

Every day in the media we see more news about Sri Lanka, where the government pretends to have won a final victory against the Tamil Tigers.

SOLIDAR members are still active in Sri Lanka although their staff have undergone severe problems and strong pressure from both sides. For more than a year, humanitarian aid projects and demining have been made impossible in the North of the country, a way of getting rid of NGOs testimonies of what is really going on there. And now the Internally Displaced Persons have been taken as hostages and prisoners.

Sri Lanka does not need a pretense of victory, but a project for the future with the government being held accountable for the human rights abuses going on, and NGOs being given access to all areas of the country and able to work under secure conditions to provide help to the people in need.

As an important sign of solidarity with the Sri Lankan people, the next SOLIDAR Annual General Assembly will vote on a motion on Sri Lanka; to help and aid a population in need.

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

EU ELECTIONS

In the run-up to the EU elections taking place on 4-7 June throughout Europe, SOLIDAR has identified the main issues of importance for us in these elections. This week, we are highlighting three issues: [More and better aid](#); [Eradicate poverty and social exclusion](#); and [Making trade work for development](#). For [the full list](#).

And to remind decision makers that people must come first, 350,000 people took to the streets last week in Madrid, Brussels, Berlin and Prague calling for a New Social Deal! These EU elections are an opportunity for European citizens to vote for politicians who want a more social Europe, who will give more and better aid, and who will guarantee decent work for people in Europe and worldwide. Read [ETUC media release](#) & SOLIDAR member [AWO media release](#) about marches.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

TOGETHER FOR SOCIAL EUROPE: NATIONAL SEMINARS

This week SOLIDAR members Arbeiterwohlfaht and Czech Council for Foreign Relations organised national events in the framework of the "Together for Social Europe" campaign. SOLIDAR participated in a meeting with Arbeiterwohlfaht regional representatives working in the field of in-patient and out-patient services and institutions for persons with disabilities in Berlin. SOLIDAR focused on the ongoing debate and policy process around a voluntary quality framework for personal social services at European level. Participants of the seminar were critical about defining quality standards at European level, however supported the idea of developing common quality principles and a methodology to promote quality management and assurance systems.

On Wednesday SOLIDAR then participated in a seminar on migration and integration organised by the Centre on Multiculturalism in Mladá Boleslav, Czech Republic, in close collaboration with SOLIDAR member Rada Pro Mezinárodní Vztahy and bringing together stakeholders, local decision-makers and representatives of the central government. The purpose of this meeting was to present and discuss results of a study on the situation of migrant workers in the Czech Republic, mainly looking at their working conditions and challenges regarding their integration and access to services at a local level. [Read more](#). See [full list of national seminars](#).

SOCIAL ECONOMY UPDATES

The European Parliament's Intergroup on Social Economy have launched their memorandum for the EU elections, stating that for the Social Economy to bring a valuable contribution to European integration, it is essential that the Social Economy Intergroup of the European Parliament is renewed, and its mandate widened to include the services of general interest. [Read the memo](#) (available in EN, FR, DE, ES, IT).

Other updates: Social economy Europe has also issued its memorandum for the elections in [EN](#) | [FR](#) | [DE](#); and SOLIDAR member Pour la Solidarité held a conference on Social economy and energy, [read the report](#).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

EU MUST ENSURE THAT THE TRICKLE TURNS INTO A STEADY FLOW - SOLIDAR RESPONDS TO GAERC CONCLUSIONS

Following the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) meeting on supporting developing countries in coping with the crisis which took place in Brussels on Monday and Tuesday of this week, SOLIDAR has issued its [comments on the conclusions](#).

PES development ministers meeting on the margins of this week's council meeting have also issued a [statement](#) saying no to bailing out of commitments and yes to global responsibility.

IS DIALOGUE NO MORE THAN LIP-SERVICE?

Next week, the European Commission's trade department is holding a seminar under its Civil Society Dialogue process, supposedly intended to engage civil society in European trade policy. Yet a glance at the trade department's current 'To Do' list shows that the concerns raised by civil society during a decade of

'dialogue' are not being listened to. Read the [full letter](#) by SOLIDAR and Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) published in this week's European Voice.

CEO have also filed a [complaint to the European Ombudsman](#) in part following a DG Trade memo recently [leaked to the EU Observer](#).

EDUCATION

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Council's [conclusions on the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training](#) (ET 2020) were adopted this week. This framework will guide EUCIS-LLL's work until 2020; and is an important document for everyone working in the field of European cooperation in education and training.

MEMBERS NEWS

Read the latest updates on the [SOLIDAR members area](#)...Don't have a password, contact [Abigail](#)

SOLIDAR Belgian member **Solidarité Socialiste** have issued a [press release](#) calling on Carrefour and Ikea to respect freedom of association. Also, read their [newsletter](#)

PARTNERS NEWS

SOLIDAR partner in Pakistan, Labour Education Foundation and its sister organisations have set up **Labour Relief Campaign** (LRC) to support Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs) due to the military action in SWAT in northern Pakistan and to fight the religious extremism in Pakistan. [Read how you can support them....](#)

Read **European Women's Lobby's** [press release](#) on most Political Parties Lagging Behind in the Road towards Gender Equality in the European Elections 2009.

Read **Sawt el-Amel/The Labourer's voice's** [report](#) on an Israeli company telling Tel Aviv labour court that compensation claims of enemy workers from Gaza must not be heard in court.

View **Kavlaoved's** [film](#) about Palestinian workers conditions at the Israeli settlements at West Bank.

9-18	CONCORD elections campaign: 10 days for development, Brussels and around Europe
26	SOLIDAR Annual General Assembly, Brussels
27	SOLIDAR International Cooperation Committee meeting, Brussels
1-3	United Nations High-level conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, New York
3-19	International Labour Conference, Geneva
4-7	European Parliament elections, throughout EU
9	SOLIDAR Social Affairs Committee meeting, Brussels
17	Spring Alliance (EEB, ETUC, Social Platform): Consensus Conference for a Spring Alliance Manifesto, Brussels
22-23	Global Network Europe, Bucharest