



**PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE**

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**Resolution: Social Cohesion and Progress**

30 – 31 August 2019, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

We live in times of rapid change. New technologies revolutionize the way we live and work. Globalization and automation disrupt entire industries, new means of communication and transportation redraw the map of the world. At the same time, climate change threatens the survival of many species, not least our own.

Change always creates winners and losers. Some enthusiastically embrace the new opportunities. Around the globe, millions have been lifted out of poverty and joined the middle classes. Others feel threatened by the rapid change. They see their communities, identities and livelihoods under pressure.

Socialism and social democracy have always been forces of social progress. We have never broken machines, but shaped and tamed capitalism. Historically, we have brokered social compromises between capital and labour, and between the working and the middle classes, resulting in development and social peace. Today, at the advent of digital capitalism, we must repeat this historical mission, and at the same time, we must provide alternatives because the capitalist logic of exploitation of humans and nature has long exceeded planetary boundaries and caused historical injustice.

This is no easy task, because decades of market liberalization have encouraged many to focus only on themselves. As a consequence, the common good agenda has lost political currency. At the same time, distribution conflicts over jobs, work, welfare and the cost of climate change are intensifying. Especially those on the lower rungs of the social ladder worry how they and their children will do in the future.

Our opponents on the right exploit these anxieties for their own benefit. By pointing to vulnerable minorities as scapegoats for alleged societal decay, they introduce a politics of fear and divide. Strongmen



justify their assault on democracy with the fictitious need for cleansing the body politic to restore the health of the nation. Where the future looks bleak, reactionary appeals to the golden past resonate with those who feel disrespected or left behind.

**The Progressive Alliance offers a vision of a better tomorrow for all.** Our vision combines social progress with social cohesion.

To thrive in the rapidly changing world economy, we must unleash the full potential of our societies. Progressive development means to create a climate of openness to encourage creativity and innovation. This is why we must resist technologies for social control, and struggle to open up space for free expression and association. We must invest in heads to nurture every talent. This is why we will invest in life-long learning systems with innovative curricula.

Liberal freedoms are the basis of economic development. Yet, they cannot be fully achieved without social and economic security. Only those who are free from want have the capabilities to unleash their full potential. This is why we must address anxieties over the future of work head on.

**The Progressive Alliance is set on creating decent livelihoods in digital capitalism.** In the machine age, we must support human work around the things humans can do better than machines, namely creativity and innovation, empathy, experience, and communication. Humans will always be better in taking care of humans. This means the job engine of the human economy of tomorrow is the care economy. We must make sure that those who raise children, educate students, heal the sick or care for the elderly receive a decent income. This way, innovative economic policy for the digital age also leads to social progress.

**The Progressive Alliance offers a positive vision for a better tomorrow.** And yet we need to take those who feel anxious along with us into a better future. The invisible forces of globalization, automation and migration change our societies. Old communities are uprooted, social norms and customs change, and conflicts threaten to tear apart the

fabric of society. Many feel powerless in the face of all this change, and fear the loss of control. If we want people to embrace change, we need to invest in social cohesion.

**The Progressive Alliance is committed to building strong communities.** Strong communities empower people to take control of their lives through first class public services. We need to build connectivity and digital infrastructure, hospitals and sanitation, schools and kindergartens, community centers and libraries. Democratic communities give us a say in the shaping of our social environment. Having one's voice heard is essential for strong identification with the community. This is why we struggle for full participation in democratic decision making on the national, regional and local level. Communities can give orientation in the vertigo of change. This is why we fight to protect human rights for all, especially for vulnerable minorities. Participation and collective action strengthen the sense of local identity and belonging, and are therefore key ingredients of social cohesion.

**The Progressive alliance calls for gender equality and empowering all women and girls.** Gender equality matters. It is not only a fundamental human right – it is one of our core values as well. Gender equality has not been achieved in one single state in the world. Without gender equality we cannot achieve social cohesion and progress. That is why we fight for gender-equal societies with equal opportunities for all women and girls in all areas of life, especially in education, economy, administration, science and politics. Equal rights, equal access to education and health care including respecting sexual and reproductive health and rights, equal pay and equal career opportunities, equal share of unpaid care work are prerequisites for a self-determined live. We fight for a society where women and girls can live free from discrimination and free from gender-based violence.

We support the UN's women's right convention - CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women), which has been adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and has been ratified by 189 states. We feel responsible for the



implementation of the Beijing platform for action which has been adopted 1990 from the world women's conference in Beijing. To achieve the UN's sustainable development goals there are only 10 years left. Therefore, we call for a faster and more sustainable implementation of gender equality including monitoring and reporting: in all areas of life - in all countries.

To counter the sowing of divisions and fear by populists, we need to foster an inclusive collective identity. The progressive "we" includes all of us, despite our ethnic roots, political views, financial means or religious affiliations. This is how progress and social cohesion are interconnected: **What matters most is not where we come from, but where we will go together.**