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PROGRESSIVE **ALIANZA**
ALLIANCE **PROGRESISTA**
DE LAS AMÉRICAS
OF THE AMERICAS

Declaration of the Progressive Alliance of the Americas 50 years after the military coup that overthrew Chile's socialist President Salvador Allende

Fifty years ago, on 11 September 1973, the Chilean armed forces attacked the La Moneda Presidential Palace in Santiago to overthrow the legitimate democratic government, and in the face of the attack the then President Salvador Allende decided to commit suicide.

Allende had been elected in the second round of the 1970 elections representing the “Unidad Popular” (a political force made up of the Socialist Party and the Communist Party).

From that date until 1988, a terrible and bloody dictatorship terrorised the country, torturing and murdering political opponents not only in Chile, but also in various cities around the world (Washington and Buenos Aires among others).

Under the military dictatorship Chile became the regional neoliberal laboratory of Milton Friedman and the Chicago boys who devised the dictator's economic plan, provoking a deep social fracture and crystallising inequalities.

The progressive response was expressed by a great wave of international solidarity movement and, as such, the 50th anniversary commemoration is of global significance for our political family.

Today's call is "Never Again" at a time when the far right is gaining in public opinion, polls and elections.

In Chile the political right is trying to revise the historical facts and gain hegemony in the interpretation of what happened by putting the responsibility on the Allende government and pretending to justify that the military coup was to avoid a communist coup and the result of his mismanagement.

They disregard and neglect the victims, the violation of human and civic rights, and the thousands of people who are still missing.

In this context, progressive parties, trade unions and civil society organisations are united to oppose this wall of lies and defend historical memory. Salvador Allende is today more present than ever in the hearts and minds of many Chileans of all generations.

For us his legacy, marked by the construction of a democratic and peaceful path to socialism, the social democratic programme of government and the unification of the left within the Unidad Popular, is more relevant than ever.

In the present historical context, we must learn the lessons of that process. We live at a time when only 20% of the world's population live in democracies, and democracies are under threat. Times when military coups have returned and threats to the rule of law and freedoms occur on a daily basis in countries such as Nicaragua, Burkina Faso, Niger, El Salvador or Guatemala (a country where the legitimacy of the progressive triumph has been questioned), and when the centre-right prefers the support of the far right to govern, as in Finland, Sweden or the recent attempt in Spain.

Therefore, these 50 years are more than a simple commemoration. It is about remembering and remembering to defend democracy, to unite the progressive and democratic family, and to put social issues first. In short, it is about the power of international solidarity.