

Press release



Swedish Social Democratic Youth

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The IUSY FESTIVAL 2000 ended with cyber conference, speeches and fireworks.

The IUSY (the International Union of Young Socialists) FESTIVAL 2000 in Sweden ended tonight. The participants bade each other farewell with speeches from Swedish prime minister Göran Persson and an internet conference including ANC-leader Thabo Mbeki and president of Chile Rickardo Lagos.

Göran Persson held an internet conference which could be seen by the festival attendees and was broadcasted live via the "net". Social Democratic leaders from three different continents – Persson, Mbeki and Lagos – discussed IT and human rights as a key for development in the underdeveloped countries and global solidarity.

-The new technology is a possibility but also a risk. The new technology can be a new tool to widen the gaps between rich and poor if we do not fight it, said Göran Persson.

After that, Göran Persson asked Thabo Mbeki and Rickardo Lagos about their views on the subject. Mbeki hoped that IT could be a part of the third world "leap-frogging" towards prosperity. He also said that the socialist movement had contributed to the promises that the last G8-meeting made in order to help the third world getting the new technology.

Lagos meant that IT has lessened the importance of geographic distances and that the remote Chile of the past now lies in the middle of the world.

Mikael Damberg, the president of the Swedish Social Democratic Youth, have had the honour of hosting the IUSY FESTIVAL 2000. He thanked the 6000 festival participants from 120 different countries:

"Our discussions and ideas on this festival will make a difference and greatly effect the future of socialism around the world. How do I know that? Because if it's anything this festival has shown us it is that the International Union of Socialist Youth is a great political force.

At the opening ceremony I said that our political movement might be the only global force. Now I know that it's true."

It was a grand closing ceremony at the IUSY FESTIVAL 2000. The atmosphere was high spirited when the ceremony ended with a magnificent firework. The colourful and bright Malmö sky could be seen as an ending to this IUSY festival as well as a beginning of a big party, when the 6000 festival participants celebrated their last evening together.

Entire speeches are available at www.iusy.org where information on seminars, guests and other things are available. Contact the press secretary at +46-70-592 60 38.