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Invitation

Conference: Social Cohesion and Progress

30 – 31 August 2019, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Dear friends and dear comrades,

It is an extraordinary pleasure to invite you to this conference, because on 28/08/19, the day before our event, the **Network of Social Democracy in Asia** (SocDem Asia) will celebrate its **10th anniversary** to which you are all cordially invited (please register via the secretariat of SocDem Asia socdemasia.secretariat@gmail.com). We are also honored that our host is the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)** which, together with other parties, has **managed to bring about the first change of government since Malaysia's independence**. They were able to achieve this in a democratic and peaceful way, thanks to a program for progress and social cohesion.

Therefore, the focus of our conference will be on **progress and social cohesion**. All over the world, people in our societies are worried and feel an enormous pressure. It is because of the complete economization and rapid digitisation of all spheres of life, citizens feeling alienated from the state and its institutions, the threat to our world and our living space posed by climate change, and democracy being called into question. These are the causes that lead to a division in our societies.

There is a predominant feeling that people are no longer working together, but rather against each other. Although people long for cohesion, they mostly do not believe that it will come to fruition in their daily routine. Many no longer bear in mind the general public and the common good, but only care about themselves. It is often not about good schools for everybody any more, but just about



getting the best school for his or her own child. This attitude is reflected in almost all areas of life.

As socialists and social democrats, we cannot accept such a state of affairs. We want to make the world and our countries a place where people are inspired by working together in harmony, solidarity and humanity. We want to move towards a new era where “we” means “all of us”. Our political opponents also use the word “we”. But they use it to exclude others and differentiate from them. To make this inclusive “we” come true, we need **Decent Work, Growth and Human Development**, which is the second topic of our discussion on progress and social cohesion.

Furthermore, we will have a working group at our conference dealing with the **Recent Developments in Asian Countries**, and in our **Gender Working Group** we will focus on the question of what progress and social cohesion means precisely from a gender perspective.

Dear comrades, dear friends, this conference will not only be an excellent occasion to continue our political debates. It will also be a splendid opportunity to exchange experiences, to learn about best practices and to deepen our progressive network.

For more information about the conference, please find enclosed the draft program, the technical details and the registration form.

Please get registered for the conference in Malaysia at the latest on 12 August 2019.

We are looking forward to the confirmation of your participation and to seeing you in Kuala Lumpur.

Kind regards,

Konstantin Woinoff