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SOLIDAR events 2008

SOLIDAR is pleased to announce its major events for 2008:

- The **Annual General Assembly** (AGA) will take place on 2 July from 9.30 to 15.00 in the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels - the AGA is only open to SOLIDAR members.
- **SOLIDAR's 60th Anniversary** celebrations will follow on from the AGA on 2 July, taking place in the European Parliament from 16.00 to 19.00 and hosted by Ms Ieke van den Burg MEP.
- The prestigious **SOLIDAR Silver Rose Awards** will take place on the 15 October in the European Parliament, hosted by Harlem Désir MEP. The Silver Rose Awards celebrate the achievements of individuals and organisations who have contributed greatly to the struggle for a just and civil society. The Call for Nominations is now open!

To learn more about the Silver Rose Awards and to make a nomination

To participate or find out more about SOLIDAR events

Civil Society Dialogue in the Western Balkans

In the framework of the Social Platform delegation visit to Kosovo this week, Conny Reuter, Secretary General of SOLIDAR and President of the Social Platform, met with representatives from 120 Civil Society Organisations in Pristina. This meeting aimed to aid shape civil dialogue and highlight the importance of building civil society dialogue in a country like Kosovo in this transition period.

'From Brain Drain to Brain Gain' Conference

Conny Reuter, SOLIDAR Secretary General, participated in the conference "From Brain Drain to Brain Gain? The impact in Central and Eastern Europe of the free movement of workers" organised by the European Policy Center (EPC). During his intervention Conny said that *"SOLIDAR is a network of service providers and employers in the care and social services sector. One problem with increased mobility in this sector is that people from new Member States will accept work in the private health-care sector in the EU-15 for bad pay and conditions, thus undermining long-term local pay and conditions. Regulations are needed to support migration and provide decent conditions for all."*

See the full EPC Conference Report

UNCTAD Civil Society Forum insists that Decent Work should be priority

The Civil Society Forum, held prior to the United Nation's Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) taking place this week in Ghana, issued a Declaration from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to the Conference which SOLIDAR strongly supports. The Declaration highlights CSOs concern with the very urgent need to fix the global financial crisis and the rising food prices and food shortages. It insists that the objective of the global financial system should be to ensure that finance serves development, not the greed of speculators and that the goals of development include decent work, full employment, adequate income, environmental sustainability and gender equality.

The Declaration continues by stating that in order for these goals to be achieved, developing countries must be allowed to defend their food security and small farmers, so as to quickly expand food production through sustainable agriculture and raise tariffs in order to prevent import surges. And there must be changes to policies at the World Bank, the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and to free trade agreements (FTAs), including economic partnership agreements (EPAs). Furthermore, it reaffirms that employment is the key to poverty eradication, but this implies the inclusion of full and productive employment and decent work in agriculture, services and industrialisation as the main goal in policymaking and requires trade policies and financial policies that are consistent with this objective. The Declaration calls for UNCTAD to incorporate into its activities the commitment to decent work w hich was adopted by all United Nations member States at the 2005 World Summit of the United Nations General Assembly.

Read the full Civil Society Forum Statement

Decent Wage for Agro-Export Workers in Peru

'Outrageously cheap' is the slogan which will accompany Belgian SOLIDAR member, FOS', campaign taking place between 23 April and 21 June.

In Peru, workers employed by the agro-export sector are paid ?0,50 per hour, an income barely sufficient to cover food and transport costs. But in Ica (South of Peru) - one of the areas most violently hit by the 2007 earthquake - workers are not ready to give up their fundamental right for a decent wage: they have joined the union and have organised themselves. In order to support their fight, FOS is asking you to send a solidarity postcard to their trade union leader María Navarro in Ica.

Find out more about FOS' campaign for Decent Wage (in Dutch)

Read SOLIDAR's briefing on Decent Work and the Agro Export Industry Workers in Peru

Watch the Plades video on Working condition in Ica's agro-export industry

New Additions to Call to Action for Decent Work Decent Life

The last weeks have seen an increasing number of organisations joining the Call to Action and undertaking actions to collect signatures for the petition. Amongst others, different SOLIDAR members, such as Banana Link in the UK, COCIS in Italy, Solidarité Socialiste in Belgium and Solidarité Laïque in France.

See the organisations which have officially endorsed the Call to Action

Send your message of support to the campaign, you can request the endorsement form from decentwork@solidar.org

All messages will be published online, see examples

Ending Street homelessness Declaration Adopted

FEANTSA and SOLIDAR, together with 12 major European networks, are delighted to announce that the Written Declaration on ending street homelessness has been adopted by the European Parliament. **438** signatures were collected from Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from all political groups and all European Member States. In signing the Declaration, the European Parliament has sent a clear political message that the issue of street homelessness is an urgent one across Europe and must be tackled in a determined and focused way.

Read the Press Release

Employers' Sanctions Directive

Prior to the European Union's Justice and Home Affairs Council which took place on 17-18 April, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and SOLIDAR reminded EU Ministers of the crucial need to follow a human rights-based approach in taking forward the proposed EU Directive providing for sanctions against employers of irregular third country nationals.

In the statement, PICUM, ENAR and SOLIDAR, write that EU decision makers must ensure the directive does not undermine important work to tackle the exploitation of vulnerable workers and to guarantee equal treatment for all. The statement also pointed out that identifying 'illegal' employment as a 'pull' factor for 'illegal' migration ignores the fact that an overwhelming majority of migrants would rather have regular employment contracts and contributes to the social security system than live outside the legal system, under a constant threat of deportation. Additionally, undocumented work is a major factor in enabling exploitation and ensuing poor working conditions, health risks and insufficient social protection coverage.

Read the full statement

Social Europe Conference

SOLIDAR and its French members (Fédération Nationale Léo Lagrange, Jeunesse au Plein Air, Ligue de l'Enseignement, Solidarité Laïque, Union Nationale des Associations Laïques Gestionnaires) and the Maison de l'Europe will jointly organise a one-day conference on Social Europe on 25 June in Paris. The conference will highlight SOLIDAR's contribution to the debate around two main issues currently high on the European Social Agenda: (Social) Services of General Interest and Decent Work and Decent Life/Building Inclusive Societies. They will be discussed on the backdrop of the Lisbon Treaty and its provision for a more social Europe and a Europe oriented towards citizens' needs and expectations.

The conference is expected to bring together about 100 representatives from the SOLIDAR network, in particular SOLIDAR's French members, as well as other French and European NGOs working in the social and educational fields, European institutions and the French government. Conclusions from the debate and a SOLIDAR resolution on Social Europe will be elaborated and handed over to the French Presidency before it begins. This conference is the follow-up to conferences organised in 2006 in Vienna by Volkshilfe and in 2007 in Berlin by Arbeiterwohlfahrt and Arbeitersamariterbund in the framework of SOLIDAR's 'Save our Social Europe' campaign.

More detailed information will be circulated to the SOLIDAR network and will be available on the SOLIDAR website at the beginning of May. For further information please contact Mathias

Sri Lanka consortium newsletter

The SOLIDAR Consortium in Sri Lanka has issued the April 2008 edition of their newsletter

Read the newsletter

New Intern for Decent Work campaign

SOLIDAR welcomes Hanna Sjölund to the team! Hanna will be assisting Barbara on the Decent Work Decent Life campaign. All requests for information on the Call to Action can now be addressed to her at decentwork@solidar.org

28-29	2nd Forum on Social Services of General Interest, Paris
30-2	Volonteurope 2008, Genoa, Italy

SOLIDAR is a European network of 42 members working for social and economic justice in Europe and around the world. SOLIDAR's Weekly Round Up provides you with the latest information and news from SOLIDAR and our members, as well as other issues of interest and European developments.

If you have any comments or wish to have further information on any of the articles featured in the Weekly Round Up, please do not hesitate to contact SOLIDAR's Communications Officer Abigail

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