which has become very active in recent years.