

Dear comrades and friends, fellow members of our great socialist family.

Thank you for welcoming me to London, and for inviting me to speak here this morning. And thank you, Jeremy, for that warm introduction.

It's always exciting to be part of events like this. And let me tell you, Labour is not the only party in Europe that's facing real challenges, and debating hard questions. [Refer here to one or two bang-up-to-date political developments in other EU countries, with references to other leaders Serge has spoken to recently.]

And no wonder. We assemble here to debate the defining political issue of the day, probably one of the most important issues in British political history — the future of your relationship with the European Union and the world.

This is a hugely challenging issue. But before we dive into the detail, I want to say a few words on behalf of your neighbours, the progressive socialist parties around Europe.

In fact, we are more than just neighbours. As I said a moment ago, we are also family — a political family, socialists and democrats across Europe. I was not just being polite. This relationship really matters.

Good neighbours coexist — but good families share.

Good neighbours tolerate each other — but good families support and strengthen each other.

Good neighbours are polite — but good families are open and direct.

Of course even the best families can disagree. But, as we all know, “we have far more in common than that which divides us”.

Remember this fact.

In the weeks and months and probably years to come, you'll hear a lot of talk of 'us and them'. Not just from the right-wing, anti-European media, but from the government too — as unhelpful as that will surely be.

I know you're used to it, because it's been that way in Britain for years. It is always Britain versus Europe, Westminster versus Brussels... 'us versus them'.

But in the days to come, whenever you hear that kind of talk, I want you also to remember the message that I'm here to deliver this morning.

The treaties that created the European Union are strong. But the family ties among socialists and democrats are strong too.

Why?

It's not just that we fight for the same causes — fairness, social justice, equality. It's not just that we stand against the same opponents: populists, conservatives, those who prefer unfettered markets dominated by big corporations.

Our family ties are deeper than that. This is a fundamental fact about our political movement — we are international by our very nature. No matter what happens, progressive socialism can't possibly be inward-looking or isolationist. International solidarity is part of our DNA.

That's why we were so devastated last June when the UK voted to leave the European Union. Because make no mistake about it — the EU is one of the world's brightest beacons of international solidarity. It is difficult for us, painful even, to realise that Britain would choose to walk away from it.

Of course, as much as we regret that decision, we also accept it. That is another element of good families: they respect each other's right to make decisions.

And this brings me to the other message I want to give you from your European friends and family.

As you work through the implications of Brexit — you, the Labour party, as well as the whole country — we are determined to support you however we can.

We can speak publicly about our support — as I did when I chaired the discussions among European leaders on the other side of the river. [anecdote here from dinner!]

We can connect you with other family members — something that will be especially useful during the negotiations that will take place in the coming months.

And we can offer you advice, and an alternate perspective, when you need it.

Remember that the best neighbours are polite, but the best families are open and honest.

The European leaders who met last night in London agreed unanimously that the Brexit vote must not lead to a weakening of the progressive values that we share.

Is there anyone who thinks that the best way to fight populism is to become more populist?

That the best way to fight nationalism is to become more nationalist?

That the best way to lead Britain — the 100%, not just the 52 or the 48 — is to blindly follow the anti-European right into the dark alley of isolationism?

No.

I said that Brexit is one of the most important issues in British politics. But I also want to remind you that it is not the only issue, and it will not be around forever.

The next few years will be tough. But when all is said and done, the UK's relationship with Europe and the world will once again settle down. And when that happens, our shared political battles will continue — for fairness, equality, justice.

We are socialists; this means we are all part of something bigger.

Even after Brexit, family is still family. We will continue to work with you.