

With the preparations of the Commissioners hearings by the political groups in the EP and the interesting moves taking place in the Commissioners cabinets, for SOLIDAR, it is essential to speak about the need for a more social Europe and social inclusion to give us some idea about the real intentions of the European Commission for the next 5 years. SOLIDAR has not only prepared [16 recommendations for Decent Work and Quality Jobs in Europe by 2020](#), but we have also prepared [questions for the Commissioners](#) working on our core topics.

Yesterday, 10 December was the International Day for Human Rights. SOLIDAR has been a vocal [supporter](#) of Aminatou Haidar and is pleased that the [EU Presidency](#) and the [PES](#) have taken up the issue by disseminating statements echoing our call to urge the Moroccan authorities to fulfil their human rights expectations and cooperate with the Spanish authorities. Together, we are a force for change!

See SOLIDAR in the news this week: [ALDE seminar on the social provisions of the treaty | PES Congress | EPC's new newsletter](#)

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

## NPA CELEBRATES 70th ANNIVERSARY

President of SOLIDAR, Josef Weidenholzer, present at the 70th Anniversary celebrations of SOLIDAR member, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), commented that "NPA is one of the pillar members of SOLIDAR; a founding member who has and will continue to have a substantial impact on SOLIDAR's activities and development. The professional skills of this value-driven organisation have been a benchmark for the SOLIDAR family since SOLIDAR was founded and will continue to be so for the next 70 years!"

See the [milestones in NPA's history](#).

## SOCIAL AFFAIRS

### CROSS-BORDER HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVE PUT ON HOLD

At the end of April, the EP voted on a [proposal for a directive](#) on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, excluding services in the field of long-term care, after fierce disputes concerning the appropriate legal basis, concepts used and a number of concrete stipulations. But in the EPSCO Council on 1 December, conflicting positions concerning the reimbursement of costs of cross-border health care for pensioners permanently residing outside their country of affiliation and for providers not contracted to the mandatory health care funds could not be reconciled. It is now up to the Spanish and Belgian EU Council Presidencies to continue negotiations in view of a compromise.

SOLIDAR had welcomed the strengthening of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, however also warned against stipulations most likely creating or not reducing inequalities in access to these services (see [full position](#)), as also done by the European Public Service Union (EPSU) (see [position](#)).

## TOGETHER FOR SOCIAL EUROPE: NATIONAL SEMINARS

Last week, national events in the framework of the [Together for Social Europe campaign](#), took place in Paris and Amsterdam. In Paris, La Ligue and UNALG organised a seminar on improved inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in society. And in The Netherlands, Humanitas organised an [event on working poor](#). More information on the [national seminars](#).

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

### PRESSURE ON EU BUILDS TO SUSPEND TALKS OVER FTREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH

## COLOMBIA

The European Union is coming under increasing pressure to stop negotiations with the Columbia for a Free Trade Agreement given the impunity of the Columbian government shown in the face of murders of trade unionists and indigenous activists, as well as its general disregard for human rights. Similar deals with the US, Canada and EFTA countries have all been delayed due to human rights concerns. SOLIDAR wrote to the EU Trade Commissioner earlier this year demanding that Columbia be suspended from the EU's trade preferences regime GSP+ and that the talks over an FTA be suspended until the government showed its willingness to address the situation. [Read more...](#)

## WTO DOHA ROUND OF TALKS NOT MUCH CLOSER TO CONCLUSION

The World Trade Organisation held its 7th Ministerial from the 30-2 December in Geneva. SOLIDAR Secretariat, members as well as our partners from the Global Network and allies from the ITUC participated in a range of side and lobbying events during the 3 days, as well as following the debates and discussions during the conference itself. SOLIDAR was also a part of the EU Civil Society Advisors' Team and as such took part in European Commission debriefings on a daily basis. [Read more...](#)

## MEMBERS NEWS

### FAIR FLOWERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

SOLIDAR member Volkshilfe Austria, FIAN Austria and other partners have been carrying out urgent actions as part of the campaign: [Fair Flowers for Human Rights](#) to raise awareness of the working conditions in two flower farms in Colombia. The 400 workers in these farms had not received social benefits for years and were not receiving regular salary payments, so they went on strike, backed by the independent Colombian trade union [Untraflores](#). The flower farms refused to pay out compensation and pressured workers to quit, amongst which many single mothers, using the financial crisis as the excuse.

FIAN then launched an urgent action urging the Colombian government to act against the violation of human rights. The workers are now filing individual lawsuits to receive compensation, supported by Untraflores, and will continue the struggle for justice - already one of the claims has been successful. The campaign will continue with a series of actions at the beginning of 2010, including one in the European Parliament in Brussels. [Read the full story...](#)

Why do young people from immigrant backgrounds rarely find an apprenticeship? Two SOLIDAR members, **AWO & ISS** conducted a [study](#) + **AWO** analyses trends in child poverty and risky integration, school drop outs and precarity in "[The future of social work in Germany](#)"

Read **OGB-L**'s [newsletter](#)

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

## PARTNERS NEWS

In the weeks before Christmas, Triumph International keeps its doors shut for **representatives of Thai and Philippine unions** that are fighting against mass-dismissals at three Triumph subsidiaries. The unions have come to Europe to put pressure on Triumph International to stop their global restructuring plan at the cost of union jobs. [Read more....](#)

The **International Domestic Workers' Network** celebrated "[Mobilizing Day for Domestic Workers](#)" on Human Rights Day. As part of our international campaign for the ILO Convention on Domestic Worker, various activities are taking place around the world.

**CTUWS news:** Security Forces Hold Back Spinning and Textile Workers' Strike in El Mahala

## AGENDA

12	SOLIDAR Round Table: social/active inclusion and decent work in Europe,
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	Brussels
3	SOLIDAR Social Affairs Committee, Brussels
9-10	Global Network Europe Seminar, Belgrade

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](#)

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