

Progressive Governance Summit
13-14 July 2003 Communiqué

We, the heads of state and government of 14 countries from five continents have met in London to renew our commitment to the principles of progressive governance and to exchange our experiences in applying those principles in practice.

We share a belief in freedom; in justice and fairness; and in solidarity and mutual responsibility. We share a conviction - reinforced by history - in the power of collective action to improve people's lives. And we share the experience of having seen our own progressive policies work in practice.

Previous meetings in New York, Florence, Berlin and Stockholm set out an agenda of progressive policies that have been pursued both domestically and internationally. We also committed to learn from each other.

Over the last two days our discussions have ranged widely over both domestic and global issues. We have reaffirmed that the rapid pace of change in technology and globalisation does not make values-based government any less possible, or any less necessary.

Both globally and domestically we have discussed a new progressive agenda based on:

- * protecting people against risks from which they cannot protect themselves, from crime and long-term unemployment to violent conflict and terrorism, to the effects of environmental degradation;
- * empowering women and men to control their own lives, through education and health, political participation and human rights; and
- * preparing our societies and economies for the challenges of the future, ranging from climate change to science.

As part of that progressive agenda we have reaffirmed our commitment to the United Nations and looked at how the global challenges of poverty, protecting the environment and human rights, promoting development and peace and combating terrorism, require a step change in the confidence and capacities of our global institutions. These, we believe, must be based on respect for international law and founded on multilateralism not unilateralism; preventing war and eliminating absolute poverty rather than just tackling symptoms; and creating a world without divisions between haves and have-nots. Our global institutions must keep up with today's challenges: we need a sustained and imaginative debate about how to renew them so that they can ensure that globalisation works for all, not just the few.

Renewing the progressive tradition

We are successors of a strong tradition of progressive thought and action. That tradition - with its commitment to rights and freedoms, social equity and widely shared prosperity - has deep roots and a history of remarkable achievements: dramatic advances in public health, welfare, human rights, education and prosperity. Achievements that once seemed impossible were made possible by the vision and determination of progressive leaders. However, the progressive agenda remains uncompleted and there are new challenges which demand an imaginative response. That is why we are committed to revitalising the progressive tradition - and combining its long-standing values with practical common sense to address today's priorities.

The domestic progressive agenda

Within our very different nations, progressive governments are addressing eight major sets of common challenges:

First, progressive strategies for growth. To sustain growth and maintain progress in eradicating poverty governments need to act on four fronts amongst others: to reinforce open and competitive

markets; to invest in future prosperity through education, modern infrastructure and research and development; to support the shift into more resource efficient products and processes; and to maintain fiscal rigour and sound monetary policy.

Second, equity. The continuing shift to a more knowledge-based economy is fuelling unprecedented prosperity for many, but also risks further widening inequalities. We need to continue developing imaginative policy responses: to ensure welfare systems remain effective; to reduce exclusion and tackle hunger and acute poverty head-on. We also need to widen access to opportunities of all kinds, bringing down the barriers that hold people back from realising their full potential, and expanding access to health and education.

Third, public services. Rising public expectations of public services make it imperative that governments promote continued reform, guaranteeing fair access to services, improving quality and expanding choice and diversity to meet the needs of all parts of the population, and evolving services beyond one-size-fits-all. We stand neither for privatisation as an end in itself nor for provider capture of public services. We stand for putting the citizen first.

Fourth, children. We need to raise investment in children. The wellbeing of children is not only a moral obligation for society, but is also the key to future economic growth and a central element of strategies to reduce poverty. The demographic pressures in the north make this an even higher priority.

Fifth, community safety. Without protection against crime and violent conflict no community can thrive. Fear of crime and anxieties about identity fuel support for extremism and intolerance. We will continue to modernise our policing and criminal justice systems, including strengthening community-based crime-prevention efforts, to reduce crime and fear of crime. We believe that there is no contradiction between safety and civil rights - safety is a civil right to which everyone is entitled.

Sixth, social cohesion. Governments have a crucial role to play in holding societies together, promoting the tolerance and respect on which they depend. Shared public services play an important part in sustaining a common sense of community - as do non-profit and co-operative civil organisations for which we favour an enhanced role.

Seventh, governance and democracy. We need to continue deepening democracy. Our priorities are to achieve greater transparency and accountability, to combat corruption, to build a stronger ethos of public service and to reconnect politics and the people by engaging the public more closely in decision-making.

Eight, employment. Full employment remains an important goal for progressive policy-makers. We must provide women and men - including those outside the formal labour market - with the means to work their way out of poverty into decent jobs. The promotion of rights, representation, employment and protection is at the heart of successful policies to reduce poverty and ensure globalisation pays a positive social dividend.

In every area of domestic policy we believe in tackling causes as well as symptoms; using evidence of what works rather than dogma; promoting innovation and entrepreneurship; and working in close partnership with business, non-profit organisations and the wider public. These challenges must be met with the full participation of all members of society, including women, minorities and Indigenous Peoples, and people with disabilities.

The Global Progressive Agenda

Globalisation creates unprecedented new opportunities and risks - including the risk of a widening gap between rich and poor. The priority must be to ensure that globalisation works for all not just the few. We believe that greater integration is the only valid response to an era of unprecedented interdependence, and to the

opportunities and the dangers that it brings. Within Europe that means continuing to make progress to enlarge the European Union and expand the Eurozone. In South America, it means strengthening and deepening Mercosur and further widening South American integration. In Africa, it means strengthening the African Union and its programme, NEPAD. Globally, we need to revitalise and strengthen global institutions and partnerships, pressing forward with fair and open trade, and strengthening support for development. We need to work together to strengthen the global financial system and ensure that international financial institutions, including the IMF and World Bank, are equipped to respond to new challenges. For richer countries globalisation brings a heightened responsibility to ensure that domestic policies are designed to take account of their impact on the lives of those in poor countries.

Promoting prosperity

As progressive governments we will therefore work together, through the many different organisations of which we are members, to:

- * Reduce barriers to international trade and make international trade rules fairer by delivering on the commitments in the Doha Development Agenda including those made on agricultural liberalisation, TRIPS and public health, lower industrial tariffs and Special & Differential Treatment for developing countries. Urgent progress by both the EU and US in reducing, with a view to phasing out, agricultural export subsidies and making substantial reductions in trade-distorting agricultural domestic support needs to be a top priority. We need to continue working to strengthen the WTO and its multilateral rules-based system ensuring it is responsive to the needs of developing countries and enables them to speak with an effective voice.

- * Ensure new and more stable sources of finance for sustainable development, and ensure social justice informs our design of the international finance system. Globalisation has increased capital flows but these remain heavily skewed towards

more developed countries. Finance for developing countries remains excessively volatile. We acknowledge the need to work towards a more stable financial system which minimises the risk of financial crises, reduces volatility and promotes adequate and predictable sources of finance and, in some cases, reductions in debt levels which remain unbearable for some countries. National governments, international institutions and the private sector all have a role to play in promoting global financial stability and in ensuring the wishes and needs of the poor and most vulnerable are fully considered in policy responses. We reaffirm our support for the Millennium Development Goals, the Monterrey Consensus, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), based upon greater commitment from donors matched by increased responsibility on the part of recipients. Achieving these ambitious goals would require considerable efforts from both developed and developing countries, including increased resources. We welcome announced plans to increase Official Development Assistance toward agreed targets. We welcome and will further analyse ways of raising funds such as the International Finance Facility (IFF) and we look forward to a report on the IFF in September. We also welcome further discussion on the proposal for an International Fund for Combating Hunger.

* Create a progressive approach to migration: the right migration policies can benefit all countries, both those facing demographic deficits, and those with a surplus of younger people with the potential to earn substantial remittances. Migration can help with the transfer of knowledge, technology and skills, as well as mutual understanding. We will work together to develop managed-migration policies that contribute to economic growth, deliver opportunities for all, and balance the rights and responsibilities of all migrants. For these policies to work it is essential that public confidence in the integrity of national immigration and asylum systems is sustained, and that there is fair and effective treatment of asylum seekers and refugees in accordance with international conventions.

* Tackle the challenges of sustainable energy security and climate change. Security of energy supply - both within nations and to different social groups - will require more diverse sources of fossil fuels, the promotion of renewable sources and greater energy efficiency, including demand-side management. Access to affordable, safe and reliable energy for the poor needs to be actively promoted so they can benefit from the services it provides. We face a significant global challenge. Temperatures over the past decade have been the highest for 2000 years. Unless we collaborate to reverse this trend, we face catastrophe. We urge all countries to adhere to the Kyoto Protocol and recognise the international scientific consensus calling for a global 60% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050. We commit to work internationally to secure the major cuts in emissions which will be needed worldwide, through accelerating the development and transfer of renewable and energy efficiency systems. There is significant potential for increased growth, employment and business opportunities arising from the transition to new, more sustainable, energy technologies. We strongly support unilateral initiatives to help all countries, especially developing countries, to successfully adopt renewable energy sources. We note the importance of multilateral initiatives such as the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP), the Global Village Energy Partnership, the EU Energy Initiative for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development and the World Conference on Renewable Energy, Bonn 2004

* Drive forward progress on corporate governance and transparency as the necessary conditions for efficient markets and long-run sustainable investment, to rebuild confidence. In particular we need to prevent any repetition of scandals such as Enron and Worldcom. We strongly encourage initiatives which involve business and civil society in solutions as appropriate, such as the UN Global Compact, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and encourage greater co-ordination and coherence between existing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts.

* Work together to improve access to health care, including drugs and treatments at affordable prices, in poor countries. We are committed to tackling HIV/AIDS, to supporting the United Nations in its initiatives and to supporting global partnerships such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM), to complement other forms of development assistance and nationally led efforts. We will actively participate in the Paris Conference to rally innovative commitments to the GFATM, and will encourage increased commitments based on the performance of the Fund. We commit ourselves to a final global effort to ensure the eradication of polio and encourage research on other diseases mostly affecting developing countries. The experience of SARS, and the threat of new epidemics, demonstrate the new challenges to global governance and the need for common responses through stronger institutions. We see common action to invest in global public goods as an important priority for the new century.

Promoting Security

There can be no prosperity without security. We recognise that the new threats to security from state, non-state actors and illegal networks require effective action, in accordance with the UN's founding principles. Governments and international organisations now need to step up their efforts to address the new threats, addressing both symptoms and causes such as inequality, poverty, lack of opportunity and lack of human rights. Specifically we need to:

* Work together to tackle the threat of terrorism. We reaffirm our condemnation of all acts of terrorism, which threaten not only our security but also our fundamental freedoms and values. We are committed to individual and joint actions to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism in all its forms in accordance with the principles of international law.

* Work together on disarmament and non-proliferation to tackle the growing danger of the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction

(WMD). We reaffirm our commitment to the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. We urge all states party to those treaties to comply fully with their obligations. And we urge all states which have not yet joined them to do so.

* Make progress in the long-term scaling down of conventional armaments. We reaffirm our endorsement of the UN programme of action to combat the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. We reiterate our commitment to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Destruction (the "Ottawa Convention"), underline the importance of the universalisation of the Convention and call upon all States which have not yet done so to ratify or adhere to it.

* Develop more effective responses to contain and combat criminal and terrorist networks. Over the next few years there is a significant risk that links between the increasingly sophisticated criminal networks involved in people smuggling, the illicit drug trade, money laundering and terrorism will grow. Governments and law enforcement agencies will need to co-operate more intensively and learn more sophisticated ways to contain and undermine criminal networks.

* Improve the response of the international community to serious humanitarian crises, in accordance with the objectives and principles of the UN Charter. As progressive governments we reiterate the crucial importance of international co-operation in responding to humanitarian crises, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We recognise that these issues require the international community to develop appropriate and effective responses through democratic mechanisms. The report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) on the "Responsibility to Protect", launched by the Canadian Government in 2000, is a valuable contribution to the ongoing and necessary debate within the

United Nations on how to better deal with these new and emerging challenges. We therefore encourage the UN General Assembly to give these matters urgent consideration. We are clear that the UN Security Council remains the sole body to authorise global action in dealing with humanitarian crises of this kind. We support reform of the Security Council to make it more representative of the modern world. We call on all States to recognise the authority of the International Criminal Court to make this an effective instrument against the gravest violations of human rights.

* Fight regional insecurity and promote global integration: we believe that regional integration and co-operation is the best way to tackle regional rivalries and sources of insecurity. We strongly endorse the Quartet Roadmap for peace in the Middle East and urge all parties involved to work to implement the Roadmap. We support building peace and democracy in Iraq and stress that the people of Iraq must take control of their own destiny. We strongly support democratic reconstruction in Afghanistan. We also strongly support continuing efforts by the United Nations to bring peace to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

Future co-operation

As a commitment to deepening the collaboration between our countries, we resolve to increase the activities our network and widen its reach in order to exchange progressive policy ideas. We will make particular efforts to draw on the policy experiences of other countries in the network.

The way forward

This century has the potential to bring huge advances in health, in knowledge, in prosperity, and to bring billions of people out of poverty. We are optimistic that a truly prosperous, inclusive and secure global society is within our reach. However, realising that potential depends on careful and concerted action. It depends on the

progress we make in further integrating our economies, societies, regions and communities. And it depends on our success in standing firm against division within societies - against prejudice, discrimination, and inequality - and against division at a global level into competing blocs.

Some will continue to respond by turning inwards to the comfort of old identities, old ways of thinking and old structures. We believe that new challenges demand new solutions that combine fiscal responsibility, investment in citizens and democratic processes.

As progressive governments, we will therefore accelerate our work in matching imaginative new ideas with practical means of putting them at the service of the citizens we represent.