

Party program of the Social Democratic Party

Adopted by the Party Congress in Västerås 6 November, 2001



Socialdemokraterna

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Democratic Socialism

Social Democracy aims to build a society based on the ideals of democracy and on the equal value of everyone. Free and equal people in a solidaristic society are the goal of democratic socialism.

Everybody must be free to develop as an individual, to govern their own lives and to influence their own society. *Freedom* involves both freedom from external compulsion and oppression, hunger, ignorance and fear of the future as well as the freedom to participate and to decide on questions together with others, to develop as an individual to live in a secure community and the freedom to live ones own life and to choose a future of ones own.

This freedom of people presupposes *equality*. Equality means that all people despite different preconditions are given the same opportunities to build their own lives and to influence their society. This equality presupposes the right to choose and develop differently, without differences leading to social ranking and to social divisions in power and influence over everyday life and in society.

Freedom and equality are a matter both of individual rights as well as of collective solutions in order to create the best for all, which provides the basis for the individual's opportunities in life. The human being is a social creature who develops and grows in co-operation with other people and much of what is important to the welfare of the individual can only be created together with other people.

This common good presupposes *solidarity*. Solidarity is the unity that originates from the insight that we are all mutually dependent on each other, and that the best society is the one that is built on co-operation, on mutual consideration and on respect. Everybody must have the same right and opportunity to influence solutions; everybody must have the same obligation to be responsible for them. Solidarity does not exclude striving for individual development and success; it excludes the egoism that enables people to exploit other people to their own advantage.

All power in society must start from those who together form society. Economic interests never have the right to set limits to democracy: democracy always has the right to state the terms for the economy and to set limits for the market.

Democracy must be practised in many ways and on several levels. Social Democrats strive for a social order where people as citizens and individuals can influence both development at large and community work at the level of everyday life. We strive for an economic order where every person, as a citizen, wage earner and consumer, can influence the direction and redistribution of production, the organisation and the conditions of working life.

Social Democracy wants these ideals of democracy to characterise society as a whole and people's mutual relationships. Our aim is a society without divisions into lower and higher orders, without class differences, sexual segregation or ethnical divisions, a society without prejudices and discrimination, a society where everybody is needed and has a place, where

everybody has the same right and the same value, where all children can grow up to become free and independent adults, where everybody can run their own affairs, and in equal and solidaristic co-operation work for the social solutions that serve the community best.

These ideas of democratic socialism have been inherited from earlier generations, they have been reshaped by experience and they are the driving force of today's and tomorrow's political efforts. Social Democracy has its deepest roots in the conviction of everybody's equal value and inviolability.

I The world of today

Today's world offers everybody unique opportunities for a more secure and richer life, so great are the resources that are created by modern production technology. But the opportunities are still very unevenly distributed. Today's world is characterised also by deep divisions in both welfare and power, between people and between countries.

Development is characterised by paradoxes:

- Many poor countries have taken the step from underdevelopment to development, and an increasing part of the world's population has a share of higher growth. But the divisions between rich and poor countries are still very wide, and the uneven distribution of both modern production technology and modern medical knowledge threatens to sharpen already existing injustices. Even within the rich part of the world gaps are growing and new pockets of poverty and social exclusion are emerging. More people than ever can realise their own choices in life, but at the same time feelings of powerlessness and desperation are growing among the large number of people who are excluded from both the labour market and the life of the community.
- The reach of democracy is greater than at any time in history, and in many surviving dictatorships democratic forces are clearly on the rise. But at the same time democracy has to fight against the strong interests of capital, which threaten its ability to act, against nationalist movements, fundamentalist views and ethnical prejudices, all of which work in an oppressing and brutalising direction. Democracy has also to deal with internal problems of its own, when a large number of electors feel that their own opportunities to exercise influence are too limited.
- Population movements in the world have increased. Immigration has in many aspects enriched the receiving countries, but the inability to handle the new ethnic and cultural plurality has created overshadowing threats of segregation and marginalization. This together with the exclusion from the labour market of poorly educated groups in the indigenous population has created a breeding ground for right-wing populist movements with nationalist and racist traits.
- The work of disarmament has made important progress. The end of the cold war has decreased the risks of military conflicts between states substantially. Instead armed conflicts within states or former state units are increasing and pose a threat to security and stability within large regions. Bloody civil wars have cost hundreds of thousands of human lives, millions of people have had to flee and the economic and social structures in the affected countries have been torn apart in a way that will have far reaching repercussions for the future.

- A wise use of the resources of the planet is the precondition for the future of mankind, and environmental issues play an increasingly important role in both national and international policies. But the ecosystem of the planet is still under too great a pressure from the resource demands of production technology and just as much from the resource demands arising from the consumption patterns that have been developed in the industrialised world. The existing environmental friendly technology spreads too slowly. Both economic and social structures make the necessary adjustment to ecological sustainability more difficult.

In these paradoxes there is a clear pattern of conflict between the power of democracy and that of capital, between popular interests and the interests of capital. These conflicts are classical. The new production conditions, created by modern information technology, have in their early phase sharpened the conflicts and created new challenges for democratic forces.

But this however is not the whole truth. It is not only exploitative capital interests that give rise to the divisions between rich and poor countries; it is also the self-interest of rich countries. It is not only the short-term profit motives that lie behind the environmental problems of today, it is also the resource consuming life patterns which could be changed through the free choice of consumers themselves. It is not only the economic dominance that keeps people in poverty and social disadvantage; it is also the oppression of women and the inequalities between the sexes.

If we are to make the most of the opportunities for increased justice, increased welfare and a strong and wider democracy offered by development today, despite all its problems, then we must focus on all the different factors that cause the divisions in power, freedom and welfare.

A New Order of Production

The economy and the labour market affect the whole society. This insight has always characterised a Social Democratic analysis of society.

When modern machine technology and industrial methods of production broke through, it changed more than the way of working. It changed the whole society. It affected people's way of understanding themselves and the world, it affected the conditions of everyday life and finally the whole organisation of society: monarchy and oligarchy had to give way to democracy based on popular elections.

The whole society is changing in the same way today when technological and scientific development changes the conditions of industrial production, working life and trade.

Manufacturing industry still constitutes a large part of the national product, but its share of employment is falling. The emerging service sectors are becoming increasingly important for employment, and they give rise to a miscellaneous pattern as regards work places and work organisations. The demands for skills are increasing within large sectors of working life. Large enterprises are being internationalised at the same time as small enterprises are growing. All this entails new conditions for work and consequently for society.

Modern information technology reduces the importance of geographical distance and national borders. It opens up new opportunities for trade and economic co-ordination. Money moves

rapidly across the world, and the production within companies in different parts of the country or in different countries can be co-ordinated easily. New effective channels are created for the exchange of knowledge as well as economic transactions. Completely new types of companies and jobs develop, at the same time as ways of working in old established branches and professions change.

Changes in the economy, technology and working life create new social patterns and make for new demands on politics. New opportunities to assert equality and justice open up, as well as new injustices and new social problems. The internationalisation of the economy also makes the internationalisation of politics and trade union work necessary. This calls for new political and trade union instruments and presents new challenges to democracy.

But factors other than technological and economical changes also affect society and change the demands on politics. The welfare society and social security have given people increased independence and the means to run their own lives. The increased equality between men and women has increased the individual's choices and changed people's way of looking at themselves and others. All these factors together work to break up old authoritarian patterns and they give rise to demands for new more equal relations within both family life, working life and social life.

The power of capital

The capitalist order of production based on private ownership implies that profit is given priority over all other interests, no matter how it is achieved and what it costs society, people and the environment. Political and trade union forces have long been counterweights to this one-sided profit motive, but in the ongoing period of change these forces have declined in strength. The interests of capital have become less dependent on the national platform that both political and trade union activities build on. The fact that financial interests have in part been decoupled from production means that they escape the pressure of those counterweights that are linked to work and production.

This strengthened position of power makes the inherent inability of capitalism to be economical with resources just as clear as its ability to create deep social and economic injustices. Short-term speculative financial movements contribute to the instability of the international economy and have in several cases seriously worsened economic problems in individual countries. The concentration of large companies in increasingly larger worldwide concerns creates large economic power centres beyond the reach of democratic control. In poor countries the labour force is exploited with low wages and ruthless and hard working conditions. Trade union efforts are opposed, often in brutal ways. In rich countries non-profitable groups are excluded from the labour market at the same time as ever-higher tempo in working life damages the health and working abilities of many of those who have a job. Environmental pollution increases particularly in poor counties when strong capital interests ruthlessly exploit the land and natural resources.

In addition, the values of capitalism have a tremendous impact on the public debate and opinion and the increased power over people's minds reinforces the purely economic power of financial interests. In the capitalist world, money and economic success is the gauge of what is good and desirable. Human values like solidarity and compassion are distorted into profit calculations. The labour force is seen as an article of consumption. Children's need for time together with their parents is second to the demands that working life makes on

employees. People's natural longing for community and appreciation is made the object of crass commercial exploitation. The damages this causes are as serious as those resulting from the inability of capitalism to manage economic resources; the result is a cold and brutal society without a sense of trust and community.

The new strength of capitalism does not however demonstrate the whole picture of development. The interests of capital are dependent on the surrounding world: on the laws and rules and the infrastructure that only social institutions can create and maintain, on the employees who create production methods with their skills and on the consumers who pay the costs of production with their aggregate demand. This dependence has always existed but has if anything increased in the new order of production. It requires a technologically advanced, well built up infrastructure that can only be maintained by society, a high and broad level of competence in the labour force and strong and growing overall demand. All this opens up for great opportunities to influence and change. Democracy has created people who demand control over their own lives and who do not accept the control of interests they have no opportunity to influence themselves. This and the force of democratic values that have grown strong over the decades are in themselves the strongest protection against the demands of capitalist interests to exercise supremacy over social development.

Today all the various counterweights to the strength of international capital are being strengthened and further developed: Politics develops its forms of international co-operation. National states change their economic-political instruments to minimise the room for speculative movements of capital. The trade unions look for international strategies to hinder the dumping of wages and to promote demands for health and safety at work. Popular movements learn how to use modern technology to promote opinions and to co-ordinate actions. Consumers' reactions against the actions of multinational companies in poor countries have in many cases meant the start of greater social responsibility. The involvement in environment issues and the necessary adjustment to economically sustainable development is an international counterweight that gathers many in opposition to exploitative economic thinking.

In fact conditions today resemble those prevailing at the emergence of industrial society. Its early stages were characterised by a deep uneven distribution of the new and substantial resources the technology of that time created. Above all those groups who controlled the new industrial capital and its profit were strengthened. But the opportunities of a better life for all working people, which the industrial society made way for created strong pressures for a more just distribution of both influence and welfare. When the emerging Labour class movement organised this effort in the form of a political and trade union struggle, there arose a force, which greatly exceeded the power of the ruling oligarchy to resist.

Today's new technology creates in the same way real increased opportunities for both greater welfare and greater democracy. Just as at the start of industrial society these opportunities have been used mainly by those who control the flows of capital in ways that have increased divisions and injustices. But the force of the opportunities the new order of production has created is now just as then, too strong for the interests of the oligarchy to resist in the long run. Nowadays just as then, those forces, which have the interests of the majority behind them, will prove to be the strongest. No social or economic organisation can in the long run survive in opposition to these interests.

Today's displacement of power to the interests of capital is not an inevitable and consequently not an unchangeable result of globalisation. It can be stopped by deliberate political and trade union work. New great opportunities open up to wipe out divisions and to spread democracy and welfare, but political will and political effort are required to make use of these opportunities inherent in the new development.

Swedish Social Democracy seeks to be part of this political force, which makes globalisation an instrument of democracy, of welfare and of social justice.

New class patterns

The concept of "class" describes the systematic differences in people's living conditions, which are created by the conditions of production and which affect people's whole lives. The differences are both in economic means, control over one's own life and work and about the opportunity to influence the society you live in.

Democracy and the welfare state have diminished class divisions. But there are still large differences between different people created by the conditions of production. The economic crisis in the 1990s resulted in class divisions again starting to increase. Inequalities characterise all parts of life: wages and working conditions, health, children's education, the housing environment and the access to culture and to leisure time activities. Now as then class divisions mean limits on people's opportunities to grow and to develop freely and to take part in social life on equal terms with others.

The decisive difference is between those who have large capital resources at their disposal and those who only have their labour. This dividing line between labour and capital is the traditional basis of class analysis. But the new order of production changes the factor of labour as well as the factor of capital, and it affects the character of class patterns. The change is in two ways: in certain respects the conflicts between capital and labour are sharpened, in other respects the borderline is more fluid and human capital can be on an equal footing with financial capital.

A central change is that the connection between ownership and direct responsibility for production and the enterprise has clearly been weakened. Owning capital has become something anonymous and institutionalised: investment companies, unit trusts, pension insurance funds and other institutions that manage capital assets for others, are responsible for an ever larger share of capital accumulation and capital management.

Increased institutional ownership has sharpened the demands for short-term returns on investment. At the same time the international mobility of capital has forced up demands for profit and this has led to asset management having a greater stake in the results of production. This has affected production in several ways and has resulted in harder pace, more frequent notices to quit and increased use of temporary employment. In this area the changes of ownership have sharpened the conflict between capital and labour.

Much of the institutional capital is held in pension insurance funds and insurance companies which have been built up with wage earners' money. This entails that new opportunities open up for wage earners to exercise joint influence on how capital is used. In the long run there is the possibility that the borderline between capital and labour might be loosened up.

The importance of skills and competence increases in production. The success of companies is becoming increasingly dependent on the skills of the employees. It is a question of greater need of both university education and technical skills. It is also a matter of increased demands for social skills such as the ability to co-operate and to work independently with different tasks. From a classical socialist point of view this means that workers can regain control of their own work and thereby that strengthen their position in economic life. The power relation between labour and capital is changed and the position of labour is strengthened.

But development is fragmented because strongly proletarian groups with weak links to the labour market and a clear exclusion from society emerge along side this development. For them opposition to capital has become sharper.

The gap between the marginalised and the most privileged groups in the labour market is large and growing. Between them there are broad and growing layers of groups with a secure position in economic and in working life. Some of these groups have both capital in the form of knowledge, which is of importance today, and a shareholder interest in the finance sector.

This development can be described as a tripartite class related division. It can involve the risk of the so called Two Thirds Society, i.e. the class of capital owners and the favoured middle levels in society form an alliance against those who have weak positions in the labour market or are completely excluded. At the same time this development also implies the opportunity for new strategic alliances against pure capital interests, as well as the opportunities for influencing the use of capital.

II Our Ideological Heritage and our Social Analysis

Social Democracy desires to meet today's challenges, nationally and internationally, on the basis of the values we invest in liberty, equality and solidarity, on what our own political experience has taught us and on our trust in the strength and support of the democratic society.

A. Our values

Liberty

Liberty means freedom from external compulsion and repression, from hunger, ignorance and fear as well as the freedom of participation and of co-determination, of individual development, of a secure community and the opportunity to control one's own life and choose one's own future.

Civil rights and privileges, universal and equal rights to vote, freedom of thought and religion, freedom of speech and the freedom of association are necessary, basic conditions for liberty, but they alone are not sufficient. Economic and social differences create different conditions for citizens to use these freedoms and for real opportunities for people to control their own lives. Real freedom of participation and development presupposes that people are freed from economic, social or cultural disadvantage, and from the dependence on separate economic power groups beyond the control of democracy.

Freedom is a matter of both individual rights and privileges and of the social structures that give the individual real opportunities to grow and develop and to participate in the work of the community on equal terms with everybody else.

Equality

Equality is the expression of the idea of everybody's equal value, dignity and rights. Equality is a matter of everybody's equal right to control their own life and to influence the society they live in.

Equality does not on the other hand mean that everybody must act and live in the same way. On the contrary the demand for equality is a demand for plurality: People must be free to make their own different choices and to develop their own identity without being limited by the idea of how they should act and without running the risk of finding themselves socially disadvantaged because of their choices. Equality presupposes difference but is inconsistent with social divisions.

Equality is the condition of freedom. In an unequal society those who are affected by inequality are inevitably less free than others to control their own lives. Equality presupposes a fair distribution of the resources that are essential for this freedom of people: economic strength, education, and access to culture. As with liberty, equality presupposes social structures and economic conditions, which give everybody, equal rights and equal conditions for development and participation.

Solidarity.

The human being is a social creature and as social creatures we are all dependent on each other. It is in co-operation with others that people develop as individuals, emotionally and intellectually. It is in co-operation with others that people build the society that shapes the conditions of the individual's life. This mutual dependence makes mutual consideration and respect necessary and this is the essence of solidarity.

For those who struggle from a position of disadvantage solidarity provides support in the struggle for justice. No matter how strong a person may be, solidarity is the precondition of security and community in the surrounding society for everybody. Security and community can only be born out of trust, never out of battle and competition.

This solidarity requires that everyone according to his or her ability makes their contribution to and take their responsibility for social and working life. At the same time it requires that we as citizens give each other the right to a secure livelihood when ill, injured at work, old or unemployed, the right to education, health and care, to participation in cultural life and to the respect for everybody's value as an individual and as a social citizen.

Liberty, equality and solidarity constitute together the foundation of the democratic society. At the same time it is only a democratic society that can make liberty, equality and solidarity a reality. Democracy is the very basis for the social philosophy of Social Democracy and its ideals must characterise social life as a whole – politically, economically, socially and culturally.

B The history of the Labour movement

The working-class movement grew as a natural reaction to people's own rough experiences of poverty, humiliation and injustice. Democratic and socialist ideas gave a political structure to these experiences and created the organisation that gave them their social impact.

Social democratic ideas have several roots. The basic values, liberty, equality and fraternity, originate from the radical debates of The Enlightenment. They retained their influence in the 19th century in the social criticism where both liberal and socialist thinkers tried to formulate alternatives to the prevailing social order with its many injustices. In Sweden the growing Labour movement also drew on the traditions of local, popular self-government, which had been spread by early popular movements such as the temperance and Free Church movements. These ideas, which express a community-based view of society, built on citizenship and democratic co-operation, have played a major role for social democratic policy, which has always emphasised democratic participation.

Liberty, equality and solidarity are value terms, which ultimately deal with the life of the individual. But the opportunities for liberty, equality and solidarity are to a great extent created by the conditions of the surrounding society. A policy for liberty, equality and solidarity is a question of creating the structures in society and working life that will enable all the inhabitants of a society to lead a free, equal and solidaristic life. The individual and the collective group are dependent on each other: the goal is always the welfare and free development of the individual, but this goal can only be achieved through common activities in order to form a society where everybody enjoys these rights.

Democracy, and politics, was therefore goal as well as means of the Labour movement. In the struggle for political democracy the Liberals and Social Democrats were on the same side. But the social agenda of the Labour movement differed from the one of the Liberals. For the Labour movement it was a question of more than providing individual workers with the opportunity to work themselves out of poverty and exhausting conditions into something different and better. It was a question of changing the whole society so that all workers would escape poverty and tiring work, and be respected for the work they did and get their legitimate share of the results of production. It was a question of changing the conditions society offered its inhabitants. The goal was to abolish class divisions. This could only be done through democracy and increased popular government.

The ideology of the Labour movement is also a means of analysing the development of society. Basic to its analysis is the materialistic view of history, i.e. the insight that such factors as technology, capital accumulation and work organisation – the forces of production – are of decisive importance for society and for people's social conditions.

The materialistic view of history, the connection between the economy and society is one central idea of Karl Marx, who together with Friedrich Engels formulated the explanatory model of why injustices arise and are preserved. The other main idea is that of the theory of class struggle. This says that social development is driven forward by the struggle for control of the means of production that is the power over production and its distribution. The struggle between labour and capital is according to this theory, the final phase of the historical process. Capitalism releases massive productive forces but its ruthless profit motive leads to constant crises, which finally create a revolutionary situation in which the working class take power. The working class is in this phase the only class besides the owners of capital, since the middle class according the theory will be proletarianised and merge into the working class. After

the revolution class struggle will end, since the means of production will be owned collectively and the fruits of production will be enough for everybody.

The Marx-Engels development model was a scientific theory. As with all scientific theories its validity is determined when it is tested against reality. The historic-materialistic view has demonstrably made important contributions to the understanding of social development and has influenced both public debate and the social sciences. Other parts of this theoretical structure have on the other hand proved to be insufficient or to contain faulty explanations and have disappeared from the debate. The theory that historical development follows given laws has no support in modern science. Social Democracy gave up this belief in fate at an early stage, the future is not decreed by Fate; the people themselves determine it.

Marx and Engels were both active in the political debate of the 19th century but their theory of the development of history was not a political program of action. The theory maintained *that* a change would happen but not *how* it would happen. Nor did it describe what the new classless society would look like. The theory was on the whole non-political, since it saw the transformation of society as being dependent on a certain level of technical and economic development.

For the Labour movement living in the midst of pressing poverty and blatant injustices it was of course impossible only to await the course of history. The many poor, hard working people demanded action in the present, not in some distant future. Within and between the socialist groupings of the 19th century an intensive debate arose on how to influence the course of events that the theories of Marx pointed to.

Reformism and revolution

One line of thought, the revolutionary one, started from the idea that the fall of capitalism would be the end of history. According to this line you need not await the final crisis of capitalism. (A group of single-minded revolutionaries could speed up the course of events and by means of a coup and the use of violence direct developments along the lines decreed by history) These ideas were developed in a communist and an anarchistic direction both of which rejected the democratic way for social change. By doing so they also rejected in practice the idea of people's equal value, since they did not give everybody the same right to participate in shaping the future.

The development of Soviet Communism in the direction of strong repression is explained both by this rejection of the democratic choice and by the underlying view that politics is a matter of putting into practise what history already has demonstrated as inevitable. If development is determined by history and your own group understands this best, it will consequently not be necessary to respect the views of others or even to have a majority of the electors behind you. From this point of view it is, on the contrary, in the citizens' own best interests necessary to defeat the opposition that represents the risk of leading development away from the right path.

Views that see a certain line of development as objectively predestined, by history or religion or something else, are usually called fundamentalist views. Fundamentalist views are inconsistent with democracy since the important thing is not to gain the approval of the voters but to follow the predetermined line. Regardless of the intentions of the elite who appoint themselves the true interpreter of the only path, the end result will be dictatorship. The development within the planned economies of Communism cannot be blamed only on the

wrong leaders or the wrong organisation; it is the result of the fundamentalist thinking of Communism.

The other line of thought, the reformist line, was on the other hand built, and builds, on democratic participation and reforms, which were supported by the majority of the population. Changing society for reformists did not mean that they should realise a definite external organisation but that they should gradually increase people's democratic participation in social life as well as in working life. The work of change started from the demands and needs of the citizens in society, as formulated in constant ongoing discourse where theories were constantly tested over and over again against reality.

The Swedish Labour movement was developed along two lines, the trade union and the political lines, where co-operation was, and is, natural but a division of tasks practically motivated. Trade union work was then as now directed at working life in order to strengthen the rights of workers. Political work then was a matter of capturing the civil rights that would give the workers the means to influence the society they lived in. Now it is a question of preserving and further developing these civil rights and the democratic power of action that has developed during the last century.

The development of the Labour Movement: political democracy

The first decades of the Labour Movement were dominated by the struggle for the universal right to vote, the right to organise in trade unions and the right to freedom of expression. In close co-operation with the Liberals but in a harsh battle against the Conservatives and the leading capitalist interests political democracy was established during the first decades of the 20th century. At the same time the right to organise oneself in trade unions was acknowledged in law.

Political democracy provided opportunities to assert the interests of workers in a way that classical theories had not been able to foresee. It influenced both the social and the economic structures in a different direction than the theories had expressed. Private ownership remained but the private capitalist order of production, where the profit motive was superior to all other motives, was changed in decisive ways. When other interests in production were strengthened against the interests of capital both the organisation of working life and the redistribution of the fruits of production were changed and power was moved from owners to citizens, wage earners and consumers.

This change arose from legislation and economic policy as well as the strength of trade union work. It arose from municipal politics with its local roots. It arose from the entire social involvement which was supported by the work of the party and popular movements and which provided the new forms of democracy with a meaningful content.

This resulted in its turn in a review of the theories. Taking over the ownership of the means of production was no longer the decisive factor. What was decisive was the democratic control of the economy. The democratic perspective with its emphasis on participation, co-operation and plurality was put at the forefront. This policy had several main points: social rules for enterprises, economic policy, collective agreements in the labour market, labour legislation and consumer legislation, a growing consumer co-operative movement and a strong public sector based on social ownership, where people's needs, not their incomes, were the governing principle for redistribution.

People's own experiences demonstrated the opportunities of democracy to increase freedom, security and justice in society. Experience from other countries demonstrated that fully nationalised economies led to quite the opposite: lack of freedom, insecurity and injustice. These different experiences deepened the perspective on the democratising the economy and reinforced even more the insight that democratic control, not ownership, is the decisive factor. Economic democracy can just as little as political democracy build on solutions that gather most of the power in a few central institutions. Economic democracy must deal just as much with the influence of workers and consumers as it does with the rights and opportunities of citizens to determine the social conditions of production.

The development of the Labour Movement: welfare policy

During the second part of the 20th century social security systems were built up and provided all citizens with economic security when ill, unemployed and old. Schooling was expanded to give all children the opportunity for education, regardless of parental income. Medical care, child care and care of the elderly became rights for everybody.

Welfare reforms increased people's freedom of movement. Together with collective agreements and labour legislation the reforms strengthened workers' power over their own lives by liberating them from the need to accept unreasonable wages and working conditions in order to gain a living. Welfare policy also contributed to changing the private capitalist order of production. It is not surprising that many of the reforms had to be forced through against determined resistance from more privileged groups.

During the last decades of the 20th century with its upswing for conservative and neo-liberal tendencies welfare reforms were subjected to new attacks. Critics asserted that welfare systems took away people's responsibility and weakened their power of initiative and that the costs involved weakened the national economy. This criticism is an expression of power politics and ideological and lacks support in reality. It is capitalist mythmaking to maintain that people's ability to act increases, if they are disadvantaged and that the economy is strengthened, if its most important resource, people, are worn out and weakened.

The development of the Labour Movement: an expanded view of equality

From the 1970s on, environmental politics and equality issues developed into elements increasingly important of social democratic policy. The environment debate adopts the classical social democratic demands for a non-exploitative economy. The policy on gender equality develops naturally from the overall ideology of equality of social democracy. But both debates also broaden the analysis of society.

a Environment

The distribution of power and resources between labour and capital still remains central to the analysis of the conditions of democracy and the economy. But environmental problems have demonstrated that a democratic economy can also be exploitative. This will be the case if goals are set only with a view to the quantity of resources they create for today's welfare without regard of what they actually cost in the form of used natural resources. Environment demands add a dimension to the discussion on economic power, which is of importance regardless of ownership and how the fruits of production are distributed.

Environmental policy also entails a further political principle affecting that of the redistribution between generations. For the sake of their own welfare today's generations do not have the right to impoverish the natural resources and physical environment that form the

basis also for the life of coming generations. From this point of view Social Democracy is an environment party.

b. Gender Equality

The class patterns that are created in economic life are central to the understanding of the problems of inequality. All policies of equality must include a struggle against class divisions. But the debate on gender equality has demonstrated clearly that lower and higher ranking is not only created by factors within production but also by factors outside this. Actions against class injustice are not enough for real equality. This calls for a battle also against these other patterns of inequality.

One such a clear structure is what is called the genus order, the systematic higher and lower ranking between the sexes that creates unequal conditions for women and men. Within all social classes the conditions of women are different from men's, the average income is lower and the responsibility for home and children greater. This order limits the life opportunities and development opportunities for women, but it also locks men into role expectations, which curtail their opportunities for personal development. A break with the thinking that refers to biological differences in order to motivate social differences between the sexes means enlarging the development opportunities for both men and women. This creates an other and in its deepest sense a more humane society with equal rights and equal responsibilities for women and men in family life, professional life and social life. With this basic philosophy Social Democracy is a feminist party.

c. Ethnicity

Discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of ethnic origin also lead to restricting and limiting people's life opportunities. In today's real world immigrants and as often as not also the children of immigrants run a greater risk of unemployment, often have a job below their education level and are underrepresented in political assemblies. Housing segregation hits inhabitants with foreign backgrounds more blatantly than is the case with other groups.

d. Discrimination

Sexual orientation, disabilities or old age are other factors, which may lead to the direct exclusion of the individual or the limitation of life opportunities, both in personal life, public life and professional life.

The policy on equality must be directed at all forms of social ranking and within the framework of this broad work for equality lie many of the challenging future tasks of Social Democracy.

Development in two directions

The Labour Movement has changed Sweden. Social Democratic Sweden is a country where more people have the opportunity of making their own choices of life and where democracy is more strongly rooted in people's everyday life than it is in most other countries.

But Sweden is also a country where development draws in different directions. Sweden is one of the most equal countries in the world but is still a society with visible class divisions, visible inequalities between the sexes and visible ethnic segregation.

For many people a future opens up with tremendous opportunities for free choice, with sufficient resources of their own to make use of them as well. It is the children and

grandchildren of the welfare society who have created these opportunities for themselves. They have been formed by the independence that has come from economic security and the possibilities of choosing one's own future as well as by the desire for solidarity. As free, strong and independent individuals they make increasing demands for freedom of choice and personal influence at the same time as they remain true to the ideas of solidaristic solutions and responsibility for common needs such as schooling, health and care.

But class, sex and ethnicity still create inequalities. Where class differences coincide with differences created above all on the grounds of sex and ethnicity, inequality is greatest.

For many people the opportunities of choice are small or non-existent and the obstacles and limitations are difficult to overcome. Class related inequalities are propagated from adults to children in a way that poses a threat of growing social divisions also in the future. Far too many people have far too few opportunities for development in working life, and far too many people are still forced to risk their health and well being in physically or mentally stressing work environments. This exposure in working life is in strong and shocking contrast to the large and increasing privileges the industrial elite award themselves, in stark contrast to their demands that employees accept increased insecurity at work.

Women still encounter obstacles within professions, something that is reflected in a sexually segregated labour market, in lower wage levels and fewer career opportunities. They still have the major responsibility for home and children. Tougher demands in the labour market create an unreasonable pressure on many families with children, where both children and parents fare badly. If this development is not stopped, many people may be forced to choose between children and professional careers. For both women and men this may mean that the broad spectrum of development opportunities, included in the right of being both an active parent and an active gainful employee will once again be narrowed down.

In addition, new forms of discriminating attitudes towards women have developed, which seek once again to force women into roles that conform to demands made by men and not from a choice of their own or on their own terms. An increased sexualisation of the female body affects young women especially and can affect their working and studying environments in a way that may have serious consequences for both personal development and their choice of profession.

The new role models for how women and men should act differ in some ways from the old ones. But they aim at the same type of higher and lower ranking of sexually determined roles, which curtail the personal freedom of action.

Today Sweden is a multiethnic society but with visible inequalities that are related to people's ethnic backgrounds. In many suburbs with a high density of immigrants a sense of social exclusion grows among the adults who are not admitted to the labour market and among the children who do not feel that they have any future in the surrounding Swedish society. This form of social exclusion creates some of the harshest and most offensive social divisions in today's society. This sense of social exclusion and limited opportunities that far too many immigrants are forced to experience, are totally inconsistent with the ideals of freedom and equality of social democracy.

Social divisions are also growing between different parts of the country. Unevenly distributed economic growth threatens to lead to large regional differences in people's opportunities for

development as well as in social welfare. Such differences are impossible to combine with the demands for equality and solidarity and the demand that people must have freedom of choice when it comes to choosing different types of housing and social environments.

C. Social Democratic view of society of today

Democracy

The conditions of the individual's life are determined to a great extent by the surrounding society. This leads to the demand for democracy: Everybody must have the same right to influence that, which is of great importance in his or her own life. The individual's life can never be controlled by political decisions, but politics determines a great deal in terms of the real opportunities to control one's own life. The individual and the collective interests coincide in the democratic process. Borne by the will and conviction of the citizens this process is the instrument of social change.

Democracy is a process for making decisions on common, civil concerns. Democracy presupposes a multi-party system and general elections. But democracy is more than a form of government and more than a set of rules for making decisions and putting them into practice. Democracy is value system that must permeate every aspect of social life and its foundation is the equal value and dignity of all.

These basic values give everybody the right to participate in the work of the community. Civil rights and liberties form the necessary starting-point but to this there must be added the right to personal development, the right to social security and to participation in working life and culture. At the same time democracy requires everyone to respect the democratic rights of others, to take their share of responsibility for the work of the community and to respect decisions that have been agreed on, even when these go against their own desires. Democracy gives people the right to promote their own views and interests but it also entails the obligation to listen to other people. Democracy does not exclude opposition and conflicts, but requires everyone to be prepared to solve conflicts in a democratic way.

The scope of democracy can be determined only by democracy itself. All power in society must have its source in those who together form the society, not from allegedly natural laws that draw a boundary between politics and the market. Where that boundary should go is a question for democracy to settle itself. Human rights set the boundary against which political decisions must never act, but at the same time it is only democracy that can maintain these rights. The protection of the individual's autonomy and the protection of the rights of the minority all ultimately rest on democratic values.

At the same time democracy builds on the spread of power. Concentration of power always threatens democracy, regardless of the constitution of the group in power. It must be possible to exercise democracy in many ways, on several levels and in many arenas, all independent of each other. Democracy requires that people are in a position to influence social changes as a whole as well as the functions of social institutions such as they meet them in everyday life, in school and care, in housing, in traffic and in the local environment. Democratic processes build on the power of citizens and their desire for social involvement and action, the need to be creative, increased knowledge and personal responsibility. This force cannot be liberated by commercial power or by bureaucratic public bodies, but only by the people themselves. Community building must always rest on the trust in citizens' own involvement and their own organisations, in the popular movements, voluntary adult education and joint responsibility.

The decisions on common concerns made at a national level and in municipalities and county councils must conform to an overall perspective. The complexity of the necessary adjustments requires that these are made by elected representatives appointed by and responsible to the voters in accordance with clearly stated political values. But a living debate and living involvement on the part of the citizens themselves must provide continuous support for this representative democracy.

The democratic process and the administration of society must build on public access and insight, and on clear and fair rules. Political commissions and services within the public administration must be open to all citizens on equal terms. As a consequence of these general demands on public administration Social Democracy also works for the abolition of the principle of hereditary succession in the monarchy and seeks to replace it with a republic where the people directly or indirectly elect the head of the state. As with all changes in democracy this change presupposes the support of a majority of the population.

Social Democracy has developed, as a popular movement and the methods of working in a popular movement remains the platform for our political work. This is why we must also make use of the energy shown in the involvement demonstrated in the new popular movements, which has developed as a reaction to the injustice and problems in our society.

Democracy presupposes active citizens. The popular movements, old and new, and adult education --with the force for change that arises when people meet to share ideas and act together -- must play a decisive role in the building of society. They give people the opportunity to change their own environment and the opportunities to develop their knowledge and ideas in conversations with others. They constitute meeting places protected from commercial demands for profitability, where citizens can relate their own experiences and demands to a wider social perspective in a natural way. This builds up an awareness of the values of democracy, which in its turn creates a sense of personal responsibility for maintaining democracy. Here modern information technology provides new opportunities for greater participation in debate, for meeting places between inhabitants in different parts of the country and increased contact between voters and elected representatives.

The popular movements have always been important bearers of the democratic discourse and this role takes on additional significance today through the increased importance of the mass media. The media themselves play an important role in free speech and the free flow of information. But the concentration of power in the media industry and the growing links with the entertainment industry means that the information flow becomes increasingly uniform and entails that it rests far too much on passive consumption instead of social involvement. Preventing the concentration of power, maintaining plurality and protecting the public service-channels within radio and TV are central elements in the social democratic media policy. The non-commercial media for the spread of knowledge, adult education and cultural breadth strengthen democracy. But the arenas for public discourse and the exchange of ideas and experiences which popular movements of different kinds offer, are also indispensable counterweights to the commercialisation of public debate. Debates, opinion building and the critical review of policy must never become a question for professional debaters only. Just as community work it must be founded on the involvement of the citizens themselves, social and culture debates must have the same support.

Trust in democracy depends on the opportunities of citizens to share it as well as on its force of action, on the possibility for politics to realise decisions passed in assembly. The right to participate in and to influence decision-making is ultimately a question of the right to influence reality. Democracy loses credibility if it cannot solve in practice the problems people encounter in everyday life and the shortcomings they see in society. The power of democracy to take action must constantly be safeguarded against groups that have power because of their economic strength as well as against groups that think they have a greater right than others to influence politics because of their specialist knowledge or specialist competence.

Internationalisation implies new challenges to democratic participation. Many political decisions, which previously could be made at a national level, now require international co-ordination. This increases the democratic force of action but it also increases the distance to the voters. It creates among many people a feeling that their own involvement and attempts to influence are of no use. The demand for forceful democratic action finds itself in conflict with the demand for democratic participation.

This is why working methods and decision-making processes within international political organisations for co-operation must be reviewed and further developed with the view to creating greater insight and control as well as a more secure democratic platform. It also means that national political forms of democracy and institutions must be changed in order to facilitate greater civil involvement in several different ways. It calls for greater preparedness to change old working methods and established institutions, both within different social bodies and within political parties.

A democratic economy

Modern technologically advanced system of production is necessarily based on large capital investments. If the means for such investments are to be available, production must provide a given return, i.e. profit. In this strictly economic sense of the term capital accumulation cannot possibly be avoided.

But for some time the concept of capitalism has had another and wider meaning in political debate than this strictly economic meaning. It represents a power system where the person who owns capital is given the right to determine over all other interests and where people's rights are determined by their profitability in economic terms. This power system creates a lack of freedom for everybody but large capital owners. It creates enormous injustice and social tensions within countries and between countries. It leads to a dangerous exploitation of the environment and natural resources.

Against this monopoly of power, Social Democracy pits an economy controlled by popular interests. We strive for an economic order where each individual as a citizen, wage earner and consumer has the right and opportunity to influence the direction at and the distribution of the fruits of production, the organisation and the conditions of working life. It includes different forms of ownership and enterprise. It sees a consideration for the environment as an overriding demand on every aspect of production. It requires that production be based on respect for everybody's work, that it makes the most of everybody's involvement and willingness to work and that it distributes the fruits of production fairly. It presupposes respect for the rules that democracy has in terms of the overriding right to determine.

This order of things is not opposed to private enterprise. It is like all modern production based on the fact that real capital must provide a return. It sees enterprise and management as one of many actors of importance to the economy. It sees the market economy as *one* part of economic life. But it does not allow the demand for private profit to dominate all other interests and to steer the development of society, nor does it accept the market as the norm for social utilities and community life.

In the conflict between capital and labour, Social Democracy always represents the interests of labour. Social democracy is and remains an anti-capitalist party, which has always built up counterweights to the demands of capital for power over the economy and society.

Democratic society always has the overriding right to state conditions and framework for economic life. Democratic society always has the right also to change conditions and forms, if a certain way of organising work and the economy does not fulfil important public interests. Economic interests never have the right to set limits for democracy, on the contrary it is always democracy that sets the limits for the market and economic interests. Social Democracy rejects a development of society where capital and the market dominate and commercialise social, cultural and human relations. The norms of the market must never determine people's worth nor provide the norm of social and cultural life.

Democracy must be combined with efficiency in economic life for the sake of public welfare. Ineffective production entails less in exchange for the work that is invested and consequently poorer returns with fewer resources for welfare. This weakens in its turn the confidence in the democratic forms of organisation. Also here experience shows that efficiency and productivity require openness and variety. It presupposes the direct influence on the part of consumers. It presupposes a working life that is based on the respect for the skills, ideas and involvement of the employees. It presupposes the opportunity for people to realise their own ideas by starting up businesses of their own.

The demands of democracy as well as those of efficiency lead to the same conclusion: it must be possible to influence economic life in many different ways, at several different levels. The various demands on economic life cannot be met either by exclusively political decisions or exclusively market solutions. They require the mixed economy that is based on a combination of public measures and market mechanisms, strong trade union organisations and mindful, active consumers, supported by strong consumer legislation.

Political decisions must provide the rules to prevent all forms of exploitation, to guarantee economic balance and to redistribute the fruits of production fairly and in a way that meets fundamental social rights. The market is necessary for efficient production that creates and recreates the resources for welfare. Capitalism and market economies must be kept apart. The market economy is a system of distribution where goods and services change owners with money as the medium of exchange. Capitalism is a power system with a return on capital as the overriding norm.

In the market for goods and private services the price mechanism is a fast and effective signal system between producers and consumers. New companies can rapidly develop in response to the demands of consumers, and the competition between different companies creates scope for the consumers' many and varied choices. The market builds on a great number of independent actors, who provide scope for many ideas and thus create real economic resources.

But the market cannot maintain itself. Its inherent tendencies towards concentration counteract plurality, which is its own precondition. The price mechanism, through which the market works, cannot create the stable rules that the market itself requires in order to function well. Only public bodies independent of the market can create and maintain these rules and regulations. Only such a system of rules can maintain competition and stop the tendencies towards concentration, which eliminates the price mechanism to the detriment of consumers and creates the type of private monopolies that the labour movement has always combated.

Nor do market mechanisms cope with those resources that lack a market price, such as air and water. This also requires measures in the form of political decisions as well as counterweights in the form of mindful consumer opinions.

Thus the market is only *one* part of the mixed economic system Social Democracy prefers. The market can only meet such needs and preferences that can be expressed in sufficiently strong demand. These utilities that constitute social rights, i.e. utilities available to everybody regardless of income, must be kept out of the distribution principles of the market and be distributed according to other principles. Among these are care services, schooling and health services. The legal system is also such a case. As is culture. The housing sector to the extent that is required to ensure everybody's right to a decent home is also one such utility. Also included in this list is a policy that ensures communications and a social infrastructure across the country as a whole.

The starting point for deciding on the choice between public commitments and a market economy must be which of the two provides the best result as regards justice and efficiency. Choices can vary between different sectors of the economy, depending on what demands and requirements they must meet. The redistribution can be changed, if important demands are not fulfilled in the original form. Social Democracy rejects the economic fundamentalism embraced by the right and the left, which propose one single form of ownership in the economy as a whole as a precondition for a good society. The decisive factor is never the external organisational form, but how well the targets of the enterprise are achieved.

A democratic economy is not an economy free of a conflict of interests, free from difficulties and demands for adjustment. But a democratic economy is free of the exploitation of people and the environment. A democratic economy is an economy where different interests co-operate with each other and the interests of capital are subordinated to democracy. A democratic economy gives those who are confronted with the demands for a change the support to adapt to new conditions. A democratic economy is based on the right of everybody, people as well as regions, to participate in creating welfare and at the same time enjoying the benefits of such welfare.

Equality and plurality

There are several different factors that create inequalities in society but the fundamental pattern is common: The individual is not seen and treated as a person and cannot develop in accordance with his/her own conditions and choices. Choices are subordinated to the individual's affiliation to a certain group, determined by class, sex or ethnicity, by disabilities, age or sexual orientation. This pattern is also found in the conditions of working life and the individual's position there.

Social Democracy strives for equality in the distribution of the resources that are of importance to people's opportunities to influence society and their own lives. Our task is, as always, to change those patterns and power structures in society that entail some people not being able to grow and develop fully. The policy of equality must always start from the needs and conditions of those who are disadvantaged by inequality, but reforms aimed at equality must always be supported by a conviction among the majority of the population that they are correct and beneficial. Otherwise they will not be sustainable. The equal society becomes sustainable only if it broadens and enriches the lives of all.

The strength of existing welfare systems arises from the fact that they combine the needs of different groups in the population in different life situations to solutions that create security and freedom for everybody. In the same way our policy today must find solutions that combine the needs of those who are saddled by limitations and disadvantage and those who, not least due to social democratic policy, are already independent and strong.

A policy for equality is directed at the equal rights and opportunities to work for all, something that provides economic independence and the possibility to develop and go further. It focuses on the right to influence one's own job and to an organisation in working life that values and respects everybody's efforts fairly. It deals with everybody's equal right and opportunity to take part in political and trade union work, to cultural experiences and to involvement in work in the community. It deals with changing class patterns and with breaking traditional sex role patterns as well as ethnic prejudices and other forms of discrimination.

Full employment, equal pay for equal work and a working organisation that gives everybody the opportunity to influence and to grow in the job are all fundamental conditions. An educational sector is also fundamental, one that provides the conditions for everybody to make their own choices in life, both the choice of studies and thereby the choice of a profession when young and the opportunity for continuous learning in adult life.

A policy for equality is a question of financing each other's welfare in a fair and solidaristic manner and presupposes an effective and ambitious policy of distribution. The taxes that finance welfare must be levied according to the ability to pay and the welfare services that are created must be distributed according to needs.

A policy for equality deals with the equal rights of both men and women to both professional life and family life and with their equal responsibility for the home, the family and children. This requires a working life that makes it possible to combine professional life with the family life and with well-developed child care services.

A policy for equality is a policy for integration based on an open attitude to the opportunities provided by plurality and on mutual respect between immigrants and native Swedes. Cultural and religious traditions contribute to personal identity and can be a source of enrichment to a society. Cultural and religious plurality must be welcomed to the extent that they do not impose limitations on the rights and opportunities of others to make their own choices in life.

A policy for equality is about a society where the disabled are seen as competent and independent citizens with the same right to an active and independent life, to work and to their own housing and to the full freedom of mobility in society just as everyone else. It is about a policy for sexual equality, where people can choose the form of social life they want without

risking discrimination and exclusion. It is about a policy that helps and supports the mentally disabled and the mentally ill. It is about a policy that involves all ages in the social structure, that makes use of the experience and competence of the elderly and that makes a consideration of children's needs and rights an important trait in community life.

A policy for equality requires that a demanding and decisive line be drawn against all forms of racism and hostility towards foreigners, and against sex related violence and harassment. It calls for a battle against all types of prejudices and discrimination that limit people's lives and opportunities to choose for themselves. It is a policy for plurality where each person is seen as an individual with the right to develop on his or her own terms and at the same time with the right to be involved in a working and social community on equal terms with everybody else.

The rules and regulations in society must all be shaped to support and stimulate development towards increased equality in plurality. The labour market and the educational sector play the key role in breaking class patterns as well as inequalities on the grounds of sex, ethnicity and disabilities. But much depends on changing values and attitudes and breaking patterns of action that are based on other ways of seeing things. Popular movements and political parties, companies and trade union organisations, school and childcare all have their share of responsibility in this regard. The task of Social Democracy as a popular movement is to stimulate public debate and within our own movement ensure that we realise the demands for plurality and equality.

These demands for equality, in all these different aspects, must permeate the policy of social democracy in every sector of life.

Welfare policy

Social democratic welfare policy demonstrates the three principles of liberty, equality and solidarity. They originate from a long tradition of viewing society as something we build together. They create both individual and public utilities. They provide rights, but they also make demands.

The welfare policy involves everyone, not only people with low incomes. Everyone has a share in both rights and obligations; everyone is included on equal terms. Citizens are not divided into "receivers" and "payers", as they are in means-test systems, with the conflicts of interest this can entail. Universal welfare policy is something citizens offer each other in a spirit of solidarity and contribute towards financing in a spirit of solidarity. Both the freedom and security they provide and the individual and the social co-operation this welfare policy creates are of great importance.

Welfare policy deals with economic security, and also with the fair distribution of life opportunities and with providing the conditions for choice at different stages of life. Everybody must have the right to work, and everybody must have the right to develop in his or her jobs. Everybody must have the right to security in his or her childhood and in his or her development, in accordance with the UN's children's charter. All children and young people must have the right to grow up in a world free from drugs and violence. Everybody must have the right to knowledge and cultural experiences. Everybody must have the right to good housing at a reasonable cost in a safe and secure environment. Everybody must have the right to security and dignity in their old age. Everybody must have the right to make their own choices in life without meeting prejudices and discrimination, and without the risk of finding

themselves in a socially disadvantaged position. Everybody must also take responsibility for maintaining welfare systems and not abusing the benefits.

Welfare policy deals with more than just correcting injustices, which have been created by economic life. Welfare policy deals with equality. It is a question of increasing people's power over their own lives. By this it also contributes to changing the power relationships in the economy and in society.

Social insurance and the social services such as care, schools and health can never be reduced to goods in a market, where the task of society only is to distribute taxation money towards individual purchases. Welfare systems presuppose the responsibility of the citizens not only for their own benefits, but also for the rights of everybody else. They must be designed in such a way that this common responsibility can be exercised. The so-called models for customer choices, which turn social utilities such as schools, care and health into goods in a service market, are inconsistent with the demands for solidaristic responsibility. The principles of the market and competition must not characterise public services. Democratic principles, openness and clear terms governing responsibility must prevail.

We cannot accept the development towards increased elements of private insurance in the area of welfare. They pose a threat to universal welfare and create unacceptable injustices when it comes to access to welfare for all citizens.

Schools, care and health play a central role in redistributing the opportunities in life. Unequal opportunities for education, care or health are inherited and magnified into unequal opportunities for personal development, in social life and in the labour market. Such social divisions harm the individual, and they harm society. Equal access to these utilities, providing high quality for everybody, is a key element of equality policy. Care, schools and health must also be aware of the importance of class and sex related patterns of behaviour and work deliberately to change them.

This is why education, care and health are the concerns of society. The distribution of these benefits must never be left to the price mechanisms of the market and the supply of these benefits must never be determined by the individual producers' interests in a profit their own.

Schools, care and health must be financed through taxation in a spirit of solidarity. Politically elected representatives must have the responsibility for the distribution between different requirements to ensure that taxes are used so that the demands for equal accessibility and equally good quality for everybody are satisfied. The ability of society to offer schools, care and health is a condition for maintaining the fundamental principles of quality and redistribution according to needs.

All inhabitants throughout the country must have equal access to schools, care and health. This presupposes equalisation of local tax, otherwise different tax-paying capacities and differences in the population mix will lead to differences in welfare between citizens in different municipalities.

We want to develop the public sector services so that they correspond both to classical demands for justice and equal access and to new demands for influence and the freedom of choice. Being able to influence the school and the health care offered is part of the power over

one's own life and is necessary for the sense of involvement in society as well as of taking responsibility for society.

People are different, with different needs and conditions. This is why different pedagogical methods, different forms of health care and alternatives in medical care are required. There must be the possibility of choosing between different forms of care, schooling and health services, on condition that there is room for several alternatives. In this regard preconditions differ between sparsely populated and densely populated areas.

Plurality and variation in the organisational forms are important both from the point of view of equality and welfare. It is clearly one of the main tasks of the public sector to develop alternatives, in its own services, in order to meet the different needs and wishes of citizens. But co-operative, idealistic and individual alternatives can also play a role. They must have access to public financing, if they follow the same rules as public services. Other possible alternatives involve the opportunities for citizens to choose schools, care and health services, not the opportunity for individual producers to choose the pupils and patients who are the most profitable. The citizen's access to welfare must not be determined by the profit motives of individual companies.

Publicly financed services must also meet the high demands for good working conditions and for opportunities to exercise influence and develop in the job. They must make the most of the involvement and competence of the employees and provide scope for testing of new ideas and solutions. Within the public sector as well as in different private alternatives independence and creativity must be stimulated. The services must be characterised by openness and the opportunity for insight. Freedom of speech and the protection of informants must not be restricted in the case of employees.

Taxation money is a limited resource that is never sufficient for fulfilling all the demands made on it. It is always necessary to balance different demands against each other, taking into account the overriding demands of justice and equally high quality for everybody. This balancing of interests must be made in an open democratic process, which everybody can influence, i.e. in the forms provided by representative democracy. The possibility of financial support for private alternatives cannot be made as automatically functioning rules, which would replace this democratic process.

For economic reasons as well as in the interests of efficiency municipalities and county councils must enjoy great leeway in shaping social services according to local needs and conditions. But national goals for the services must never be set aside in favour of local decisions. The rights of the individual, which are determined in direct decisions by parliament and government, or which are inherent in the national goals for the services, such as schools, care and health must not be enfeebled by local decisions.

Good economic protection, when one's own source of income is lost, is fundamental for the security and freedom of the individual. Social insurance systems must give everybody this cover according to the principle of compensation for income loss. Only universal social insurance systems can meet both the need for economic protection of the individual and the political demands for special cover of exposed groups through policies of redistribution. Insurance systems must be adjusted to a labour market, where an increasing number of people alternate between periods of studies and periods of gainful employment and where many people combine employment with their own businesses.

In many of the periods of change in life freedom as well as security is a matter of finding help in the adapting to new conditions. Anyone who is unemployed is entitled to training in order to get a new job and to a period of time in order to find a suitable new job. Anyone whose work capacity decreases as a result of illness or injury is entitled to rehabilitation. Anyone who is disabled must have support in order to lead an independent life and to make his/her contribution to working life. Those who have children must be entitled to paid parental leave and those who have small children must be entitled to the secure and developing child care which enables parents to combine parenthood and professional work.

Housing policy is an indispensable part of universal welfare and constitutes the fourth pillar of welfare policy, alongside care, schools and health. A home is a social right and it is a responsibility of society to guarantee the housing supply. Strong public housing and co-operative companies are necessary to counteract segregation and to keep down housing costs. The residents' influence on their own housing and housing area must increase.

An integral part of welfare policy, in a wider sense, is also the extensive measures to prevent work related injuries, illnesses and exclusion from the labour market. Among these are preventive health care, work environment legislation, labour market education and adult education. Security in the streets and public squares and in one's own home are also elements of welfare policy. Combating crime is part of the policy to ensure security, but in this is also included combating of the causes of crime. Society must react unambiguously against crime and transgressions against the rules. But the best way of combating crime in the long run is to form a society where social divisions are small, where everybody is entitled to a job, where sex related violence is non-existent and children and the young can grow and develop under secure conditions.

Work and growth

A strong economy and production system with a highly competitive profile in international terms form the basis for a continued positive development in jobs, real wages and social welfare.

Welfare strengthens the conditions for growth. When more people are better educated and more people are able to raise their competence, the economy is strengthened. An active labour market policy makes it easier for the unemployed to find new jobs and for employers to acquire the staff with the competence required for the job. Health insurance gives people the means to look after their own health and this reduces exclusion from working life.

Having children is a question of welfare and life opportunities. It is also about the future and consequently about economic development. A working life that is suitable for children is essential if women and men are to be able to achieve their goals of life when it comes to children and parenthood. Social Democracy works for a society suitable for children.

An understanding of the link between economic strength and welfare must govern policy and this makes for demands on the shape of growth. The purpose of growth is increased human welfare and this cannot be done with methods that undermine human health and quality of life, devastate the environment or impoverish natural resources. Such growth is not growth; the human, ecological and social costs it entails exceed the short-term profit it may lead to.

All growth arises from human effort: from the technical development created by human ingenuity, from the social systems people build up for production and consumption, from the capital originating from this, and first and last from human work that puts capital and technology to gainful employment. People's work is the basis of all welfare and culture.

Every growth policy must deal with creating favourable conditions for people's work, creativity and enterprise, all over the country. Growth is the total result of many efforts, within all parts of working life, within all regions. It requires work for everybody and a working life that makes the most of the skills and competence of all those who want to work.

Full employment is a social goal as well as an economic one. It allows everybody to take part in creating welfare and prevents the feeling of being excluded with all the inequalities and human suffering this entails for those who are unemployed. It reinforces efforts to end sexual stereotypes, ethnic prejudices and discrimination by blunting the edge of the selection mechanisms which, in a weaker labour-market, would replace respect for skills and competence and sort out people on the grounds of sex, ethnic background, age or disability.

The growth policy of the Social Democrats is based on the right to a meaningful job with good working conditions within every area of working life, good conditions for business enterprises, good working environments free of stress and wear, opportunities for everybody to develop as well as respect for the value of everybody's efforts. Every employee must have the opportunity to influence his or her own work. Every employee must have the opportunity to develop his or her competence and to take part in further education. Working life must be organised in such a way that the competence of employees – both in the form of education and professional experience – is made the most of and developed in the work places. With today's increasing demands for skills this is a precondition for a strong economy, but it is just as much an issue of equality. At the same time the demand for equality means a clear right to good working conditions and a secure support also for those whose jobs do not require any extensive education. These jobs play a role for production as a whole and this must be reflected in both wages and employment conditions.

The production system must be built up to make the most of the wealth of ideas and independence of all those involved, both employees and employers. The rules for business enterprises must be clear and easy to grasp. Research and development work must be stimulated. New entrepreneurs and businesses must be promoted and co-operative enterprises must be stimulated. An effective legislation on competition must counteract monopolies and concentration of businesses.

Strong trade union organisations are necessary to assert the common interests of employees as regards wages, the working environment, working hours and employment conditions. These are obvious issues for agreements between equal parties in the labour market. Collective agreements are also a necessary precondition for the legitimacy of the rules governing working life and for non-conflict agreements. Strong labour legislation is needed as a protection for the employees.

The taxation system must contribute to a well functioning industry and to a fair distribution of the resources production creates. It must be shaped so that it rewards sound economic behaviour, at the same time as it guarantees the possibilities of financing important welfare services. Simplicity and clarity in the legal system, uniformity and broad taxation bases are

fundamental principles. The total effects of taxation, charges and subsidies must not give rise to marginal effects that can affect work and enterprise negatively.

A working life that makes the most of the competence of all workers must take into consideration people's differences and living conditions. Those who have children must be able to combine family life with working life. Those who are approaching retirement age must be able to reduce their working-hours or change to less heavy tasks if they feel that their strength is declining. The technical possibilities to adjust places of work to the needs of the disabled must be used to the full.

All this contributes to a better life quality for employees and greater efficiency in companies, since it combines the demands of workers with the demands of modern working life for a varied use of staff and time. The kind of flexibility that results in employees bearing the whole cost in the form of insecure and unsafe employment conditions is on the other hand indefensible.

Discrimination and prejudices entailing that certain people's competence and willingness to work are underrated or not at all made use of is an unacceptable waste of human resources that must be counteracted forcefully. The fact that people who are willing to work are bypassed and degraded by the labour market is an offence against people's dignity and a major cause of social injustice.

Everybody must be entitled to influence their own working hours. We want to shorten working hours in such a way that it increases the scope for personal influence. The goal is working hours corresponding to a thirty-hour working week.

All inhabitants in this country have a common interest in the whole country being able to live and develop. Even regional development provides more work, makes better use of the different resources of the country and this means that greater resources are created for common welfare. On the other hand unevenly distributed growth creates problems of overheating in certain regions and problems of stagnation in others. Both of these mean a poorer use of resources and higher costs for society as a whole. All regions must provide good opportunities for work, enterprise and education and offer good living conditions for their inhabitants.

Several factors in the modern economy increase the possibilities of spreading growth over the country as a whole and give many regions new opportunities to enjoy economic growth. Modern information technology decreases the importance of geographical location. The adjustment to ecological, sustainable development is among other things based on the increased use of resources, such as forests and crops, which are found outside large densely populated areas. The increasing importance of the tourist industry creates many new jobs. All this entails new possibilities for creating greater and more varied labour markets in all regions. A precondition is the existence of transport and communication systems, which connect different places within one region to a common labour market, and enables smooth connections with other regions.

Creating and maintaining the fundamental conditions of growth, which consists in a built up infrastructure and an even spread of knowledge-banks all over the country, is a national responsibility. Regional growth policy must be based on and develop the specific conditions of each region, which presupposes substantial freedom for each region to develop its own

solutions and the possibility of further refining its own natural resources. Well functioning local and regional networks are important to businesses and to the labour market. The co-operative movement and other actors within the social economy play an important role in regional growth and must be supported.

The green Swedish Welfare State

Wise use of the resources of the planet is the precondition for the future of mankind. Economic development must be in harmony with ecological sustainability, if coming generations are to live in a world with fresh air and clean water, a natural climate and a biological diversity of species. But today natural resources and ecosystems are used beyond the limits of long-term sustainability and unless this development is stopped, ecological collapse threatens. The necessary adjustment to ecologically sustainable development is the responsibility of the world community as a whole and a goal for Social Democracy to pursue in all international contexts. The overall requirement is to adapt production, energy systems and transport systems in a resource-saving and resource-efficient direction, in a way that is consistent with the demands for social justice. This presupposes very substantial reductions in today's use of resources, and this in turn calls for changes in both production and consumer patterns. This calls for a new view of economic rationality, new directions in social planning and that the individual takes personal responsibility for the use of resources.

A consideration for environmental demands must be built into production processes right from the beginning. Natural resources must be used more efficiently. Energy production must be adjusted. Biological diversity must be protected. Agricultural policy must be designed to meet the demands for ecologically sustainable farming and safe foodstuffs, and for ethical animal husbandry, where animals can live in natural conditions and be protected against pain and suffering. Transport systems must be reorganised towards more public transport at the same time as measures are required to develop engines that use less fuel, alternative fuels and better cleansing technology. Reducing the discharges of gases affecting the climate is a matter of high priority. Everything affecting the environment in the forms of discharges and waste must be minimised as far as is reasonably possible.

The strength of Swedish industry is dependent on the supply of energy, and the geographical position of Sweden means that a great deal of energy is needed for heating, lighting and transport. But ecological considerations set a limit to the possible use of energy. Nuclear power is to be phased out, at the same time, as the use of fossil fuels must decrease. These different goals presuppose both the efforts to develop alternative forms of energy and investments in more effective methods of using energy so as to decrease the total use. More energy-saving production processes must be developed and also more energy-efficient systems for heating up premises and homes.

The adjustment to ecologically sustainable development is a strong incentive also for economic growth, since it creates a demand for resource saving technology, for new environmentally adjusted vehicles and transport solutions and new forms of energy production. The rebuilding and construction of new houses and work places requires solutions that meet demands for ecological sustainability. All this calls for a strategic environmental policy, which connects economic, social and ecological development and which pushes for practical research and development work within companies. Investments in research, legislation and different economic policy levers are the most important instruments to achieve all this.

International co-operation is necessary for environmental policy to have an effect. This co-operation includes the responsibility of the rich world to provide poor countries with access to new environment-friendly technology, within agriculture as well as within industry. The rich countries, which are the largest resource consumers, have at the same time the obvious responsibility to change their production and consumer patterns.

The knowledge based society

Knowledge and culture are instruments for people's personal freedom and growth as well as for the development of society and for economic growth and welfare. Knowledge and culture give people the possibility to grow and to widen their perspectives, they release people's ideas and creativity. This liberating power is a decisive counterweight to the ambition of the economic and social elite to steer our thinking.

Giving everybody the possibility and conditions for acquiring knowledge is essential to break class patterns. Knowledge and competence are increasingly becoming the tools that determine the individual's opportunities in working life. Large differences in the access to these tools increase the divisions in working life and consequently in society. A high level of knowledge and competence among all individuals in working life means on the other hand that the class patterns created by production are changed. A high level of competence in working life increases at the same time the strength and competitiveness of industry and this means increased resources of welfare.

The new order of production that is developing is to a great extent based on the processing of information. Information flows have never been as extensive as they are today, and modern information technology entails a real democratising of access to knowledge. But the power that knowledge provides is not only a question of access but also a question of the ability to interpret information. All mediation of knowledge must be based on the respect for facts, but it must also provide all the tools for interpreting and judging information independently, understanding social contexts and distinguishing between facts and values. Only then is it a question of a real democratisation of knowledge.

The task facing the Social Democrats is now to create a real knowledge based society built on both training and education, open and accessible to everybody on equal terms.

A broad training and educational sector requires active efforts on the part of society. It involves the responsibility for ensuring a supply of rooms, staff and a technological infrastructure, which everybody has access to. It involves the responsibility for ensuring that the training and educational sector provides factual knowledge as well as the training in interpreting and processing knowledge independently. The training and educational sector must give all children and young people real opportunities to take in the knowledge school provides. It must give all adults real opportunities to develop their skills and competence further, both in terms of broadening and deepening professional skills and the free search for knowledge. It must give everybody the possibility of creating activities of one's own and the possibility of enjoying professional works within the different arenas of culture.

a Life long learning

High quality is a fundamental requirement for all forms of education. It presupposes good training for teachers. It presupposes research in pedagogics to keep up the development of teaching methods.

The quality of teaching also depends on the working environment of the school and on a work organisation and staff management, which make the most of the competence and skills of the teachers. Pupils – children as well as adult students – must have the same right, as all other workers, to safe work environments and to influence over their own work. Learning is a process, which to a great extent presupposes the participation and involvement of the person who is learning. Teaching is teamwork, which must build on the respect for both the role of the teacher in stimulating the search for knowledge and for the students' willingness and ability to take responsibility for their own learning.

For the sake of children it is important to have an overall perspective on the whole period of childhood and youth. For this reason the co-operation and exchange between different school forms and stages must develop. The journey through primary school may appear different depending on conditions and needs. A school without different grades is the goal of our policy.

Learning and thinking are individual processes. But the interest in and possibility of acquiring knowledge depends to a great extent on social and cultural factors. Today everybody has the same right to education and the same formal opportunities of acquiring it, but the real opportunities are still socially determined. High demands must be made on the whole educational sector to work from such a broad basis and with such varying methods that social and sex related patterns can be broken. This also calls for school environments free from bullying, sexual harassment, racism and hostility to foreigners. School and higher education must co-operate with the surrounding community and working life. Comprehensive school, where children from different environments and backgrounds meet to work together is important to counteract segregation.

On leaving compulsory school all pupils must have reached the goals set in the national curriculum. Upper secondary school must give students the opportunity to choose academic programmes in accordance with their preferences, but must at the same time provide the essential knowledge that is required to meet the needs of today's' social and working life. At least half of an age group should go on to higher education. Socially biased recruitment must be stopped just like the sex related and ethnically biased recruitment to training for further research.

Pre school – where children are allowed to be children – provides the platform for life long learning and must be seen as part of the universal welfare policy in the same way as school. Compulsory and upper secondary school must be free from fees as well as all higher education run by public authorities. In the long run this must apply also to pre-school.

Today's rapid growth of knowledge entails that education cannot only be limited to children and young people. Learning becomes a life long process, where periods of gainful employment alternate with periods of studying. The educational sector and the systems of economic support for students must be adjusted to this, so that people can enjoy the opportunities for continuous choices in life. Adults, who return to education, are in another phase in life than young people who go on directly after school to higher studies. Therefore it must be possible to study at different pace, to combine studies and gainful employment and to make use of distance learning by means of the information technology.

Every adult within all areas of working life must have the opportunity to take part in continuous and further education. Special attention must be given those who are low

educated. Extended and strengthened forms of adult education, competence development and qualified vocational training are needed. To this end, higher education, labour market training and voluntary education are all important.

Research provides the platform for knowledge development both in society and working life. In order to maintain and strengthen Sweden's position as a leading knowledge based nation substantial efforts are required from both the state and industry. Guaranteeing the freedom of research and of the basic research that is controlled by the researchers themselves is the special responsibility of the state. Interdisciplinary and multi-scientific research should be stimulated and the interface between technical and humanistic research broadened.

Swedish industry invests large resources in applied research. The co-operation on research between higher education and industry must be broadened. Also small and medium-sized companies must be able to participate in and above all share in the results of research and development work.

b Culture

Culture contains many dimensions, which must not be set against each other. It covers the light and easy as well as the heavy and difficult. Culture makes demands on people's own thinking and involvement but also provides the possibility of relaxation and entertainment. Culture gives people the opportunity to go beyond their own reality, but it must never be raised to something above daily life. The values of culture must not be defined by limited elite groups and become a barrier to all those who do not understand their established codes. Then far too many people would be excluded and culture would lose its power and dynamism.

Allowing everybody to participate in what is the core of cultural life – the opportunity for people to release their own power of thought – is a central task of democracy, at a time when a growing commercial control of the media and information flow threatens to lead to uniformity and the limitation of reason.

Everybody, children and adults, must be entitled to the fruits provided by culture, in all regions of the country. Culture provides life quality and is the glue that welds people from different generations and countries together. Culture has the power of gathering people together in their local communities and is in this regard an important factor for regional development and growth. Cultural policy must be designed so as to provide broad opportunities for personal cultural creativity and the cultivation of thought, at the same time as it supports a professional, cultural life of high artistic quality.

Culture must have forums for discourse and reflection without requirements for commercial viability and without the control that such demands always entail. Libraries must be free of charge. Assembly halls for associations that promote learning and culture must be open to everybody on reasonable terms. Institutions for professional cultural life, such as theatres and museums, must be spread throughout the country.

Cultural institutions and cultural life must reflect the cultural diversity in today's Sweden, at the same time, as our historical, cultural heritage must be cared for. This includes room to promote and support the opportunities for minorities to retain and develop their own language and culture.

Music schools and schools devoted to cultural education must be available to all children.

Internationalism

Demands, such as liberty and equality, do not know of any national or ethnic borders. The responsibility to work for human rights is as natural in the international arena as it is here, at home. The solidarity with those who defend these values is equally strong in international politics as in national politics. From the start the young Labour Movement has regarded itself as part of a larger international movement. Today Social Democrats are naturally united with all the forces around the world that are involved in the work for peace, democracy and human rights.

The issues of peace and solidarity are fundamental to our international engagement. Peace is the precondition of all development. The goal is a fair redistribution of the world's resources with equal opportunities for welfare and prosperity for all the peoples in the world, a necessary condition of lasting peace.

But today's internationalisation adds new dimensions to these classical issues of co-operation between peoples. Today's internationalisation changes entire social patterns and enters into people's everyday lives, influences ideas and values, creates new methods of production and consumption and new ways of spreading knowledge, culture and political work.

The role of the national state and consequently that of politics is being changed by this development. The scope of the national state is not always enough for asserting the goals of traditional domestic policy, such as high employment or combating crimes. Environmental issues are global. Reducing the discharges of greenhouse gases that affect the climate or averting the threats to biological diversity are challenges that can be met only through international co-operation.

This co-operation between nations strengthens the power of political action also on the home ground, since the chances of achieving the results people strive for increase considerably. The Social Democrats have always been involved in international co-operation, at a global level, at a European level and within the Nordic countries. We want to strengthen and develop this co-operation even more.

But internationalisation has also given many people the impression that political decisions have moved too far away and thus weakened democracy. From this the idea sometimes emerges, that the solution to the problems of internationalisation is to withdraw from international co-operation. But national isolationism will not solve the problems resulting from the reduced scope of the national state. It will only prevent people from making the most of the opportunities inherent in internationalisation: the strength that joint actions give both to national policy, global solidarity and the work of development.

In today's increasingly borderless world the work within countries is closely tied to the work between countries. International and national issues merge; the borders between domestic policy and foreign policy fade away. Sweden is a natural and integrated part of the international community. Sweden is in the world, and the world is in Sweden.

The European Union

The co-operation within the EU is an offshoot of the national political work in municipalities, regional bodies and the Swedish Parliament. This co-operation increases the chance of asserting central political goals, such as full employment, ecologically sustainable

development and sustainable tax bases. Thus co-operation also entails new opportunities for European citizens to enjoy close and frequent contacts through education, work, travel, co-operation and the exchange of experiences between nations, regions, municipalities, associations and interest groups.

The EU has developed into a strong force for unity on a continent, which for centuries has suffered from recurring wars between countries. This new mentality of co-operation and willingness to reach consensus solutions, which has been created by the EU, is in itself an indispensable factor for continuous positive development in Europe. The goal of social democracy is a Europe built on peace and co-operation. What is of decisive importance for this is that the EU opens up for the countries to that wish to become members of the union and in this way brings together this continent of ours, which has been divided for far too long.

Social democracy must continue to push within the EU for a European policy for full employment, which builds on the respect for the rights of wage earners and prevents social dumping.

Tripartite co-operation between the European commission and the parts of the labour market must be developed and trade union organisations must have the right to act across borders. We intend to work for democratic socialism and for a mixed economy within the union.

As part of the adjustment to ecologically sustainable development and of the work for reducing the use of resources by the rich nations the environmental policy of the EU must be further developed. Included in this are sharper demands on discharges affecting the environment, common minimum levels in energy taxation and common financing of environmental investments. This also includes a reorganisation of agricultural policy. The point of view of consumers, not the interests of producers, must be the starting point for a policy where safe foodstuffs, environmental considerations and good living conditions for animals are basic principles. The interest of consumers must be given altogether greater importance within the work of the EU.

The EU must improve its capacity to prevent and manage crises in close co-operation with the UN. The EU must become a driving force in the international work for solidarity, both by developing its own aid to poor countries and by abolishing its own tariff barriers against the poor. The EU must develop a joint responsibility for asylum and migration issues. Refugee policy must guarantee the protection of anyone who flees from persecution, war or environmental disasters. Anyone who seeks protection against this within the EU must be guaranteed equal treatment according to the principles of solidarity and humanity.

The EU plays a major role in the European work for increased equality, as a driving force for national legislation and for forming public opinion. Likewise, the EU must be a driving force in the issue of children's rights. Co-ordinated European measures are required against the growing trade with women in the sex industry, where the poor are exploited in almost slavish conditions. Cross border crime is a common problem for the members of the EU and calls for extended co-operation.

As an organisation the EU cannot copy the working methods neither of other international organisations nor of national states. The EU must develop new working methods of its own in order to meet the demands for democratic support in the member states, increased insight for the citizens into the decision making processes and the political impact in common actions.

Developing these methods is an important part of the social democratic involvement in the EU.

Each member state must be a platform for democracy within the EU. The democratic legitimacy of the EU must be built up in the member states through EU issues being constantly integrated in the political work in these states, and by the elected representatives of the European parliament and the national representatives of Council of Ministers having a clear mandate from the voters as the basis of their actions.

The Social Democratic Party wishes to work for an order where the member states of the EU can develop according to their own conditions, at the same time as they co-operate closely on common goals. A flexible organisation where co-operation can appear differently within different areas and where member states can co-operate with each other in varying constellations is the best answer to the needs of a changing world. A division of the organisation into a permanent inner nucleus group and an external group with looser forms for co-operation must be avoided.

Joint actions on the part of the European member states can be based on joint legislation but also on decisions to set up common goals, where member states are free to choose their own ways to achieve these goals.

Swedish security policy

Swedish security policy aims at preserving the peace and independence of our country, guaranteeing the stability of our immediate surroundings and contributing to strengthening international security.

Sweden will remain non-aligned in military terms. Non-alignment is an important instrument of security policy. Sweden has chosen to play an active role as a mediator, bridge-builder and dialogue partner in international conflicts within the framework of the UN. Non-alignment gives us the freedom of action to pursue an independent policy in situations of crises and also on issues on e.g. disarmament and the phasing out of nuclear weapons. As a non-aligned nation in military terms we can choose to be neutral in the event of war.

In Europe the major threat to security is not war between nations any more. The threats are of another type: conflicts within nations, encroachments on human rights, terrorism and violence against democratic institutions, interfering with the infrastructure, such as electricity supplies and telephone networks. These threats reach beyond national borders. They call for a broader security policy initiative, based on international co-operation more than military grounds.

Free trade

Free trade is one of the most important instruments for promoting global economic development, but it presupposes fair rules in the international trading system. Trade agreements must not become instruments for strong capital interests directed towards poor countries nor must they exclude poor countries from the markets of the rich world.

International trade agreements must be in harmony with international environmental agreements. Likewise they must be co-ordinated with the international agreements on work environment and the rights of wage earners. The world trade organisation (WTO) must become an organisation, which promotes a global development for economic growth and social justice.

Social clauses in the trade agreements have been interpreted at times as a restraining development, but accepting production methods that harm people and the environment will not in the long run lead to lasting development. Lasting development presupposes, in both poor and rich countries, secure work environments, reasonable working hours and the careful use of natural resources. International rules on environment and working life provide support to poor countries, which can have difficulties in making such demands on foreign investors on their own.

In exchange for these social clauses, rich countries must tear down their own trade barriers against the poor. Free trade agreements must be extended to include all types of products, not only the type of industrial goods where production is dominated by rich countries. Such an extension of free trade requires a reform of the agricultural policy in industrial countries.

Counterweights to international capital

Political and trade union organisation has always been an efficient weapon against the interests of capital. Deliberate, co-ordinated, political and trade union work is the counterweight to today's global capitalism.

In co-operation with parties close to our own and other organisations, Social Democracy in the EU and in different international organisations must work for global economic rules, which are based on social justice, respect for democracy and consideration for the environment. Free trade agreements, international environment agreements and the conventions on the rights of wage earners are important instruments. Agreements are required to prevent social dumping, for example on minimum levels in labour laws and on corporation tax. A central task is to develop instruments, which increase the stability of international finance systems.

Extensive trade union co-operation across the borders and within large transnational companies is also required. Trade union organisation in poor countries must be supported.

There are the international conventions and the so called codes of ethical behaviour for the actions of companies, which can be important counterweights to short-term profit demands, if they can be made to work in practice. Active consumer reactions towards companies breaking the rules can obviously contribute to this, since companies are sensitive also to smaller consumer movements. New and old popular movements play an important role in such surveillance by consumers and for such consumer reactions. The aim must be a more systematic surveillance of transnational companies and co-ordination between trade union work and consumer work. This also calls for co-operation between labour movements in different countries.

Peace and work for solidarity

The spiral of the arms race of the cold war has ended and the work of disarmament has made important progress. The goal remains to be reached of a complete phase-out of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The risk that such weapons can be developed by deeply undemocratic regimes or terror groups, who stand outside all international agreements, calls for special actions on the part of the world community. And so too does the struggle against the illegal trade in weapons. Disarmament work is still a fundamental task in international co-operation.

No state or terror group with military or economic strength should be allowed to force any other state to military and political submission. The sovereign right of all nations to reject such attacks is a basic condition of international co-operation between parties on an equal footing. But an equally necessary condition is the respect for human rights. The right of individuals to a life in liberty and security must always be defended. The world community must be able to react against serious threats to population groups even when that threat comes from those in power. Each form of terror act, as well as organised violence directed at the civilian population, must always be forcefully rejected.

Social democracy refuses to accept that any power has the right to support or violate human rights on the grounds of political and economic interests. To enjoy respect everywhere the same standard must be applied wherever human rights are violated.

In today's world it is often tensions other than military tensions that create armed conflicts. Economic divisions and ethnic and social antagonism pose a major threat to peace and they more often find expression in conflicts within states than between states. Poverty creates social conflicts; conflict leads to violence and violence to increased poverty. In this way poverty and war create their own evil spirals with constantly increasing encroachments on human life and human rights. The long-term work for preserving peace must focus on the underlying social and economic factors that create and maintain violence. Combating poverty, strengthening democracy and preserving peace are goals that are intertwined.

The opportunities for the United Nations (UN) to intervene for the purpose of preserving peace must be strengthened. The UN must draw up strategies for monitoring threatening conflicts at an early stage so as to be able to intervene and influence them. The UN must be strengthened legally by restrictions on the use of the veto on the part of the Security Council and by ensuring that the UN and the UN charter must be the guiding factor in all military use of violence in international and national conflicts, in practice by guaranteeing the supply of armed forces under the command of the UN.

The UN must alongside this role become a central actor in the struggle for human rights and in combating poverty, which is the focus of attention for the work of solidarity with other nations now that the colonial liberation process on the whole is completed. In order to fulfil these roles the UN must reform its inner organisation. The UN must support and actively maintain a dialogue with global popular movements.

Poverty is a question of a lack of fundamental material livelihood but also of being exposed to violence and a violation of one's rights, a lack of possibilities to influence one's own daily conditions, ignorance, insecurity and the deepest hopelessness. Poverty is the absence of resources needed to change one's own life, the absence of the means to look after one's own body and health and an absence of means to give one's children a future.

The struggle against poverty is in its deepest sense a struggle for human dignity and human rights. Combating poverty requires efforts at many different levels aimed at strengthening the possibilities for people and nations to manage their lives and future.

The development of poor countries is of common interest to both the rich and the poor part of the world. Economic organisations like the World Bank and The International Monetary Fund must integrate social development and social justice into their strategies. Development

assistance policy, trade policy and foreign investments must be co-ordinated. Sweden must reach the development assistance goal of one percent of the national income.

Development co-operation must be based on poor countries' own resources. Actions to support the growth of democratic institutions and to strengthen people's own resources through better health and educational opportunities are important efforts in development work. Combating the spread of fatal diseases, such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, is the responsibility of the whole world community. This is a question of measures in health and medical care services, of the supply of efficient medicines and about ending ignorance and prejudices, which contribute to the spread of illness.

A vital part of this work is to strengthen the position of women and to improve the development conditions of children. Both require the right to and possibility of family planning. Women must be entitled to education, to manage their own economy and not least to make decisions about their own bodies.

Rich countries must open up their markets to developing countries. Poor countries must have the possibility of debt relief. They must have a share of modern information technology and be given access to environmental friendly and energy saving production technology. At the same time demands must be made on the governments in these countries to respect human rights and to follow the rules of democracy. The persecution of dissidents, restrictions in the freedom of speech and the right to organise in free associations can never be accepted, neither in poor nor in rich countries.

The solidarity of Democratic Socialism involves all countries. Its goal is the liberty of all peoples, the liberty of the whole world.

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