

WHAT WE WANT IS MORE EUROPE; WHAT WE NEED IS MORE SOCIAL EUROPE

This week we assisted in large-scale debates on how to protect national employment markets and how to find solutions for maintaining the financial systems and encouraging economic development.

In spite of the lack of security of provisions, actors involved on European and international level remain convinced that we need better consultation and a common European voice to face the crisis. We need to keep calling for a more social Europe, real social dialogue and to not give up on the objectives of poverty reduction and eradication. The adhesion of citizens to our democratic systems depends on whether the political leadership gives direction and creates policy solutions. [Read more of Conny's comment...](#)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

REPORT FROM THE SOLIDAR CONSORTIUM IN SRI LANKA

The humanitarian community in Sri Lanka is bracing itself for what may turn out to be the darkest moments of the Government's current military thrust to regain control of the remaining few dozen square meters of land. An area known as Puthukudyirippu, south of Mullaitivu town, has become the theatre of fierce fighting between government security forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The worst affected by the ongoing fighting is almost a quarter of a million displaced Tamil population caught between the devil and the deep blue sea; if they continue to live inside the 'safe zone', there is no guarantee they will be out of harm's way from shelling and possible aerial attacks on LTTE targets also located in their midst, if they leave the area against the wishes of LTTE, they will be shot at.

The SOLIDAR Consortium and other agencies have intensified their humanitarian contingency efforts in preparation for an unprecedented humanitarian response. The Vavuniya district has been identified as the main humanitarian hub where most civilians are expected to be temporarily relocated to. SOLIDAR's Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) assistance activities include the construction of emergency shelter and latrines, distribution of water, provision of Non Food Relief Items and promoting hygiene practices. [Read more..](#)

HEADS OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS & GERMAN GOVERNMENT RECOGNISE ROLE OF DECENT WORK IN ACHIEVING FAIRER ECONOMY

On the occasion of their meeting on 5 February 2009 in Berlin, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the heads of five international organisations, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the World Bank issued a [joint press release](#) affirming their will to improve cooperation to build a 'stronger, cleaner and fairer economy'.

In the same document, the ILO's 'Decent Work Agenda' has been recognised as a key element to achieve the goal of a fairer economy (point 1), as well as the importance for the international community to deliver on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the fight against poverty (point 5).

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

EUREOPAN YEAR OF VOLUNTEERING 2011 TO BE ANNOUNCED

Pending the official confirmation from the European Commission, the Alliance of 17 European NGOs, which includes Volonteurope and SOLIDAR, has received information from DG EAC that the Citizenship Unit at the Directorate has been instructed to prepare for the [European Year of Volunteering](#) to be held in 2011. Officials at the Commission are expected to make an official announcement in the next few weeks.

Tamara Flanagan, Board Member of SOLIDAR and Director of European and Statutory Funding at CSV (a SOLIDAR member which provides the Secretariat for Volonteurope), has said: *"We are delighted that citizens' voices are being heard in Brussels, that volunteer activity will be recognised.*

This could be the first time a European Year has been put in place at the suggestion of the third sector/civil society. "Read [background info](#) and the [Alliance's discussion paper](#)

SOLIDAR REPORT ON FLEXICURITY

SOLIDAR has launched a [Report on Flexicurity](#) following a seminar organised in October 2008, together with its Danish member - Fagligt Internationalt Center (FIC) - in Copenhagen. The Report contains a summary of the meeting as well as a policy briefing and SOLIDAR position on the topic. An interesting read for beginners or experts on the subject.

EDUCATION

MORE EMPHASIS NEEDED ON SOCIAL DIMENSION OF EDUCATION

The European Commission invited European stakeholders in education and training and the social partners to discuss immediate policy priorities and ways of improving working together in the long term at the Second Stakeholders' Forum which took place last Tuesday, 9 February. The exchange was based on the Commission's proposal for a strategic policy framework in education and training, presented last December, but also touched on the ongoing European Year of Creativity and Innovation.

Conny Reuter, SOLIDAR's Secretary General, present at the event through the Lifelong Learning Platform-EUCIS-LLL, commented that *"we strongly underlined the need to give more place to the social dimension of education, such as the integration and well being of individuals, which is currently the lacking element in the strategy proposed by the European Commission."*

MEMBERS NEWS

Read the latest funding update, meeting report from the Social Protection Working Group and the latest project applications that SOLIDAR is submitting... in the **Members Area**. Don't have a password? Contact [Abigail](#)

On the occasion of the International Day against the use of Child Solidiers, German member, **ASB**, released a [press release](#) demanding the repatriation of former child soldiers in Uganda

Read **Solidaridad Internacional's** [newsletter](#)

Read **ARCI's** [newsletter](#)

PARTNERS NEWS

European Trade Union Institute's (ETUI) Monthly Forum is on the topic of Assessing environment-friendly policies from a labour and social perspective on 26 February 2009 from 11.30-13.30. [For more info](#)

[Job opportunity with ILGA-Europe](#) - Communications Officer

18	Prep meeting - 8th Round Table on Poverty and Social Exclusion (DG Empl & Swedish Presidency), Brussels
12-13	Conference "Quality and Safety Policy for Patients", Prague
16-18	Conference: Social Rights, Active Citizenship and Governance in the EU, Brussels
19	EUCIS-LLL Annual General Assembly, Brussels
25-26	Conference: Flexicurity - Lifelong Learning and Social Protection Components, Prague
2	G20 meeting, London

2-3	Global Progressive Forum event, Brussels
14	Civil Society Day, Brussels
16-18	Conference: Social Economy, Prague
22-23	Conference: Social Services - a tool to Mobilise Workforce and Reinforce Social Cohesion, Prague

SOLIDAR is a European network of 50 NGOs and labour movement organisations. Working in cooperation with progressive civil society and trade unions, SOLIDAR promotes equality, solidarity and social justice in the fields of social affairs, international cooperation and education. SOLIDAR's Weekly Round Up provides you with the latest information and news from the SOLIDAR Network. 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](#)

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