

On 2-3 April, progressive forces will come together at the [Global Progressive Forum](#) event, taking place in the European Parliament in Brussels, to come up with alternative solutions to the crisis as well as a long-term strategy for a fresh approach to the current neo-liberal and conservative policies.

SOLIDAR fully supports this event which Conny Reuter, Secretary General, is contributing to. We invite all our members and other civil society organisations to take part in the making of this agenda for a New Global Deal!

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

DECENT WORK FOR WOMEN IN THIS TIME OF CRISIS

In the run up to this year's annual International Women's Day, the ILO issued yesterday the [Global Employment Trends for Women](#). The report indicates that of the 3 billion people employed around the world in 2008, 1.2 billion were women (40.4 per cent). It says that the gender impact of the economic crisis in terms of unemployment rates is expected to be more detrimental for females than for males in most regions of the world and most clearly in Latin America and the Caribbean. It also stresses that access to full and productive employment and decent work is crucial for all, and decent work deficits are the primary cause of poverty and social instability.

The right of workers to organise and to join a union is a fundamental step to achieve decent working conditions. To celebrate all the women fighting for social justice and Decent Work, SOLIDAR Global Network Partner PLADES has made a [video](#) (in Spanish) telling the story of three women employed in the garment sector who have put their jobs at stake to refuse exploitation.

ITALIAN DELEGATION REPORT FROM PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

An Italian delegation made up of NGOs, Local Authorities and the Peace Network (Tavola Pace), did not receive permission to enter the Gaza Strip after waiting for three days at the Erez check point and despite the involvement and pressure of the Italian Consulate and Embassy in Tel Aviv.

All humanitarian agencies are declaring problems in implementing their mandates; a psychological war is still going on and the people in Gaza are still under siege. Only a few trucks - an average of one hundred a day, one fifth of what is needed - have entered over the last month, declared a UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Officer. He continued by saying that only a very restricted list of goods are allowed to enter, and that the depot area is still full of aid.

The priority now is to put political pressure on the Israeli Authorities to respect and protect the right of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza. It is not enough to pledge funds for reconstruction if the conditions for construction and assistance are not available! [Read more.](#)

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

SOLIDAR INVOLVED IN PREPARATION OF EY2010 COMBATING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

In a meeting with members of the Social Platform and EAPN, a document prepared by the EY NGO Steering Group, brought together by SOLIDAR, was used as a starting point for discussions on the political messages and political outcomes of the Year. With still much work to be done, common ground was found around some key concepts: fundamental rights; participation, dignity and empowerment; democracy; extreme poverty; and distribution of wealth and solidarity.

SOLIDAR also participated in the first meeting of the EU Stakeholders Expert Group, organised by the European Commission. The goal of this meeting was to exchange on the state of play of preparations for the EY2010. The Commission presented their objectives and main activities for the EY, as well as informing stakeholders that some activities suggested by the NGO Steering Group had been taken on board, for example, two European focus weeks and a Journalist Award.

TRADE UNIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY JOINING FORCES TO COMBAT POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF ELDERLY PEOPLE

At the World Social Forum 2009, SOLIDAR's Secretary General, Conny Reuter, contributed to a workshop on the elderly today and in the future, co-organised by SOLIDAR Italian member Auser. This workshop resulted in a statement (in [EN/FR/IT/PT/ES](#)) signed by SOLIDAR and other members which proposes the establishment of a broad network of unions of workers and pensioners and civil society organisations to contribute to the implementation of a strategy to combat poverty and the social exclusion of elderly people, nationally and internationally.

Conny Reuter stated that "*making sure that elderly people are not left to wallow in poverty and implementing strategies to keep them included in society, like SOLIDAR Silver Rose Award winner filo d'argento - an Italian helpline set up for the elderly, offering support, conversation, and acting as a watchdog against abuse - are crucial, and we, as civil society organisations, can actively contribute to the set up of more innovative services bringing together different stakeholders.*" [Read more...](#)

EDUCATION

GRUNDTVIG AWARDS 2009 LAUNCHED

The European Associate for the Education of Adults has launched the call for proposals for the Grundtvig Awards 2009. They are looking for excellent adult education and learning projects with the topic 'Creative and innovative ways to overcome barriers to learning'. [Learn more](#)

EUCIS-LLL AGA

EUCIS-LLL, the platform for lifelong learning will be hosting its Annual General Assembly on 19 March in Brussels. If you are interested in attending, please contact afrieth@laligue.fr

MEMBERS NEWS

This week in the **Members Area**: **!!!NEW** Weekly summary of the next week's topics in the European institutions **NEW!!!** Read the Meeting Report from CONCORD's Policy Forum and Policy Coherence for Development Workshop in Stockholm, information on IRIN - a humanitarian news service, as well as the latest funding update. If you don't have a password, contact [Abigail](#)

The **18th Volunteurope Conference**, taking place in Sarajevo, Bosnia i Herzegovina, 8-11 October 2009, has launched its Call for proposals for workshop presentations. The Conference's Secretariat is hosted by SOLIDAR's UK member, **CSV**. For more information, psadowski@csv.org.uk

Belgian member, **Pour la Solidarité**, is holding a [Midi de la solidarité](#) on 25 March on 'Elections européennes de 2009: quel rôle doit jouer la société civile organisée?'

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

Read Italian member, **Arci**'s [newsletter](#)

PARTNERS NEWS

While 20,000 workers in Israel lost their jobs in January 2009 alone, the government's Wisconsin Plan is planning to "reactivate" physically impaired long-term unemployed in the saturated labour market. Read **Sawt el-Amel**'s [report](#).

The **ITUC** has released a [video](#) on the occasion of International Women's Day

COFACE is seeking a full-time [Communication Officer](#)

12-13	Conference "Quality and Safety Policy for Patients", Prague
16-18	Conference: Social Rights, Active Citizenship and Governance in the EU, Brussels
17-18	SOLIDAR Board meeting

19	EUCIS-LLL Annual General Assembly, Brussels
25-26	Conference: Flexicurity - Lifelong Learning and Social Protection Components, Prague
28	Global Day of Mobilisation for G20 Summit, London
1	Global Network Steering group meeting, Brussels
2	G20 meeting, London
2-3	Global Progressive Forum event, Brussels
14	Civil Society Day, Brussels
14	SOLIDAR Development and International Funding Workshop, Brussels
15	SOLIDAR West Africa Working group, Brussels
16-18	Conference: Social Economy, Prague
22-23	Conference: Social Services - a tool to Mobilise Workforce and Reinforce Social Cohesion, Prague
29	SOLIDAR-FEPS conference: 'Together for a Social Europe'

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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