



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

February 8, 2024

To the members of the Presidium of the Socialist International

Dear Comrade,

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you as a member of the Presidium in response to recent developments in our esteemed organization. These recent developments have prompted a profound reflection on the work and values of our organization which we as leaders have a responsibility to protect. Indeed, our election to the leadership of the Socialist International offered hope to member parties and progressives worldwide. I did not take lightly the responsibility placed on me as Secretary-General of our organization and was expectant of the work that together with you we could achieve together. I did not hide my gratitude for President Pedro Sanchez's support of my candidature for the position and I looked forward to a cordial working relationship with him to transform our organization. Unfortunately, several situations came up over the course of the last year that have hindered the working relationship between the President's team and the Secretariat.

As you may be aware, the Presidium meeting scheduled for 25th January 2024 for which an agreed agenda was sent on the 23rd January 2024 turned out to be a meeting to discuss my work as Secretary-General. Although I was hinted at the possibility of this discussion several weeks prior, I had no course to expect that such a discussion would take place in my absence. About 10 minutes before the meeting, I was informed that I could not attend the meeting and a request to be allowed to respond to whatever allegations were being brought against me was denied.

Although no formal allegation has been brought to my attention for a response, I deem it necessary to provide some clarification on certain issues, given the feedback I received from some members of the Presidium who attended the Presidium meeting on 25th January 2024. I was further compelled to write to you to clarify issues when during my meeting with the President of the Africa Committee and a Vice President from the Africa region over the past weekend, it became apparent to me that they had taken the narrative of Vice President Hana Jalloul on several issues and formed their impressions on the issues. As you will note I did not engage you as a Presidium member on these issues prior to the Presidium meeting because I was advised by the leadership of the Africa Committee not to engage other presidium members on the issues. I hoped that these issues would be resolved and not get to the level of the entire Presidium. Unfortunately, the situation has been blown out of proportion and presented to the entire presidium members as a crisis.

Since assuming the role, every action of mine has been driven by a commitment to actualizing the new vision of the organization. Collaborating closely with key stakeholders within the SI family, my focus has been on working with other members of the presidium towards building an efficient and resilient organization capable of addressing the pressing issues of our time. With a support staff of one (1) assistant – Carlos Wallhead, I have managed to implement key initiatives aimed at building an efficient Secretariat while projecting the work of the organization globally.

Despite the challenging organizational difficulties, I have worked to ensure efficient management in the organization and it is with great conviction that I feel compelled to address the claims circulating about my work and to set the record straight regarding the ongoing situation.

Among the issues raised for which I provide clarification include:

COORDINATION BETWEEN PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY-GENERAL

i. Working Relationship with the President

Although I had hoped to have a close working relationship with the President after our election, this has not been the case. Indeed, after the online Presidium meeting on 3rd February 2023, I did not have the opportunity to meet with the President for eight (8) months. I only met with him on 3rd October 2023, where he indicated that he could not work with me anymore. I informed him of the fact that it would be fair for him to grant me the opportunity to brief him on the work that had been carried out in the organization over the past months. However, he informed me that Hana Jalloul had briefed him on various developments so there was no need.

Indeed, since the congress, Hana Jalloul has been the person I engaged with on behalf of the President so whatever working relationship exists is with Hana Jalloul and not directly with the President. This is understandable given the busy schedule of the President.

However, what I find unfair and unjust is for conclusions to be drawn on the work of the Secretariat and myself without being allowed to clarify the issues. Thus, making whatever conclusions are drawn prejudicial.

ii. Working Relationship with Hana Jalloul

Upon the commencement of my role as Secretary-General, I realized that there was a need to institutionalize the organization's processes and procedures. Given my understanding of my role as Secretary-General as stipulated by the Statutes of the organization, I began to take steps to streamline several processes and reorganize the management of the Secretariat.

Although my efforts were welcomed from the beginning, Hana Jalloul began questioning some of the steps I undertook and started informing some vice presidents that I was making political decisions rather than focusing on the purely administrative role that I was to play.

These issues escalated in the days leading up to the Latin American Committee meeting in March 2023 when my insistence on certain procedures about the election of the Latin American Committee chair was interpreted as indicative of my support for one of the persons vying for the position.

From that point, my working relationship with Hana Jalloul became very hostile to the point where I felt it was no longer safe to have a different opinion on how issues should be dealt with and my every single action was strongly scrutinized. I felt censured as any engagement with member parties or other organizations was viewed with suspicion.

Several other events occurred and by August 2023, I had decided that I was not going to engage with Hana Jalloul to avoid all the hostilities until I had met with the President. I

met with Hana Jalloul in September 2023 in Finland where she indicated that we should try to work together. Less than one week from that meeting she started being hostile towards me again. I told her it was important for us to define a working framework to ensure that the misunderstandings and suspicion could be curtailed.

I subsequently proposed a meeting with other parties to discuss a working framework between her and the Secretariat. I discussed with the Chair of the Interim SIFAC Eero Heinaluoma and Vice President Paulina Lampsa and they agreed that there was a need to convene a meeting to agree on a working framework. The meeting was convened by Eero Heinaluoma and Hana Jalloul agreed on the meeting taking place on 2nd October 2023 in Madrid. She gave the time for the meeting.

On the scheduled date, Eero Heinaluoma, Paulina Lampsa, Hana Jalloul, and I met in the PSOE Office in Madrid. However, the scheduled discussion on the working framework did not take place as Hana Jalloul indicated that she had another meeting and could not stay beyond 30 minutes.

The working framework could therefore not be discussed and the two officers (Paulina Lampsa and Eero Heinaluoma) left without achieving the intended purpose of their trip to Madrid.

Since the coordination of work between myself and Hana Jalloul has not been defined it has led to a lot of misunderstandings in roles and suspicion of the intentions behind certain actions taken. A classic example occurred in November 2023 when upon being informed that the President wanted the Council held in the PSOE headquarters, I sent the Memo on the Technical Requirements for a host party of the council meeting. I was surprised to learn that this was translated as me trying to challenge the President's decision when all I sought to do was communicate what was needed from the Host Party of the Council.

Indeed, other third parties who have been involved in these discussions noted how stressful the situation was and how every action on my part seemed to be misconstrued and viewed with suspicion. This has however not deterred me from working as I believe that I owe it a duty to the organization to deliver on my mandate.

DELAY IN ORGANIZING ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

i. Delay in organizing the first Council Meeting

In January 2023 ahead of the presidium meeting of 3rd February 2023, I drew up a draft calendar of activities which I shared with the President for his input. I presented this calendar during the presidium meeting. The calendar included among other activities two council meetings, the first in June 2023 in Niger and another scheduled for December 2023 to be hosted tentatively by PS Portugal. Also, I scheduled a presidium meeting to be held in New York together with Heads of State in September during the United Nations General Assembly.

After the Presidium meeting, I commenced preparations for the organization of the Council meeting in Niger with the host party PND S Tarraya. I traveled to Niger to meet with the party leadership to discuss the technical requirements and preparations. A venue was booked by the party for the council and plans had been made for other logistical details to

be finalized for the Council meeting together with an Africa Committee meeting in June 2023.

On 13th April 2023, I received a call from Hana Jalloul informing me that the President has discussed with the President of Niger and that the council meeting scheduled to take place in Niger has been cancelled. I, therefore, sent an email to the presidium informing you all of the cancellation of the council meeting scheduled to take place in Niger in June 2023.

On 14th April 2023, the President sent this message to the WhatsApp group of the Presidium informing members of the presidium of this fact and indicated that a new date will be communicated.

Although I subsequently requested a new date for the council meeting from the President's team, I did not receive any dates as Hana Jalloul repeatedly indicated the President's tight schedule due to the then ongoing Spanish elections and the President's assumption of the Presidency of the European Union.

While awaiting possible dates from the President's office, I consulted with possible host parties including, PS Portugal, PS Albania, SDP Romania, and CHP Turkey to ensure that once I received the dates from the president's team, we would have possible host parties to quickly engage and confirm a venue. All the above-listed parties confirmed that they were willing and able to host the council meeting bearing in mind all the technical requirements.

As of September 2023, in communicating the cancellation of the proposed Presidium breakfast meeting in New York, the President sent a letter to Presidium members indicating that the Council meeting would take place before the end of the year. No dates were communicated to me until November 2023 when Hana Jalloul informed me in Madrid of the council meeting dates being 3rd - 4th February 2024. This was subsequently changed as she informed me that our colleagues in Finland had elections around that period and requested a change in the dates of the Council meeting.

I only received a confirmed date from the President's team through a letter they sent to the Presidium on 8th December 2023 informing the Presidium of a Council meeting on 24th-25th February 2024, following which the invitation and other technical information were forwarded to member parties.

Given these facts, I find it baffling for me to be accused of having "blocked" the organization or being the cause of a delay in organizing the first council meeting after the congress.

Implications of the delay in organizing the first Council meeting

It should be noted that the delay in organizing the first Council meeting affected the convening of all other meetings of the SI:

- a. Apart from the Latin America & Caribbean Committee and the Africa Committees, all other geographical committees are yet to be constituted by the Council and as such no other geographical committee meetings can be held until the Council have constituted them. The Latin America & Caribbean Committee and the Africa Committee meetings were held in March and June 2023 respectively. The meeting

of Parliamentarians at the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union was also held in Angola in October 2023.

- b. Although the CIS, Caucasus, and Black Sea region committee existed during the last mandate, the Presidium meeting of 3rd February 2023 did not recommend the formation of this regional committee but rather proposed the formation of an Asia Committee, Europe Committee, and Mediterranean Committee. The previous member parties of the CIS, Caucasus, and Black Sea Committee fall within the three newly proposed regional committees. Organizing the CIS, Caucasus, and Black Sea regional Committee in 2023 would have implied maintaining that committee and election of its Committee Chair. This would have automatically reconstituted this committee, which the Presidium did not propose.
- c. Once the first Council meeting had not been held, all the proposed geographical committees, thematic committees, and working groups could not be functional as none of them had been constituted.
- d. The interim Committees and working groups constituted on the 3rd of February, 2023 were intended to function for a few months in preparation for the then-scheduled council meeting in Niger in June 2023. Once no Council meeting had been held to constitute the substantive committees of Ethics and Finance and Administration, it became difficult for the interim committees to take certain decisions as they did not have the statutory mandates. Indeed, both the SIFAC and the Ethics Committees held several meetings (over 23 meetings in total) during which I presented several reports on the status of the finances of the organization as well as the status of our membership, membership applications, and reports on my engagements with former member parties. Assessments of indebted member parties were also undertaken by the Secretariat together with the Ethics Committee which was subsequently presented in joint meetings of the SIFAC and Ethics Committees. The work of these committees is to serve as a foundation for the substantive committees to be constituted in the next Council meeting.

ii. **Cancellation of Proposed 2023 Presidium Breakfast Meeting in New York**

Similarly, to the above-narrated challenges in scheduling dates for the council meeting, the Presidium meeting scheduled to take place in New York in September 2023 was not held due to a delay in the President's team confirming his availability for the meeting which significantly impacted the cost associated with organizing the meeting and the number of Presidium members who could attend the meeting given the short notice.

After constant inquiries and follow-ups beginning May 2023 on the dates for the Presidium meeting in New York, I only received a confirmed date barely 3 weeks before the meeting. Hana Jalloul booked a venue for the meeting and only directed me to pay for that venue for a Breakfast meeting. This venue together with the interpretation cost amounted to over \$40,000.

I presented this to the Chairperson of the Interim Finance and Administration Committee – Eero Heinaluoma and given the high cost due to the late bookings and the fact that less than ten (10) presidium members had confirmed their attendance at the breakfast meeting, he advised that the meeting should be canceled. He communicated this to both myself and Hana Jalloul when we met together in Finland for the congress of the SDP on 2nd

September 2023. This was subsequently reported to the Presidium members by the President.

WORK OF FOUNDATION WORKING GROUP FORMED BY THE PRESIDUM

i. Delay in the work of the SI Foundation Working Group

During the formation of a working group to consider the proposal of the President to establish a Foundation of the Socialist International, the President indicated that he wanted to chair this working group. He together with Comrades Manuel Augusto, Khagendra Chetry, Janet Camilo and myself constituted the membership of the working group. Given the President's schedule, Hana Jalloul informed me that she will be taking the place of the President as chair of the working group. I therefore remove the president from the group and replaced him with Hana Jalloul.

I consulted her, as I do with all other committee chairpersons, on dates and times convenient to convene a meeting of the working group. She directed that I convene the first meeting of the working group. She sent the statutes of the foundation to the working group and was supposed to present them during the meeting. At the time of the meeting, she indicated that she could not participate and had asked her assistant, Ana to join the meeting to take notes which she would respond to later.

The meeting was attended by only Comrades Manuel Augusto, Khagendra Chetry and myself with Hana Jalloul's assistant – Ana, in attendance. There were several questions asked on the proposed statutes of the foundation which I did not have answers to for obvious reasons. Hana Jalloul's assistant indicated that she was going to forward the questions to Hana for feedback. I took it upon myself to create a PowerPoint presentation on the governance structure of the organization based on the text of the statutes to offer some clarity on the proposed structure of the foundation.

As the Chair of the Foundation working group, Hana Jalloul did not attend any of the meetings that she agreed to be convened. Given that the President's team worked on and presented the draft statutes, it was important for her to take the lead in the discussions and offer clarifications to committee members. As at the time of this report, I had not received any feedback on the questions posed by the committee members to which Hana Jalloul was to respond.

It was expected that the proposal of the Foundation would be presented back to the presidium for a decision to be taken before presenting it to the Council meeting for ratification.

With the interest of undertaking some preliminary work to facilitate the work of the Foundation once it is established, I took the initiative to put together a list of foundations and think tanks of our member parties. This was to ensure that the SI foundation collaborates with the domestic think tanks of parties who can bring on board diverse perspectives and solutions. A request was sent to all member parties and a list of party think tanks has been put together by the secretariat.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT MY ROLE AS SECRETARY-GENERAL

i. Travels and engagements with Member parties

At various points since my elections, I have been questioned about my engagements with member parties of the organization. I was informed at one point not to engage party leaders without the permission of the president. As Secretary-General I deem it a duty to honor invitations from our member parties to attend their political events. So, whether it is for the ICAPP meeting hosted by MPP Mongolia, to support the municipal elections of the PSOE in Valencia, Spain, for the congresses of the SDP Finland, PNDS Niger, SP Albania, or PNP Jamaica, I am compelled to honor these invitations to support our member parties domestically. Without inquiry, it has also been alleged that all my travels have been paid for by the organization's limited funds, which is not accurate as a number of these trips have been financed by the inviting parties.

On September 29th 2023, I met with some member parties of the SI from the western Balkans to discuss ways in which the SI could work together with the parties in the region. This meeting was held in Tirana by the Socialist Party of Albania. A report to the President on 3rd October 2023 stating that such a meeting was held was met with allegations of me making political decisions without consulting the President. Indeed, the meeting was a brainstorming meeting with some international secretaries and the outcome of the meeting was supposed to guide our work in the region subject to the President and the Presidium's approval.

ii. Political Statements of the Socialist International

Following my election, my efforts to be proactive in drafting political statements on political development for the approval of the President have also been interpreted as me making political decisions. There has not been any occasion that a statement has been issued without inputs from the President's office. Following the numerous complaints about me making political decisions and in the interest of peace, I decided to stop initiating the drafting of statements on political developments until the President's team suggested. This has led to the limited number of statements being issued by the organization over the past 4 months.

iii. Engagement with Former Member Parties of the Socialist International

As you will recall, during the 3rd February 2023 presidium meeting, the president informed the Presidium of the fact that he and I will be engaging former parties of the SI to reunify our political family. Based on this, the Secretariat compiled a list of all the parties that left the Socialist International from 2013 to 2022. A total of 59 parties left the organization during this period. I started making contacts and engaging with some of the former member parties of the Socialist International. So far, I have engaged over 30 parties from all continents. Both the President and the interim Ethics committees have been briefed on these engagements through various reports.

It is however surprising to learn in recent days that my efforts to engage former parties of the SI was an attempt to undermine certain current member parties. Indeed, in my report to the President on 3rd October 2023, I stated several issues to discuss with him including the above subject matter. Unfortunately, we did not have any discussions on the report to enable me to clarify the situation.

SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT ISSUES

i. Rental of Workspace in London

As will be recalled, I informed the Presidium on the 3rd February 2023 of the challenges with accessing the office in London given that the former Secretary-General had insisted on his continued usage of that office. Due to this, I worked without an office and had to coordinate the work of the secretariat remotely. Although the coordination of the work of the Secretariat was challenging due to the absence of an office, we managed to get most of the work done remotely until we approached the final stages of organizing the archives of the organization which has been kept in storage units in London over the years (from the 1980s to date).

Given that the SIFAC had suspended its meetings pending a meeting between the President and I, I briefed the Chair of the Interim SIFAC committee on the work of the Secretariat and the need to rent an office in London when I met with him in Finland on 2nd September 2023. The office was to enable the secretariat to transfer old fixtures and equipment from the old office and to finalize the organization of the archives of the SI to be transferred to the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. It must be noted that Article 7.4. of the statutes of the Socialist International permits the Secretary-General to consult with the Chairperson of the Finance and Administration Committee on urgent matters in between the meetings of the committee.

I subsequently signed a lease for a workspace in a shared office space in London from October 2023 with a 3-month and 6-month break clause. The lease was negotiated in this manner to ensure that the lease could be terminated within 3 months or 6 months within which time the Secretariat would have completed the transfers of the archives and also to wrap up its activities and prepare for the Council meeting.

During my meeting with the President on the 3rd of October 2023, I explained the circumstances that necessitated the rental of the workspace. I further explained to him that once the archives were transferred to Amsterdam and the council ratified the presidium decision on the delegation office in Spain, some of the fittings and equipment from the old office would then be transferred to Spain.

Indeed, once the Council meeting was confirmed for February 2024, a notice of termination was sent to the management of the office in December 2023 and the President was informed of this fact.

ii. Operationalization of SI Delegation office in Spain and Payment of Membership Fees to Spanish Bank Account

Following the presentation of the transition challenges in the UK to the Presidium on 3rd February 2023, several members of the Presidium supported the President's proposal to open a delegation office in Spain. The presidium however indicated that this decision needed to be ratified by the next council meeting. At this time, the Council meeting was scheduled to take place within 4 months of the decision.

Steps were taken by the President's team to register the delegation office in Spain, in furtherance of which I signed an authorization letter for Hana Jalloul to commence the

process of opening a bank account. I was scheduled to travel to Spain in the first week of June 2023 to sign off on the bank account. Unfortunately, I fell ill and was hospitalized for over 12 days. Subsequently, I informed Hana Jalloul about my condition and had to cancel my trip to Madrid. While in the hospital, I kept getting emails about the need to travel to Spain to sign off on the bank.

I was discharged 2 days before the Africa Committee meeting in June 2023 and I went straight from the hospital to the airport to get a flight to Niger. This was to ensure that the meeting was held successfully.

A day before the meeting, some of the Vice Presidents of the region called me into a meeting to enquire about why they were being asked to pay monies to the Spanish bank account when the council had not ratified the decision and the member parties had not been properly briefed.

An email was also received from Khaoula Lachguar addressed to myself and the Chair of the Interim SIFAC committee indicating that she had been informed that the bank account in London was not in the name of the organization; this assertion was inaccurate. Around the same period, I was informed that Hana Jalloul had instructed the President of the Latin America & Caribbean Committee - Miguel Vargas to write letters to member parties in the SICLAC region (*attached and marked Appendix I*) requesting parties to pay their membership fees into the Spanish bank account. This was unusual as it is the Secretariat that communicates to member parties on the membership fees and not the Regional Committee Presidents.

I raised these and other concerns in the meeting of the interim SIFAC committee and indicated to them the misinformation circulated among member parties by Hana Jalloul on the situation of the bank account of the organization.

Based on these developments I wrote an official letter to the President (*attached and marked Appendix II*) and the members of SIFAC indicating that given the misinformation and agitations, it was prudent to hold off on communications with the parties until the council meeting where parties can be properly briefed. To this end, I did not sign off on the Spanish account as Secretary-General until November 2023 when it was presented by the leadership of the African Committee in Chad as a demand of the President to be fulfilled before the council.

It should be noted that I did not sign off on the Spanish account prior because Hana Jalloul sought to operationalize the Spanish account without recourse to me as the Secretary-General. I found this as undermining the work of the Secretariat thereby adversely affecting the independence of the Secretariat.

As you may all be aware, I have since December 2023 directed all member parties to pay their membership fees to the Spanish Bank Account.

Regarding the Delegation office in Spain, I was also for the first time shown this office in Madrid on the 23rd of January 2024 and informed that it would be operationalized after the Council meeting.

iii. Preparation of Financial Statements for the previous years (2017-2022)

I have been informed of the fact the delay in the preparation of the accounts of the previous years has been attributed to me. During the transition period, both myself and Hana Jalloul were informed by Former Secretary General Luis Ayala that since the accounts of the previous years pertained to his tenure in office, he would oversee the preparation of those accounts and submit them upon completion. I informed the Presidium during the meeting of 3rd February 2023 of this fact.

Subsequently, I was informed of the fact that the bookkeeping from 2017 to 2022 had to be undertaken before the accounts could be prepared. Latifa Perry engaged a bookkeeper who worked with her for several months to have this done. After this process, an accounting firm was engaged and together with the former Secretary-General the Accounts for the previous years were prepared and sent by Luis Ayala to the President and the Chair of the Interim Finance and Administration Committee in November 2023.

Based on these facts, I find it difficult to understand how the delay in the preparation of the accounts of the previous years could be attributed to me. I did not oversee the receipts and expenditures of the previous years and I could not have been involved in answering any queries on that. Latifa Perry and former Secretary-General Luis Ayala were in charge of this and they had the mandate to prepare those accounts.

iv. Current Finances of the Socialist International

Reports indicate that some members of the Interim Finance and Administration committee alleged in the presidium meeting of 25th January 2024, that there was no budget presented for 2023 and there was a lack of clarity on the finances of the organization. This is completely inaccurate.

In April 2023, I presented a draft budget to the Interim SIFAC which was discussed and inputs were made by members of the committee present at the meeting. I was directed by the committee to submit a revised budget which I worked on and sent back to the committee members for its meeting in May 2023. It must be noted that not all members of the SIFAC attend meetings and therefore the interim SIFAC Chair Eero Heinolouma was the best person to answer to reports on these issues. Also, there has not been any financial information requested from me by the SIFAC that I have not provided to the committee. The summary of expenditure which was requested by the committee had to be prepared by the bookkeeper upon her reconciliation. Although there was a delay on her part, she submitted this to me and I forwarded it to the committee in November 2023.

Indeed, given the challenges faced in the preparation of the previous years' accounts (2017 to 2022), I decided to engage the bookkeeper to reconcile and undertake the bookkeeping of the organization every month. This was to ensure that there was no delay in the preparation of the financial statements at the end of the year as was experienced with the preparation of the previous years' accounts.

A meeting was held recently between the President's Lawyer, myself, and the bookkeeper on 22nd January 2024 upon the request of the President's lawyer. After over 2 hours of discussions on the bookkeeping processes of the previous years, we went over the bookkeeping processes of the 2023 accounting year. The bookkeeper informed him of the

fact that the documentation and recordings of 2023 were up to date and are being finalized to be sent to the accounting firm for the preparation of the 2023 Financial Statements.

v. Salary of the Secretary-General

Following my election as Secretary-General, Latifa Perry, the Secretariat Coordinator sent me a letter (*attached and marked Appendix III*) detailing the terms of my employment by virtue of my election as Secretary-General of the organization. Upon the formation of the Interim Finance and Administration Committee and in my preparation of the annual budget of the organization, I engaged with the Chairperson of the committee – Eero Heinaluoma on the employment terms of the SG. He indicated that the terms should be maintained. Again, this consultation was made based on Article 7.4 of the statutes of the Socialist International.

Subsequently, this letter was sent in an email to all members of the Interim SIFAC on 25th April 2023 and formed the basis of the committee's discussions in its next meeting. Indeed, from December 2022 and even after receiving the letter stating my employment terms in January 2023 my salary was not processed and paid until April 2023 when this was presented to the interim SIFAC.

It is therefore surprising that Hana Jalloul who is a member of the Interim SIFAC committee will circulate information to members of the Presidium that I have connived with Latifa Perry to give me a letter of employment when the organization has not given me a contract and that this is supposed to be the basis of the removal from office at the next council meeting should I not resign. As an elected officer of the organization, I have only been paid the remuneration of a Secretary-General as pre-determined by the organization. It must be noted that the salary and housing allowance stated in the letter are subject to a tax deduction of approximately 40%.

This development has made me question whether the issues being raised on my remuneration are because of my race or gender. As an organization fighting for equality and which fights against discrimination, it is mindboggling to even conceive of these issues as a subject matter for discussion.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

i. Engagements with Leadership of the Africa Committee

After I met with the President on 3rd October 2023, I informed the Chair of the Africa Committee of the fact that the President had informed me that he could not work with me any longer. He called a meeting of Vice Presidents of the region and I briefly informed them of the developments without necessarily giving them detailed information about the challenges I had been facing with the President's team since my election. The Vice presidents indicated at the time, that whatever the situation, it was important that both myself and the President finish our mandates.

The president of the Africa Committee sent a delegation of three (3) Vice presidents to meet with the President on 24th October 2023. I was invited to a meeting in Chad at the beginning of November 2023 where I was briefed on the outcome of the meeting. Before this meeting I was informed by Vice President Chantal Kambiwa that I could not attend a

planned meeting of the Party of European Socialists in Malaga, Spain because Hana Jalloul had informed them that as host party they had not invited me to attend the meeting and I was therefore not welcomed. Although I found that instruction unfortunate, I obliged in the interest of peace.

Upon my arrival in Chad, I was informed by Manuel Augusto, Chantal Kambiwa and the President of the Africa Committee that President Pedro Sanchez demanded (3) things from me. First, I signed off on the Spanish Bank Account before the council meeting. Second, that I direct member parties to pay their membership dues to the Spanish account before the ratification of the decision of the delegation office by the Council. And third, that I move to Spain before the council meeting.

I agreed to undertake these steps as I hoped it might bring an end to the hostilities. I went to Madrid with Ms. Chantal Kambiwa to sign off on the Spanish account. I also wrote letters to member parties in December 2023 and at the beginning of January directing them to pay their membership fees into the Spanish bank account. During an Interim Finance and Administration Committee (SIFAC) meeting on the 4th of December 2023, I pointed out to the committee some of the practical challenges of the payment of membership fees in Euros since the fees were originally quoted in Pounds Sterling. Vice President Paulina Lampsa suggested that both the UK pound account and the Spanish Euro Account be communicated to parties to give them the flexibility of choosing which bank or currency was convenient for their transfers. I requested that the SIFAC write a letter to me directing me to request member parties to pay their membership dues to Spain. A draft letter was sent by the Chair of SIFAC and I offered to revise the letter and send it back to the committee.

The next morning after the meeting, I sent two draft letters (*attached and marked Appendix IV and V*). The first one in which I requested the Chair of the Interim Finance and Administration Committee to sign off on the fact that member parties should pay monies to the Spanish bank account although there had not been a ratification of the delegation office by the council. The second letter was from me to member parties requesting parties to pay their membership to the UK account or the Spanish account prior to the ratification and based on the directives of the Interim SIFAC.

Ms. Hana Jalloul responded harshly to the draft letters in an email indicating that she would draft a revised letter for me to send to the parties. She sent the revised letter on the 27th of December 2023 (*attached and marked Appendix VI*). Some members of the committee agreed to the draft letter sent by her and although that letter did not address the issue adequately I agreed to send it out to member parties in the interest of peace. The letters were therefore sent to member parties between the 29th of December and the first week of January 2024.

After the letters were sent, I had a call from the Chair of the Africa Committee in the 2nd week of January indicating that President Pedro Sanchez called him to inform him that he could not work with me anymore. I enquired about what else the President was basing his decision on as I had carried out all the demands communicated to me. He said he was not aware.

ii. **Presidium Meeting of 25th January 2024**

On the 25th day of January 2024, a Presidium meeting was scheduled to be held. I received an email from Ms. Carlota Merchan of PSOE in December, notifying me that the president's team would organize the meeting and I will be sent a link to send to the members of the presidium. I raised concerns about the deviation from the organization's statutes, questioning why the President's team, not the Secretary-General, was convening the meeting. Subsequently, I was informed that I could send the meeting notice to Presidium members. Despite various occasions of procedural concerns, this incident was particularly noteworthy.

Upon inquiry about the meeting agenda, Hana Jalloul stated she would consult with the President and provide me with the details subsequently. It is important to note that I had earlier informed Hana Jalloul of my intention to travel to Madrid on the 9th of January 2024 to discuss outstanding issues related to the upcoming Presidium and Council Meetings. Delays in her availability were attributed to her Congress sessions and travel agenda, and she eventually agreed to meet with me on the 23rd of January 2024, two days before the presidium meeting. During the meeting, the Presidium meeting agenda was finalized. I then translated and disseminated it to all Presidium members on the same day. I subsequently finalized my report to the presidium and shared it with the President the next day. This was to let him know beforehand what report I was going to present to the Presidium members.

It turned out that as earlier hinted, the Presidium meeting's actual agenda differed from the one discussed and agreed upon. This made me realize that the delay by Hana Jalloul in confirming the agenda of the meeting was deliberate. A few minutes before the scheduled time of the meeting, I received a text informing me I could not attend the meeting.

Following the meeting, I received several feedback on the issues raised some of which I have clarified in this letter. I also received a call from the President of the Africa Committee inviting me to a meeting with him in Chad. I subsequently met with him on the 2nd February 2024 where he informed me that upon discussions with the President, he believes the best decision was for me to resign my position as Secretary-General of the Socialist International. Vice President Chantal Kambiwa who also attended the meeting indicated that she believed my resignation would be beneficial to my health as the pressure under which I was working was too much.

I informed them of the fact that I had to reflect on the proposition and also consult with my party before making any decision.

Although it has been a challenging time and narrating these facts has been particularly difficult for me I deem it necessary to clarify these issues to you as a member of the Presidium with a mandate to lead the organization. Indeed, since I assumed the role of Secretary-General, I have received tremendous support from member parties including members of the Presidium and I look forward to this continuous cooperation.

I want to assure you that I will not be resigning as Secretary-General of our dear organization. Indeed, when I accepted the nomination of my party to contest for the position of Secretary-General I did not assume my work in the organization was going to be without challenges and I do not intend to step down at the slightest challenge. If there are any alleged wrongdoings on my part to warrant an inquiry, I would expect that the principles of natural justice will be applied and I will avail myself to answering any questions.

I will continue to work in promoting the collective interest of the Socialist International as well as supporting the vision of the President's vision for the organization. However, as I have indicated in the preceding paragraphs, I have not had much of a working relationship with our President Pedro Sanchez. My engagements have been with Hana Jalloul and since the President has indicated that she is the one I am to work with, there is a need to establish a working framework going forward to prevent further misunderstandings and foster mutual respect for each other's role in the organization. Although my attempts to have a working framework defined in the past have failed, I believe that the Presidium can facilitate this as it forms the crux of the issue.

While taking steps to resolve the current impasse amicably, it is important to safeguard the democratic principles and values that underpin our organization. As Secretary-General, my foremost objective is to ensure the preservation of our organization's principles and the unity that has defined us over the years. Our actions must necessarily reflect our values. I remain resolute in my dedication towards the progress of the Socialist International and I am very confident that we shall together find a workable solution to this unfortunate development in the interest of all our member parties. I am optimistic that our commitment to justice and fairness will prevail, and that, through our collective efforts, we can overcome this chapter and emerge stronger as a united organization.

The preparation for both Presidium and Council meeting is ongoing and I will continue to do my work as Secretary-General mandated by the Statutes to organize all meetings under the auspices of the Socialist International. I appreciate your support during these challenging times and look forward to seeing you in Madrid.

Fraternally yours,



Benedicta Lasi
Secretary-General of the Socialist International





INTERNACIONAL SOCIALISTA

Comité para América Latina y el Caribe

Santo Domingo, República Dominicana.
12 de junio del 2023

Estimados Presidentes de los Partidos Miembros del Comité de la Internacional Socialista para América Latina y el Caribe.

Después de saludarles afectuosamente, me dirijo a ustedes en mi calidad de Presidente del Comité de la Internacional Socialista para América Latina y el Caribe les informo que disponemos de una nueva cuenta bancaria en la cual realizar el pago de sus respectivas cuotas como miembros de nuestra organización. Esta cuenta nos ha sido remitida por el presidente de la Internacional Socialista, el señor Pedro Sánchez.

La nueva cuenta bancaria es la siguiente:

Banco: Banco Santander

Número de cuenta: (IBAN) ES53 0049 0001 55 2111962256

Titular de la cuenta: Internacional Socialista

Les solicito que a partir de la fecha, todas las transferencias de pago de sus cuotas sean realizadas a la misma. Les recuerdo la importancia de mantener al día sus cuotas como miembros de la Internacional Socialista, ya que esto nos permite seguir fortaleciendo nuestra organización y trabajando por los valores de la socialdemocracia en el mundo.

Aprovecho esta oportunidad para motivarlos a continuar trabajando juntos para fortalecer nuestra institución y la socialdemocracia en América Latina y el Caribe. Nuestra región enfrenta importantes desafíos políticos, económicos y sociales, y es a través de la cooperación que podremos superarlos.

Por último, quiero agradecerles por su compromiso con la Internacional Socialista para América Latina y el Caribe y por su importante contribución a nuestra lucha por la justicia social, la democracia y la igualdad en nuestra región.

Atentamente,


Miguel Vargas
Presidente del Comité para América Latina y el Caribe

Ave. Jiménez Moya No.14, casi esq. Sarasota, Bella Vista
Santo Domingo, D.N., República Dominicana
Tel.: (809) 412-4093



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

London, July 6, 2023

Pedro Sanchez,
President,
Socialist International

Dear President,

Bank Account and Secretariat of the Socialist International

Recent developments on the issue of the Secretariat of the Socialist International has necessitated me officially writing to you with the hope of having the opportunity to meet with you after this crucial upcoming election in Spain.

Following your letter dated 9th June 2023 to Presidium members, I have had a number of concerns raised by some Presidium members and member parties on issues which I would like to bring to your attention. Indeed, during the Virtual Presidium Meeting on 3rd February 2023, you proposed for the moving of the Secretariat of the Socialist International to Spain. An extensive discussion took place and it was agreed that given the challenges being faced in the UK, a temporary decision needed to be taken. Although steps are being taken in Spain to effect this, some presidium members and subsequently member parties who become aware of the proposed move of the Secretariat reached out to me questioning why steps were being taken from open an office in Spain prior to the first council meeting after the council.

Indeed, during the Africa Committee meeting held on 16 -17 May, 2023 in Niger, the then Chair of the Committee - Dr. Bokary Treta presented the issue to member parties and informed them that the discussions to move the Secretariat or open a branch office in Spain was not conclusive as member parties questioned why a major decision such as the opening of an SI office in Spain was not first presented to and decided upon by the Council. I addressed the issue and explained the fact that the Council will be presented with the issue. Given these concerns I believe it will be prudent to hold off with any communication on the opening of an office in Spain to member parties prior to the first council meeting.

As an update on the handing over process in the UK, Natwest Bank has completed the process of cancelling the overdraft facility that had been personally guaranteed for by the former Secretary General - Luis Ayala. He has also been removed as a Signatory on the SI bank account and the bank has completed the processes to add me as a Signatory on the account. I therefore have control of the bank account and oversee all transactions on it. The only outstanding issue is the completion of the financial statements of the previous 6years which has to be signed off by the former Secretary General Luis Ayala. The interim Finance and

Administration committee has reviewed and approved the preparation of the previous accounts and the secretariat has paid for the bookkeeping and accounting firms to undertake the accounts preparation. I have had a series of calls with them and they have indicated, that the accounts for the past 6years is likely to be concluded by the first week of August, 2023.

Finally, given that we do not have a scheduled presidium meeting, I will be sending members of the presidium a brief update on the situation in London as there seem to have been some misinformation on the fact that the SI bank account is being run illegally in the UK. I have received communications from a number of them requesting an update on the situation in the UK.

I wish you and the PSOE the best in the coming elections and I look forward to meeting you in person at your earliest convenience after the elections.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,



Benedicta Lasi
Secretary-General





SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

9 January 2023

Ms. Benedicta Lasi
SI Secretary General

Dear Ms. Lasi,

Following your recent election as Secretary General of the Socialist International for the forthcoming four year term, I am pleased to hereby confirm the following conditions which apply to a holder of that post:

Remuneration: The salary of the SG is commensurate with that of a Member of Parliament. In the UK, the salary of an MP is £84,144 pa.
Housing allowance: £1,420.15 per month
Travel: an overnight allowance of £100 for each night spent abroad
Holidays: 7 weeks per year, in addition to Bank, Statutory and other holidays.
Annual trip home: the SG is entitled to one annual trip home
Severance pay: one month's salary per year of service
Pension: 8% of the salary is payable, either into a private pension scheme or into the individual's state pension

Please accept my very best wishes to you in your new responsibilities.

Best regards,



Coordinator of the SI Secretariat

APPENDIX IV

Benedicta Lasi
Secretary-General
Socialist International

Dear Ms. Lasi,

PAYMENT OF MEMBERSHIP FEES INTO BANK ACCOUNT IN SPAIN

I write to you pursuant to the decision by the Presidium to open a temporary Socialist International Delegation office in Spain pending ratification by the Council.

Although the decision of the Presidium is pending ratification by the council, the Interim Finance and Administration Committee has decided that the membership fees of the organization be paid into the new bank account opened in Spain.

In line with this decision, we request that you officially notify member parties to pay their membership fees into the bank account of the Delegation office established in Spain, pending ratification by the upcoming council in February 2024.

Your prompt communication with member parties on this matter is crucial.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Eero Heinaluoma
Chairperson
Interim Finance and Administration Committee



APPENDIX V

Dear Comrades,

PAYMENT OF MEMBERSHIP FEES

I hope this message finds you well.

I am writing to inform you of the decision made by the Presidium of the Socialist International to open a delegation office of the Socialist International in Spain subject to ratification at the upcoming council meeting.

In light of this development, the Interim Finance and Administration Committee has directed (by the attached letter) that member parties be informed to pay their membership fees into the newly opened bank account in Spain pending ratification by the Council.

We kindly request your cooperation in paying your membership fees to either the new Spanish bank account or the UK bank account. Below are the details:

Spain Bank Account Details:

Bank Name: Banco Santander
Account Name: DELEGACION INTERNACIONAL SOCIALISTA
Bank Account: G13718556
IBAN: ES5300490001552111962256
SWIFT: BSCHES MM
Currency: Euros

UK Bank Account Details:

Bank Name: National Westminster Bank plc
Address: 145 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7SN United Kingdom
Account number: 22277889
Sort-Code: 60-05-34
Account name: Socialist International
IBAN: GB48NWBK60053422277889
BIC / Swift code: NWBKGB2L
Currency: British Pounds Sterling

Kindly note that as per the attached invoice, the membership fee is quoted in British Pounds Sterling and all payments into the bank account in Spain must be the equivalent of this amount in euros to be considered a full payment.

Should you have any questions on the adjustment in currency kindly contact the secretariat at secretariat@socialistinternational.org

Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Socialist International.

Sincerely,

Benedicta Lasi
Secretary-General
Socialist International

27 December 2023

Dear Comrades,

As we are approaching the end of the year, we would like to remind you please:

- Pending fees of the year 2023.
- Following the organization's rules, membership fees for the year 2024 must be paid no later than by the end of January 2024.

In order to have a successful Council and the right to vote we need to ask you to please pay your outstanding fees in the below account:

Banco Santander
DELEGACION INTERNACIONAL SOCIALISTA (G13718556)
IBAN: ES5300490001552111962256
SWIFT: BSCHES MM

I thank you all for your commitment to the organization and look forward to continuing cooperation in 2024.

Wishing you all a happy New Year

Best regards,

Benedicta Lasi

Secretary-General

