

SOLIDAR AGA 2009

The 2009 General Assembly of SOLIDAR paid tribute to the bravery and commitment of the SOLIDAR volunteers serving in Sri Lanka in a [statement](#) (read more below) and adopted a Declaration on [Together for Social Europe](#) and [5 Years of EU enlargement and 20 Years after the fall of the Berlin Wall](#).

The Assembly, which took place on Tuesday 26 May in Brussels, also elected a new Board. Josef Weidenholzer was re-elected as President of SOLIDAR and 2 new Board members were elected to the Board: Maria Jesus Herrera from MPDL as Vice-President and Sergio Bassoli from Progetto Sviluppo (see [full list of Board members](#)). Angeles Yanez-Barneuvo, former Vice-President was thanked for her support and work for the SOLIDAR network over the years. 6 new member organisations also joined the SOLIDAR network. Full members: [ARCI](#), Italy; [SASK](#), Finland; [Auser](#), Italy; [AWO International](#), Germany. Affiliate members: [FEPS](#), Europe; [Samaritan International](#), International.

We were all very impressed by the support and unity shown by the General Assembly. As well as the fact that despite this crisis, the SOLIDAR network is still growing with a number of important membership-based organisations joining the network this week. This new Board will face numerous challenges in the upcoming three years, notably how to maintain the growth and effectiveness of the network as well as developing a new strategy taking SOLIDAR into a new decade with progressive solutions to face the crisis and the social challenges in Europe and worldwide.

Together, we are a force for change!

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: [Migration and integration](#), [Education for all](#), [Climate justice](#). For [the full list](#).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

STATEMENT ON SRI LANKA

This week's General Assembly passed a vote of thanks to all the SOLIDAR volunteers who have been working under dangerous and difficult circumstances to bring much needed humanitarian relief to the thousands of IDPs who have been displaced in the last weeks of the conflict. The Assembly also heard of Swiss Labour Assistance plans to stay on in the country, further strengthening the SOLIDAR consortium presence. Read the [Statement](#).

UN CONFERENCE POSTPONED, NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE ON REFORM OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

The UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development was this week postponed to the 24-26 June with the official reason being to give more time to ensure a negotiated and consensus document. This conference is a direct result of pressure put on governments at last year's Financing for Development Conference to ensure that the UN had a strong role to play in determining how the crisis was dealt with.

This provides an opportunity for more intense advocacy in the lead up to the conference to ensure that the voices of developing countries are listened to in the debate on the reform of the global economic system. It also means that European Union Heads of State, who were unable to attend due to the June 7 round of elections will now come under pressure to do so. [Read more](#).

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

8th MEETING OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY

"There are widows and widowers earning less than 400 Euros a month", a Catalan pensioner underlined in a workshop during the 8th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty on 15-16 May in Brussels, part of the Czech EU Council Presidency programme. The purpose of these annual meetings is to listen to people experiencing poverty, and to establish a dialogue with policy and decision makers at European and national levels. They also aim to stimulate activities and initiatives which include marginal groups into the process of seeking solutions and building strategies and policies to improve their lives.

This year's meeting was entitled 'Where we live. What we need'. Bringing together people who have been or are experiencing poverty and exclusion with representatives of social NGOs, European institutions and governments or public administrations at different levels, the themes "housing", "financial inclusion/access to a bank account" and "basic services" were dealt with during the workshops. SOLIDAR attended the meeting

and participated in the workshops learning from the experiences of delegates and contributing to the recommendations proposed to fight poverty and exclusion. A representative of the Irish travellers and a representative of the Spanish Roma agreed on demanding that their groups "must enjoy the same rights as any other citizen".

EDUCATION

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EUROPEAN EDUCATION SYSTEMS STEMMING FROM MIGRATION

An own-initiative [report](#) of the European Parliament unanimously voted in at the beginning of March in the Committee on Culture and Education calls for the equal access to education of the children of migrants who come to live in Europe and for their non-segregation from other children in the education systems, by reminding citizens of the obligation of learning the language of the country of residence from pre-school age.

The earlier and the more successfully migrant children and young people are integrated into schools, the better they will do at school, in further education, and in the labour market, with early pre-primary education considerably reinforcing such prospects. The report highlights the need for special training for teachers which explicitly deals with the situation of children of migrants to support the successful integration of children with a migratory background into mainstream schools. The high level of early school leaving of migrant children is mentioned, however, without listing proposals of how to address it. [Read more.](#)

MEMBERS NEWS

Register for the Social Affairs Committee on 9 June, Middle East Working Group and Western Balkans Working Group on 3 July on the **Members Area**. Don't have a password? Contact [Abigail](#).

Poor children are sicker and more obese - SOLIDAR member **AWO** [demands](#) that there is a minimum level of care and education for children.

The [leitmotiv](#) of **Legacoopbund**'s General Assembly was the desire to react to the crisis and to develop cooperative's projects.

PARTNERS NEWS

SOLIDAR Egyptian partner **CTUWS** announced that Mamdouh Faza'e, a postal worker from Ismailiya Governorate, who was arrested by state security on charges of inciting a strike threatening the national economy and presented to the court last Monday, is released now. Also, read [Egyptian postal workers Struggling Alone](#).

Simone Süsskind and Fadila Laanan invite you to meet with women from different cultures and generations: 29 May at 18h30 at the Ryad, 80a Rue Brogneux, 1070 Brussels.

Age International: Decent Work for Elderly People Roundtable, Prague, 25 June

A recently released HelpAge International Study on older workers in Bangladesh, Peru and Uganda will be discussed at the Roundtable Decent Work for All - a side event at the Civil Society Organisations' Development Effectiveness conference in Prague organised by the Czech NGDO platform FoRS under the EU Czech Presidency. Location: Zivot 90, Karolíny Sv. 18, Praha 1 - Please RSVP by Friday 19th June to Kamala Truelove: +32 2 280 0771/euoffice@helpage.org

JOBS

SOLIDAR member **SAH** are looking for a [country representative for Sri Lanka](#).

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| 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 |
| 24-26 | United Nations High-level conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, New York |
| 3 | SOLIDAR Middle East Working Group, Brussels |
| 3 | SOLIDAR Western Balkans Working Group, Brussels |

SOLIDAR is a European network of 53 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](#)