

**Van:** SOLIDAR <margot.vingerhoedt@solidar.org>  
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**Aan:** Veerle Solia  
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Advancing social justice in Europe and worldwide

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## **SOLIDAR Weekly Round Up 01-03-2013**

**Editorial: Stéphane Hessel au Panthéon!**

Conny Reuter, Secretary General

Stéphan Hessel, a giant of the last century, passed away on Wednesday. The world has lost a leading activist who embodied all the values we share: freedom, democracy, solidarity and social justice. At every step of his life he upheld these values; at every stage of his Franco-German life as a migrant, a deportee, a diplomat or the voice of our moral conscience in the age of globalisation. I was fortunate to both meet and work with him during my time at the Franco-German Youth office. He inspired in me what he always inspired in others: respect!

Over the last 30 years, despite his already advanced years, he continued to actively support many causes, such as when he stood with the undocumented migrants of the Saint-Bernard church in Paris when the government of Jacques Chirac sent the police to attack this church. And in 2010 he published "Indinez-vous", a rallying cry which triggered a huge mobilisation of the young generation who see their future and their integration in society in jeopardy.

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#### **World Social Forum 2013 in Tunis: Social Justice in the Middle East and North Africa**

From 26 March SOLIDAR will be attending the World Social Forum (WSF 2013) with one message "Social justice in the Middle East and North Africa". This edition of the Forum will be important for its support of the Arab Spring of 2011 and its contribution to further transition towards democratic and peaceful societies in the region and the rest of the world. SOLIDAR together with the Global Progressive Forum (GPF) and partners, will organise four working groups on Progressive Forces Mobilising for Social Justice, Democratic Transition: Human Rights, Citizenship and Inclusive Governance, Youth Unemployment: A Global challenge and Another Trade is Possible. In addition SOLIDAR members will be participating in and organising activities during the five days of the Forum. We count on you to join us, so please [let us know](#) if you are attending the forum.

#### **Threat of legal action against the SOLIDAR Suisse food speculation campaign**

The campaign against food speculation that SOLIDAR Suisse launched at the beginning of February received unexpected attention this week. Last Friday, the video accompanying the petition had to be removed from the internet after a threat of legal action from a major Italian automobile manufacturer. Although the car plays a secondary role in the video, the company states it does not want to be associated with "such ruthless capitalistic evil which speculates upon the poor in order to accumulate always more and more wealth for itself, and exploits the poor and the Third World Countries for producing senseless luxury for the rich." The video is still on line in a slightly modified version.

Given the importance of the banking sector in Switzerland and the fact that Swiss banks have not shown the same scruples regarding food speculation, the campaign remains highly relevant.

Watch the [video](#) and sign and spread the [petition](#)!

#### **Social Affairs**

## Poverty and Inequality in Societies of Human Rights

Last week, SOLIDAR participated in a conference on “[Poverty and Inequality in Societies of Human Rights](#)” that was organised by the Council of Europe and the European Commission in Strasbourg. The conference was the culmination of two years of reflection conducted in the framework of the project “Human Rights of People Experiencing Poverty”. SOLIDAR [highlighted](#) that to be effective, the fight against poverty, social exclusion and inequalities in Europe cannot be limited to targeted and conditionalised benefits and activation measures. Real investment in people is needed instead of cutting social budgets and retrenching social security both of which undermine the basis of social inclusion, solidarity and democracy.

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## SOLIDAR welcomes the adoption of a European-wide Youth Guarantee

Yesterday 28 February the EU Social Ministers Council agreed to adopt a [European-wide Youth Guarantee](#). This important breakthrough is the result of year of intense campaigning from the European Youth Forum, the Party of European Socialists (PES), PES Women and ECOSY with the support of Social Affairs Commissioner Laszlo Andor and many other MEPs at European level. The news comes almost at the same time as the adoption of a Youth Resolution from the UN Commission for Social Development.

Making a youth guarantee a reality in Europe is now a step closer, but this is not yet the end of the line. Now that the Social Ministers have adopted the Youth Guarantee, the will and means need to be assured to implement it over a sustained period, to make sure that a national youth guarantee is introduced in each Member State and to take concrete measures to support youth guarantee such as programmes to subsidise the creation of jobs for young people, strengthening education systems and building up training systems based on dual education.

Read the [PES article](#) and join the [campaign](#).

## Migration

### Fair mobility and equal pay for posted workers in Europe

SOLIDAR calls on the European Parliament to ensure fair mobility, equal pay and the promotion of labour and social rights in its report on the [enforcement directive on the posting of workers](#), that is workers on temporary assignments abroad. In particular, SOLIDAR shares the growing concern about proposals – notably by the parliamentary Internal Market Committee – that may only recognise a limited number of collective agreements as well as restricted inspections of fraudulent companies. In practice, this leads to social dumping and the worsening of conditions for a very vulnerable group of workers that represents 0.4% of the EU workforce, with Poland, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Belgium and Portugal representing major countries of origin. In the case of a temporary assignment abroad effective controls and sanctions have to ensure that collective agreements, labour and social rights at the workplace are respected. Posting companies have to register in a comprehensive way across Europe to avoid bogus posting and cross-border enforcement needs be facilitated.

[Read more...](#)

## International Cooperation

### European Commission proposal on post-2015 international cooperation framework

On Wednesday this week, the EU Commission published its Communication "[A decent life for all: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future](#)" which proposes a common EU approach on post-2015 to address sustainable poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The Communication proposes a change to the EU's global poverty efforts after 2015, by integrating environmental sustainability and poverty eradication efforts into a single agenda. Among other things, the Communication recognises that the new framework should cover, "in an integrated fashion, basic human development (based on updated existing MDGs and also reflecting issues such as social protection)".

In its first reaction to the Communication, CONCORD, the European Confederation of Relief and Development NGOs of which SOLIDAR is a member, stressed the importance of linking environmental and anti-poverty efforts together. Nevertheless, it also highlighted some weaknesses and namely the fact that the Commission (1) wants an agenda whose goals apply globally (which is welcome) but without explaining what changes the EU and richer countries would have to make to fulfil this agenda. (2) The Communication is light on accountability mechanisms to ensure leaders and countries fulfil their commitments.

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### The International Domestic Workers' Network wins the prestigious AFL-CIO Human Rights Award

The International Domestic Workers' Network ([IDWN](#)) has been awarded the 2013 AFL-CIO George Meany-Lane Kirkland Human Rights Award. The prize recognises outstanding examples of the international struggle for human rights through trade unions.

In its official statement, the AFL-CIO Executive Council stresses that In recognition of the groundbreaking efforts of domestic workers worldwide to organise for greater awareness of and respect for their work, their historic success in the adoption of the ILO Convention and their commitment to support, expand and build the global labor movement, the AFL-CIO is pleased to award the 2013 George Meany-Lane Kirkland Human Rights Award to the International Domestic Workers' Network.

Through the [Global Network](#), SOLIDAR has worked together with the IDWN in raising awareness and campaigning for Domestic Workers Rights.

## Education

### 5 March: Join the SOLIDAR lunch Round Table "Promoting work-based learning: Dual VET systems – European

## Experiences”

On 5 March from 12:30 until 15:00, SOLIDAR invites you to its lunch Round Table “[Promoting work-based learning: Dual VET systems – European Experiences](#)” gathering VET practitioners, stakeholders and representatives of European Institutions to exchange views on how to equip NEETs with skills matching labour market demands, through promoting work-based learning.

Join us in this important discussion!

## Evaluating the progress of Vocational Education and Training (VET) policy in Europe

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) has recently published “[Trends in VET policy in Europe 2010-12 – Progress towards the Bruges communiqué](#)” that gives an overview of how countries have progressed in setting up the qualification frameworks and in providing quality vocational education and training. There is a strong focus on current priority actions, such as enhancing access to education and training, and helping young people to remain in and continue education and training through work-based learning.

EU decision makers have put skills development and continuous VET at the core of the response to the challenges of today's market,, thus the concept of work-based learning could be promoted as an attractive opportunity to acquire needed skills and competences. Next week, SOLIDAR will host a [Round Table](#) to discuss the current European experience regarding the work-based vocational training module with VET practitioners, representatives of sectors and EU Institutions, and will address the issue of bridging the gap to the labour market and how to help the transition from learning to work.

## Network News

**Solidar Suisse** launched a new campaign on food speculation, watch the [video](#) and sign the [petition](#)

Belgian member **Pour la Solidarité** is organising a [conference](#)

German member **ASB** is now on [twitter](#)

Belgian member **FOS** invites you to the [kick-off of the new campaign](#) on Decent Work for Domestic Workers

Read [this week's report](#) from Italian member **ARCI**

Read the [weekly news update](#) from Italian member **AUSER**

Belgian member **Solidarité Socialiste** published the new [Croco](#)

## Partners News

The **ILO** invites you to the [Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy](#)

Read the latest **World Social Forum** [declaration](#)

The **Social Platform** has [news](#)

**ECI right2water** released a [press communication](#)

The **PES** launched a new [web section on Youth Employment](#)

## **Agenda**

05 March: SOLIDAR Round Table “[Promoting Work-Based Learning: Dual VET systems – European Experiences](#)”,  
Brussels

06 March: SOLIDAR FEPS FES Round Table “[Enlargement: how the candidate and potential candidate countries perceive accession in the light of the current crisis](#)”, Brussels

26-30 March: [World Social Forum](#), Tunis

SOLIDAR is a European network of 59 NGOs active in over 90 countries working to advance social justice in Europe and worldwide. SOLIDAR voices the concerns of its member organisations to the EU and international institutions across the policy sectors social affairs, international cooperation and lifelong learning. For more info [www.solidar.org](http://www.solidar.org)

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