

Tsvangirai withdraws from election

Morgan Tsvangirai, the leader of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), has announced his withdrawal from the Zimbabwean elections. Morgan said he would quit to curb violence by ruling party militias he says killed 86 of his supporters. *"This is a huge blow for democracy in Zimbabwe"* comments Josef Weidenholzer, President of SOLIDAR. *"We have to support the UK and US to bring Mugabe's Zimbabwe in front of the UN Security Council to be held accountable for the recent election violence. If the people of Zimbabwe cannot respond, the International Community will have to act."*

Morgan Tsvangirai received a [SOLIDAR Silver Rose Award](#) in 2001.

Ireland votes no to the Lisbon Treaty

SOLIDAR is very concerned about the result of the referendum in Ireland. Three years after France and the Netherlands, citizens of another EU Member State have again voted against the proposal for a European Treaty. Martin Schulz, President of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament challenged European governments: *"to take their responsibilities. We have a negative spiral which a dangerous one. The process of European integration is on the line"*. There are certainly numerous reasons why citizens could have been disappointed with the content of the Lisbon Treaty or have the feeling that the Lisbon Treaty is not making enough progress compared to the current Treaty. It is also significant that working class and low income neighbourhoods voted no to the Treaty with a clear majority whereas middle-class neighbourhoods were more supportive. Paul Rasmussen, the President of the PES said *"we need to tackle the insecurities of ordinary people and families - we need to create more and better jobs, we need to tackle climate change and ensure a secure supply of affordable and sustainable energy, we need to manage globalisation in a fairer way for all, we need to deal with migration."*

Since agreement on the Lisbon Treaty, SOLIDAR has consistently put forward that there is a need to convince citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, and to actively promote at least the social and citizenship provisions of the Treaty. How can a positive public opinion be created if there is no public debate, no involvement of civil society, only a parliamentary procedure? Conny Reuter, Secretary General of SOLIDAR, commented *"as a network of NGOs setting Social Europe as the priority, we should inform citizens and put the social dimension of all EU policies at the heart of the debate about the future of Europe. The campaign preparations for the European elections in June 2009 are an excellent opportunity for us to challenge political parties to hold European campaigns - instead of national campaigns against or in favour of the national government in place."*

Returns Directive

Last week, the European Parliament voted on the Council of Ministers draft of the famous Returns Directive, resulting in the adoption of this "Directive of Shame" by 367 votes in favour to 206 against and 109 abstentions. Social NGOs who work with and for migrants do not see progress for Europe in agreeing that migrants whose "crime" consists in coming to Europe to participate in our wealth and our richness can be imprisoned for a period of 5 to 18 months. Stigmatising the most vulnerable who are not strongly represented is certainly not the way to promote a Europe of solidarity as stipulated in the Lisbon Treaty. NGOs from the social and humanitarian sectors are questioning themselves on how much good it does to participate in hearings and consultations if the result is this directive of mistrust.

Citizens' Agora on Climate Change

Participants in the second Citizens' Agora, held in the European Parliament (EP) on 12-13 June, agreed on the need to put in place immediate actions to halt climate change and protect future generations. Around 500 civil society representatives gathered together with MEPs, EU decision makers and international experts in order to make recommendations such as the call for an EU commitment to cut CO2 emissions by 30% from their 1990 level by 2020. Some SOLIDAR members

actively participated in the event which saw Conny Reuter as co-chair of the "Solidarity" workshop and Tamara Flanagan (CSV) as co-rapporteur in the "Governance" workshop. In the final plenary session, the EP's Vice-President Gérard Onesta expressed the wish to "*make the Agora a new institutional tool of the European Union*" and to achieve a better involvement of civil society. [Read more about the workshops...](#)

Commission plans to propose a single anti-discrimination directive

The European Commission plans to publish a package of legislative and non-legislative measures around the EU Social Agenda which should be out on 2 July. One key document will refer to non-discrimination. On 16 June 2008, Commissioner Barrot, in charge of the portfolio for Freedom, Security and Justice, confirmed to the European Parliament in Strasbourg that the European Commission will propose a cross-cutting directive aimed at combating discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, religion/belief and sexual orientation in areas outside the field of employment. In a press release issued this Thursday, several civil society organisations and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) addressed a joint statement welcoming this decision. SOLIDAR is amongst the signatories.

[Read the statement](#)

[Statements of concern by other Social Platform members ahead of meeting of the European Commissioners](#)

CTUWS re-opened

On 19 June during a press conference, the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity announced that the decision issued by the Administrative Court of Cairo on 30 March 2008 which rejected the closure of the Egyptian Center for Trade Union and Worker Services (CTUWS) would be implemented immediately. This announcement implies that the CTUWS has been officially recognised by the Egyptian Government after many months of struggle by the CTUWS with support from the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and several local and international civil society organisations. SOLIDAR welcomes this decision and encourages its implementation as soon as possible.

[Read full statement](#)

Belgian Platform for Decent Work Decent Life discusses the challenges of globalisation

In preparation of the launch of the Belgian Decent Work Decent Life Campaign (7 October - the World Day for Decent Work), the Belgian coalition of NGOs will hold a one-day seminar to discuss the interactions between development cooperation, trade, Corporate Social Responsibility and respect of core labor standards. The seminar will take place on June 26 in Brussels.

For more information please contact tania.farkh@cncd.be

Sri Lanka Muttar massacre campaign

Following the execution of 17 Action contre la Faim (ACF) aid workers in 2006 in the midst of the ongoing civil war between the Sri Lankan Government forces and the Rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the perpetrators have not yet been brought to justice and the Sri Lankan justice system has made no progress in seeking the truth or identifying those responsible for this crime. ACF has therefore set up a petition to urge the French government, the European Union, the Sri Lankan government and the co-chairs of the Tokyo conference to set up an ad hoc international inquiry.

For [further information](#) and [to sign the petition](#)

Conny Reuter shaking hands with Commission President Barroso

SOLIDAR's contribution to the PES manifesto

[See SOLIDAR's contribution on YouTube](#)

3	SOLIDAR Social Affairs Committee meeting, Brussels
3-4	SOLIDAR New Orientation Framework (NOF) meeting - Madrid, Spain
12-13	European Parliament 2 nd Citizens Agora on Climate Change, Brussels
25	SOLIDAR France & SOLIDAR network: For a Social Europe-Pour une Europe Sociale, Maison de l'Europe, Paris
1	SOLIDAR Education Committee Meeting, Brussels
1	EUCIS-LLL Public hearing on Access to Lifelong Learning for Disabled Adults, Brussels
2	SOLIDAR Annual General Meeting
4-6	European Civic Forum - mobility, dialogue, participation: towards an active European citizenship", La Rochelle, France
10-11	SOLIDAR Final Jobs Jobs Jobs/Decent Work Conference, Brussels
19-21	SOLIDAR delegation at European Social Forum, Malmö, Sweden
22-23	SOLIDAR and SOLIDAR Baltic Conference on Decent Work, Riga
7	World Day For Decent Work - Call to Action handover, Brussels and International
15	SOLIDAR Silver Rose Awards 2008 and 60 Years Anniversary, Brussels
28-29	2 nd 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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