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Whilst the world is focused on Japan, it will be one year ago this week when the international community sat together in New York to discuss the reconstruction of Haiti after the earthquake disaster that killed hundreds of thousands of people and caused terrible damage to one of the world's most vulnerable country. As disappointment and despair mount among the population, as tent cities housing more than one million quake victims have become semi-permanent sites of desolation, as the cholera epidemic makes more victims every day, Haiti still faces enormous political and economical challenges to tackle its reconstruction process.

The Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission has not lived up to the challenges of improving donor coordination, building state capacity and implementing aid resources. Haitian civil society organisations do not have a vote in the Commission and are angry that they are not being consulted about reconstruction projects that may directly affect the lives of their constituencies. The reconstruction process is being undermined by an increasing lack of legitimacy affecting both the national authorities and the international donor community.

Haiti urgently needs a legitimate public authority, accountable to people's needs and priorities for reconstruction and longer term development. The international donor community must focus on establishing a more effective and inclusive governance framework for a truly Haitian-owned project of reconstruction and development. Haiti's reconstruction process does not only need strong infrastructures and legitimate institutions, but the creation of a collective system of values based on justice, solidarity and equity for all its citizens.

Civil society has a crucial role to play in this and SOLIDAR members in Haiti are working hard to support their partners in their work and build capacity on the field.

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

## SOCIAL AFFAIRS

### **SOCIAL INNOVATION EUROPE INITIATIVE LAUNCHED!**

In mid-March, the European Commission launched its **Social Innovation Europe initiative** which aims to provide expertise and a virtual networking hub for social entrepreneurs, the public and third sectors and non-profit organisations. The initiative will help build up two resource banks containing information about other projects, organisations, policies at local and national levels, and funding opportunities. It will also help generate concrete recommendations in financing and in up-scaling/mainstreaming of social innovation in Europe.

SOLIDAR emphasises the importance of social innovation to improve access to public social services that are affordable and of high quality, to guarantee social inclusion and to promote decent work. SOLIDAR invites its members working in the area to contribute with their experiences to the two resource banks which will be fully operational at the beginning of May.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

### **HUMANITARIAN COOPERATION NETWORK MEETING IN HAITI**

SOLIDAR members working in Haiti, together with their Haitian partner organisations, held their third Humanitarian Cooperation Network seminar last week in Jacmel, Haiti. During the three-day meeting partners exchanged experiences and discussed the progress made in the year following the earthquake disaster and future cooperation prospects in the country. [Read more](#)

## EDUCATION

### PROMOTING A EUROPEAN PASSPORT FOR SKILLS, COMPETENCES AND KNOWLEDGE

SOLIDAR last week launched a [briefing paper](#) calling for the recognition and validation of skills, competences and knowledge acquired through non-formal and informal learning as part of the strategy to bridge education 'gaps'. To do this, SOLIDAR puts forward that new legal structures and policy frameworks have to be developed by the European Commission which take into consideration both 'soft' and 'hard' skills. [Read more](#)

## MIGRATION

### RADIO PROGRAMME: FOCUS ON MIGRANT WOMEN AND MIGRATION

SOLIDAR invites you to listen to the March edition of the [radio programme](#) made within the project "Decent Work for All! - Making Migration Work for Development" in cooperation with Progetto Sviluppo and radio Articolo1. On the occasion of 100th International Women's Day, this month's programme focuses on migrant women. Sheena McLoughin, European Policy Center, and Laura Fallavollita, ETUC, also speak about the poor working and living conditions of undocumented workers in Europe.

## EUROPEANS FOR FINANCIAL REFORM

### FLEEING FINANCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS IS "LARGELY A MYTH", SAYS STEPHAN SCHULMEISTER

Ahead of this week's [Brussels Tax Forum](#) focusing on the Financial Transaction Tax, the Europeans for Financial Reforms (EFFR) coalition - of which SOLIDAR is an active member - organised a [press conference](#) with Stephan Schulmeister (co-author of the ground-breaking study on Financial Transactions Tax published three years ago) and members of the Belgian and the European Parliament. Mr Schulmeister explained that the idea of financial service providers leaving a region which introduces such a tax is 'largely a myth', since it is the time-zone which is central to the location of any financial centre.

This will be an important argument to bear in mind with the Commission's ongoing [consultation](#) on Taxation of the Financial Sector and the strong voices of the financial services sector.

## MEMBERS' NEWS

Read the [letter](#) by the members of the **European Alliance for the Statute of the European Association** addressed to Commissioner Barroso, Commissioner Barnier and the European Parliament President Buzek calling for a clear response to the European Parliament declaration on establishing European statutes for mutual societies, associations and foundations

See the [exhibition](#) of Haitian art in Madrid organised by **Solidaridad Internacional** to support Haiti

Read special edition of [bulletin](#) by **Assamblea de Cooperacion por la Paz** on North African revolutions: this month featuring Tunis!

Read **AWO's** latest [news](#) on volunteering campaign

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

## PARTNERS' NEWS

Do not miss the launch of **Sphere's Handbook** on Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response at Caritas Europa premises in Brussels on 14 April. To register contact Godelive Kankindi no later than 8 April on [gkankindi@caritas-europa.org](mailto:gkankindi@caritas-europa.org)

[Read](#) the latest developments concerning laws to strike in Egypt from **CTUWS**

[Read](#) **WAC's** article on the social workers' strike in Israel

See **International Federation of Workers' Education Associations** April [Bulletin](#)

**ATD Quart Monde** re-launches its [newsletter](#) on fight against poverty and social exclusion

ITUC's latest **report** on forced labour in Europe released!

**Register** for the upcoming **CEV Symposium**: " The future of volunteering: concepts, trends, visions", organised on 4- 6 May 2011 in Tallinn (Estonia)

13-14 Migration and Development coordination meeting

14 SOLIDAR Communication Officers meeting

20 Round table on Social protection

19-20 Conference on Decent Work Agenda and informal economy (Belgrade)

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*SOLIDAR is a European network of 52 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 Communications Officer](#)*

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