



PES Leaders' declaration on North Africa

Adopted by the PES Leaders conference, Athens, 4-5 March 2011

The PES supports the democratic transition in Tunisia and Egypt and democratic aspirations in the countries of the region. The PES emphasises the role of opposition political forces, trade unions and civil society as well as the need to ensure a participatory and inclusive approach in the decision-making with national dialogue and reforms at such a crucial moment to guarantee freedom and pluralism.

Europe should play a vital role in the transition process and support democratic reforms in the region. The EU must seize this historical opportunity and offer assistance in different forms to all emerging democratic movements. The PES calls on the EU to make adequate proposals on a number of areas including regional development, investment plans in the poorest regions, civil society promotion, media expansion and support to the justice system and the rule of law. The EU must support young people, a pluralistic civil society and political parties through European political parties and European political foundations as they will increasingly shape the future of the region. The EU must take all necessary steps to implement an Emergency Programme to support, when necessary, the countries' economies as financial need may endanger the democratic process altogether while also promoting a favourable environment for economic development by fostering, inter alia, private investments.

The PES supports peaceful demonstrations taking place in other countries of the region, and stresses its solidarity with the people demanding a shift to democracy. The PES calls on the authorities to stop violence against protesters and to respect the freedom of expression and assembly.

The PES is particularly concerned about the deliberate and relentless atrocities committed by the regime in Libya and deplores the high number of innocent victims. The PES urges an immediate end to violence and the targeted killing of civilians. The PES welcomes the recent unanimous UN Security Council Resolution 1970 and calls upon the international community and the EU to implement the sanctions foreseen. The Extraordinary European Council of March 11th must serve as a framework for stronger, more assertive and coordinated action on the part of the EU vis-à-vis the Libyan crisis and the intolerable loss of human lives. The EU should assume a key role in managing the migration and refugees flows caused by the exceptional situation in most of the countries of the south bank of the Mediterranean sea with a common approach and a spirit of solidarity.

The PES will organise its next PES Euromed Conference on 28-29 April 2011 in Tunis, Tunisia, together with representatives of the opposition and political parties of the region. The PES will also form a Task Force, composed of representatives of each member parties, to ensure the follow up of the democratic reforms in the region and to ensure their successes.

The PES calls on the EU to address the current events in light of their historical scale and to ensure that protests will lead to democracy, the victory of freedom and the respect of human dignity.

