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## WHAT'S NEXT FOR EUROPEAN SOCIALISM?

SPECIAL REPORT | 18 OCT. - 3 NOV. 2017  
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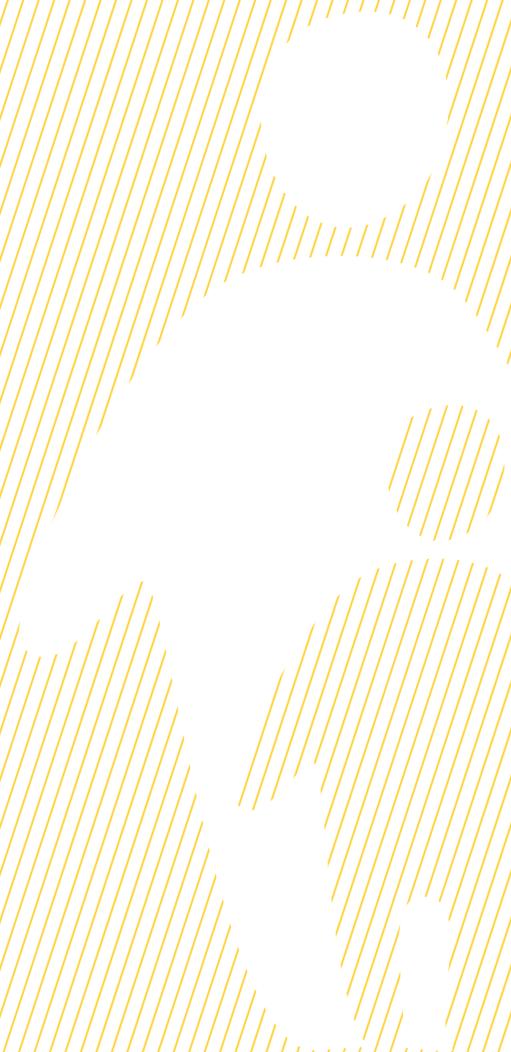


Group of the Progressive Alliance of  
**Socialists & Democrats**  
in the European Parliament

***EURACTIV***

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# Mogherini lashes out at Trump, says EU is the 'only credible' global power

By Sarantis Michalopoulos



Mogherini took an indirect swipe at Trump during an event at the European Parliament. [European External Action Service/Flickr]

**E**U foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini launched an attack against US President Donald Trump on Wednesday (18 October), without directly naming him, claiming that isolation in foreign policy leads nowhere and that the EU is currently the “only credible and predictable” global power.

Speaking in the European Parliament yesterday in Brussels, the EU High Representative also attacked Realpolitik and pointed out that being tough for the sake of being tough is

often a sign of weakness.

As far as European security and defence is concerned, she said it had nothing to do with militarising the continent but rather a means of getting strategic autonomy from others, and ensuring better military spending.

“Military force is needed sometimes but for us Europeans it’s never, never, never, the solution alone,” she said, emphasising the need for diplomacy, and patience of mediation.

According to Mogherini, the international order is going through challenging times and she urged

Europeans to be courageous and express their own ideas in order to change things.

## THE “EUROPEAN WAY” AGAINST REALPOLITIK

Mogherini was speaking at the “Building the progressive future together” event organised by the Socialists and Democrats (S&D) group in the Parliament.

In her speech, she mentioned three

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times the need to avoid “isolation” in international politics, highlighting the need to promote the “European way”.

“There is an alternative to the foreign policy of isolation, fear, protectionism and confrontation, and this is the European way,” she said.

The European way, according to Mogherini, is made of cooperation and partnership, respect for international law and standards of multilateralism as well as a constant search for win-win solutions.

The EU foreign policy chief noted that there was nothing wrong in being idealistic particularly in these times of “cynical Realpolitik”, reiterating that the solution of our times will never come with isolation.

“There is only one global power today that is credible, reliable and predictable for the rest of the world and not only to its citizens – and this is the EU,” she said amid applause.

### SUPPORT FOR THE UN

At a moment when the UN is under attack, the EU is the strongest and most reliable supporter of effective multilateralism, Mogherini continued.

She expressed her full support for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and added that the EU cannot be better off if the rest of the world is not. “We are all connected,” she said.

She explained that Socialists and Democrats understand the value of UNESCO in order to protect Europe’s heritage in conflict, history and memory.

Last week, the US and Israel decided to pull out of the world heritage body over its “anti-Israel bias”.

Trump has been a long-standing critic of the UN. During his election campaign in 2016, he complained that the United States were contributing a disproportionate amount of money to the New-York based international

organisation.

During his first speech at the UN in September, the US President strongly criticised the UN, saying it had not reached its full potential because of bureaucracy and mismanagement.

“The United Nations must hold every level of management accountable, protect whistleblowers and focus on results rather than on process,” Trump said, stressing that the organisation needed reform.

UN Secretary-General Guterres seemed to accept some of the criticism. “Our shared objective is a 21st century UN focused more on people and less on the process,” he replied.

### IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

On Monday (16 October) Trump reiterated his threat to fully withdraw the US from the Iran nuclear deal reached in 2015 with the EU as a mediator.

Referring to the deal, Mogherini said that Europe honors it and defended its achievements.

“We managed to put in place an effective monitoring system to make sure that Iran’s nuclear programme will only have peaceful purposes”.

She explained that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has conducted plenty of inspections and said that Iran has complied with all its commitments.

“It is a deal that prevented a nuclear arms race in the Middle East, next to us. That brought security in the region and to young people in the country. That was the European way and it was thanks to us because we were the mediator,” she said.

“In today’s world where everything is going wrong it’s not possible to dismantle the single agreement that works,” she emphasised.

Mogherini also noted that Europe was not naïve but does politics with a smile.

“Some will believe that strength in foreign policy means scrapping

rules and agreements and move alone in isolation against the others. That being strong means being tough.

“Let me tell you, sometimes you need more strength to smile than to shout. The real strength lies in creating a space for dialogue and win-win solutions in building your partnerships and listening,” Mogherini said, adding that being tough for the sake of being tough is often “a sign of weakness”.

### AFRICA: TURNING THE PAGE

In her speech, the EU official also drew attention to the new EU-Africa partnership, stressing it had entered a new era.

“We turned the page from the logic of aid to the logic of partnership [...] we don’t work for Africa but with Africa.”

Mogherini referred to the EU’s External Investment Plan, which was adopted in September with the aim of boosting investments in the African region.

“It is a win-win situation for the European private sector and EU and African citizens,” she said.

Regarding immigration, Mogherini said it was not a phenomenon to stop but to manage.

“If all migrants would disappear in Europe today, entire sectors of our economy would collapse tomorrow morning,” she said, adding that this does not mean fences but a partnership to work in a humane way to manage the phenomenon together, with NGOs, the states and UN agencies.

# EU socialists pledge to turn left to tackle growing extremism

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By Sarantis Michalopoulos



Gianni Pittella said there should be no more austerity at all, not less.  
[European Parliament/Flickr]

**T**he EU Socialists and Democrats said on Wednesday (18 October) that they have to keep their distance from right-wing parties and be the basis for an alliance with progressive forces in order to counter growing extremism in Europe.

Speaking yesterday at the “Building the Progressive Future Together” event, EU socialist policymakers stressed there was a need for a progressive alliance to counter the rise of extreme and populist powers.

Faced with electoral defeats across

Europe in France, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, the socialists want to put an end to the great coalitions with right-wing parties at national level.

## GETTING AWAY FROM EPP

Sergei Stanishev, President of the Party of European Socialists, told EURACTIV.com, “We have a clear distinguished vision from the European People’s Party [...] in order to tackle the threats and populism the two big parties on the centre-left and

centre-right need to show we are not the same.”

Referring to the German election, he agreed with the SPD decision to stay in opposition, as it will provide German social democrats with “a big opportunity for a strong comeback in the EU and national elections”.

The Bulgarian politician noted, however, that the picture of socialism in Europe varies, as in Portugal there was a “historical victory” for the socialist party.

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Asked whether cooperation with progressive forces such as the left or the Greens should be also on a member state level, Stanishev avoided giving a clear answer.

“We are moving in our direction with our identity and ideas. I believe that in the next EU Parliament we will be the basis uniting the progressive powers that are based on progressive values, which does not mean we are becoming GUE or Greens.”

Stanishev focused on the need for an EU-wide social action plan with “concrete measures” which will change citizens’ lives.

The big fight will be the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) whose discussion will start next year.

For Stanishev, a youth plan and a strong cohesion package should be prioritised.

### PITTELLA: NO AUSTERITY

Gianni Pittella, the leader of the Socialists and Democrats Group in the European Parliament, was more outspoken regarding austerity, claiming that we shouldn’t just be saying less austerity, “we should be saying no austerity”.

He talked about a new left for a social Europe as well as a “great democratic challenge” to help EU citizens who have a sense of abandonment.

“We have to answer the question: what is the added value of being European [...] we want to change Europe and not divide it,” Pittella noted.

The Italian politician recognised that the socialists have lost the elections in many countries and this is something to be considered, but there are many that share the socialist values.

“In order to change Europe a great socialist force is needed”.

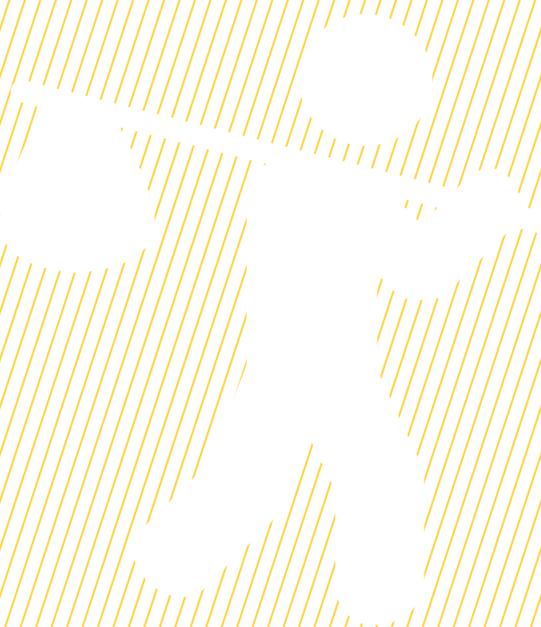
Pittella stressed that the president of the European Commission should be elected directly and called for the Parliament to become a true EU legislature.

“It is now the only parliament in the world that has no legislative initiative.”

The S&D Group tweeted, “We are leftist and pro-European! We have to convince progressive forces that Europe is the horizon of the 21st century.”

Paul Mason, a left-wing British commentator, attacked neoliberalism and sent a message in favour of a shift to the left, against far right.

“Trump, AFD & UKIP want national neoliberalism. They’ll fail and when they do, they will blame migrants, feminism and minorities,” he said.



## INTERVIEW

# S&D chief works for a progressive alliance away from 'Orbánising' EPP

By Sarantis Michalopoulos



Gianni Pittella [European Parliament/Flickr]

There should be a clear distinction between the right and the left in European politics and the EU socialists should open the door to other anti-austerity progressive forces as well as to those who do not want to follow the “Orbánisation” of the centre-right, S&D leader Gianni Pittella told EURACTIV.com in an interview.

- Socialists are the left and there should be focus on a clear progressive programme;
- Environmentalists should be part of a progressive alliance;

- Austerity has been the “kiss of death”;
- Unacceptable that Greek people were hit after years of austerity;
- Catalonia: Spain’s unity must be protected;
- Mercosur trade deal: crucial agriculture elements should be clarified;
- Dublin II regulation is shameful.

*Gianni Pittella is the Socialists & Democrats (S&D) chief in the European Parliament. He spoke to EURACTIV’s Sarantis Michalopoulos in Strasbourg.*

**The Grand Coalition is over, both in the European Parliament and in Germany. What is next for European socialism?**

Our family has to open the door to the movement against austerity, the Democrats who don’t want to follow the “Orbánisation” of the centre-right European People’s Party (EPP), the movements that advocate for the human and civil rights in Eastern Europe. And also, the door is open for the environmentalists. We have to build a great alliance to win the next elections.

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***It seems that the S&D has a more progressive approach, as you were the first who broke ties with the EPP. Can the same be done on a national level as well?***

The facts are showing that it is necessary to have a fair but clear competition and a distinction between the right and the left. We are the left and we have to focus on a clear progressive programme to recover all the voters who abandoned us because they felt insufficiently protected by us.

***Regarding the last election in Germany, Wolfgang Schäuble will no longer be in the Eurogroup. Do you believe that the participation of the liberal party in a government coalition will continue the austerity-driven policies or will things will change?***

I hope that everybody understands that austerity has been the kiss of death all these years. Also whoever has been a supporter of austerity, now sees that the outcome of these policies is a disaster. The debt is not reduced, the unemployment increased and democracy is more fragile compared to the past. These are the results of the austerity policy.

***You were among the first EU politicians who backed Greece during the difficult times both on an economy and migration level. Now, the second bailout assessment is successfully completed and lenders have shown positive signs about the third one. Do you feel justified?***

I was first of all close to the citizens and I supported the current government because the people elected it. I could not accept that the Greek people were hit after years of austerity with additional economic measures, especially on the poorest ones. Whoever led Greece I would be

supportive of the citizens. This is how we will unite Europe and achieve a substantial balance.

***The centre-left parties in Greece have internal elections. Some candidates have made it clear that they will not cooperate with the centre-right New Democracy while others have left the door open. What would you suggest to them?***

I don't want to interfere in this internal discussion. I know there is an ongoing democratic process, there are primaries. I don't want to interfere at all in these dynamics. The choice is up to the leaders that will be elected.

***So, you don't insist anymore on the need for a progressive alliance in the country as you did in the past?***

This is a choice of the local leadership. And I don't want to replace them. My European line is clear. I work for a great, large and open progressive alliance.

***Referendums in Catalonia, Veneto and Lombardy. How do socialists see these developments?***

I think we have two cleavages: one is from the richest areas like Catalonia and the other one is from the poorest communities, which are suffering due to the consequences of globalisation. Both these cleavages are undermining the unity of European democracy. So, we have to defend the unity of Spain, the full respect of the constitution and we can have a possible reform of the constitution. But, using the right tools. My colleague Pedro Sánchez is fighting to establish a committee in the national parliament that will work in six months to reform the constitution to give more autonomy to the regions, particularly Catalonia. This is the right way to reinforce the power of an area.

On the other hand, we have to focus our attention on the people

who are severely hit by globalisation. People who lost their jobs due to technological progress, who live in remote areas, young people who look for work. There are many people across Europe, who are suffering and we need to give the right answers.

***The Commission said it wanted to conclude the EU-Mercosur trade deal by the end of the year. You have scheduled a visit in Latin America. What do socialists believe in?***

The EU-Mercosur trade agreement is very important for us for political reasons. Because the EU has to reinforce its relations with Latin America, as US President Donald Trump's isolationism gives Europe great space. A significant part of the population there is originally from Italy and Spain, but I would like to say that some crucial elements of the trade deal should be clarified.

I was faced with many concerns, also in my group, on some points related to agriculture. It would be difficult to move on without clarifying these points.

Our mission in Latin America, particularly in Argentina and Uruguay, will be the right occasion to discuss also on these points.

***The LIBE committee voted to change the Dublin II regulation. However, the member states still have the final say. Are they convinced it should be modified?***

I think yes. Every reasonable person could understand that it is unfair and unacceptable that the entire burden is on the back of the first entrance and hosting countries. It is time to change this absurd and shameful regulation. It's too hard for the member states in the Council to refuse this reform.

OPINION

*DISCLAIMER: All opinions in this column reflect the views of the author(s), not of EURACTIV.com PLC.*

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# TOGETHER for a stronger, progressive family!

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President of the Party of European Socialists Sergei Stanishev (L) and Gianni Pittella of S and D (R) speak the event "Together" organised by the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S and D) Group in the European Parliament on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of signing the Treaty of Rome, in Rome, Italy, 24 March 2017. [EPA/GIUSEPPE LAMI]

**S**ocialism still has a long way to go. But following recent elections in various European countries, it is clear that progressive forces must regenerate themselves, write Gianni Pittella and Sergei Stanishev.

*Gianni Pittella is the president of the Socialists and Democrats Group in the European Parliament, and Sergei Stanishev is the president of the Party of European Socialists.*

Our values of equality and

solidarity are as relevant as ever in these uncertain times, and we must never stop defending and taking pride in them. Only a political vision shaped by equality and solidarity will enable Europe to overcome the challenges of climate change, technological innovation and changing demographics, and transform them into opportunities for high-quality jobs, sustainable growth and reduced social inequality. To be loyal to these principles, progressive forces must regenerate themselves. This requires

courage and innovation.

With our TOGETHER initiative, the Progressives set out in a new direction. Since its launch, the S&D Group, PES and their partners began a journey around the cities of Europe to talk to citizens and redefine, together, the direction for a progressive Europe.

We organised topical discussions on social Europe, on the digital economy, and on cohesion policy. In addition, we looked at broader

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questions with events such as our conference in Rome on the future of the European Union. TOGETHER is our way of taking the discussion on Europe beyond the Brussels bubble: hundreds of people joined the discussions at our events across Europe, and thousands of people took part in our online debates before and during these events.

During this journey, we have learnt that socialist forces cannot exist if they don't fight for justice. This is what we are doing every day in the European Parliament and across Europe. We are fighting for social justice with the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive – to ensure equal pay for equal work.

We are fighting for justice with the adoption of a comprehensive European Pillar on Social Rights, ensuring everyone in Europe has

decent working conditions. And we are fighting for justice with a complete rejection of austerity as Europe's guiding economic principle.

We are going further too in other areas, for tax justice, we are demanding a web-tax to ensure that all multinationals pay tax where their profits are made. We are fighting for international justice in partnership with Africa, to create a long-term strategy that can get to grips with the root causes of the migration crisis.

All these challenges are international and we can only tackle them effectively at a European level. We therefore need to increase what the European Union can do, extending its competencies and improving its democratic oversight. Together, we must define our project to change the European institutions by strengthening the European Parliament, which remains the ultimate home of European

democracy, and by pushing back against the selfishness of some national governments who are undermining the European project.

Today together with our progressive leaders, with leading intellectuals and hundreds of engaged citizens and youth, we prepare our fight back to defend and strengthen Europe.

We need to stop the shift to the right in Europe, to stand up against it and in favor of our values to create a Europe that works for the many and not the few.

TOGETHER is a celebration of democracy and participation. It is our way of strengthening our community and paving the way ahead for a progressive Europe. Social democracy is still the beating heart of decency on our planet. Only by working together we will make Europe a more just, sustainable and democratic place for everyone.



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