

**Veerle Solia**

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**Van:** SOLIDAR <abigail.goundry@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 04-10-2013**

**Editorial by Conny Reuter, SOLIDAR Secretary General**

## Europe's Disgrace

"Vergona" said Pope Francis yesterday about the human tragedy off the Italian island of Lampedusa where over 100 women, children and men have died in their attempt to reach Europe. What is even more of a disgrace is that this type of tragedy could easily be prevented, and yet thousands of migrants have died making the journey to Europe's southern borders over the last 20 years.

This tragedy also highlights again the lack of solidarity between European Member States. The Island's Mayor felt left alone, left alone by the EU Member States who withdrew again behind the Dublin Agreement that stipulates that refugees and asylum seekers have to ask for asylum in the country where they arrive. And no, they generally do not arrive by boat via the North or Baltic Seas. [Read more...](#)

## Come and Meet our Extraordinary Silver Rose Winners 2013...

Join us in gathering to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of the 2013 SOLIDAR Silver Rose Award winners at this key civil society event in the European Parliament. This year's edition is going back to basics with a new-format conference style event which will put the winners centre-stage so that we can hear from them about the crucial topics that they are working on.

Come and meet:

- **Mamadú Sissé from the Islamic Community of Tapada das Mercês and Mem Martins**, a community association that works to integrate Islamic people coming mainly from Western Africa into the territory of Tapada das Mercês in Portugal.
- **Grainne O'Toole from Migrants Rights Centre Ireland and Mohammad Younis, Migrant Leader**, working for justice, empowerment and equality for migrants and their families in Ireland.
- **U Maung Maung from Federation of Trade Unions-Myanmar** for his essential role in the survival – and now growth – of the trade union movement in Myanmar.
- **Guatemalan Indigenous Ixil Communities represented by Center for Human Rights Legal Action**, a driving force in working for justice to be done and the truth to come out regarding the terrible abuses that the Guatemalan people faced during the internal armed conflict.
- **Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pick ett**, authors of "The Spirit Level" for championing equality in order to improve the quality of life for all.

Read more about the [awardees](#) and if you have not done so yet, [register your attendance](#) at this year's Silver Rose Awards ceremony taking place on 16 October from 6.30-8pm in the European Parliament's room ASP 3G3, followed by a reception.

## Social Affairs

### EMU: Binding Social Indicators Necessary to Promote Active Inclusion

On Wednesday (2 October), the European Commission launched the long-awaited Communication on the Social Dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). SOLIDAR acknowledges this initiative as a step towards finally

recognising the social dimension as a crucial aspect of the Economic and Monetary Union, even though the proposed social indicators are not binding. [Read more...](#)

### **Access to Public Healthcare Necessary for Active Inclusion**

SOLIDAR is supporting an [appeal for solidarity](#) launched by the Association of Cancer Patients and Relatives (EL.A-ZO) in the framework of the European Year of Citizens Alliance. Cyprus is the only country in the European Union that does not have a public radiotherapy centre, but only a medical oncology department owned by the Bank Oncology Centre. This situation of monopoly represents a real threat for the equal access to healthcare services for all, which is guaranteed in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. [Read more...](#)

### **Open Skies and Decent Work**

This week, Members of the European Parliament's (EP) transport committee rejected a European Commission proposal to tighten and standardise flight time limits for pilots across the European Union. MEPs rejected the adaptation of current rules on on-duty and rest times for pilots and cabin crew. SOLIDAR fully supports the EP in their rejection of the measure and sees this proposal from the Commission as a downwards social spiral that needs to be halted. [Read more...](#)

### **Electronic Mass Surveillance of EU Citizens**

With 12 Inquiry Meetings ([livestream and more information](#)), the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) aims to unveil hidden facts on the Electronic Mass Surveillance of EU Citizens. Experts, such as ex-Microsoft privacy adviser Caspar Bowden and whistleblower Thomas Drake, will testify on inconsistencies which could help clarify European Parliament allegations that the National Security Agency (NSA) is knowingly intercepting EU citizens' communications.

Josef Weidenholzer, Member of the European Parliament and the LIBE Committee as well as President of SOLIDAR, highlights the importance of these Inquiry Meetings: "The degree to which our lives are under surveillance is staggering. The work of the LIBE Committee is therefore really important as the European Parliament must find a path towards secure data protection to ensure its citizens' personal privacy." [Read more...](#)

## **International Cooperation**

### **100 Years of Social Pensions in Sweden: The Challenge to Ensure Social Protection for All**

On the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons (1 October), HelpAge International – members with SOLIDAR of the European Working Group on Decent Work and Social Protection in Development Cooperation and the Global Coalition for social protection floors - hosted a conference on [100 years of social pensions](#) in Sweden and the challenges that developing countries are faced with when beginning to build up a system of social protection. The event comes at a time when social protection is high on the global agenda for sustainable development and when there is growing recognition of the role that it can play in reducing poverty and inequality.

Despite this, only a small proportion of the world's population has access to a Social Protection Floor (SPF) and four out of

five older people have no access to a pension. Together with HelpAge International and other members of the European Working Group on Decent Work and Social Protection in Development Cooperation and the Global Coalition for social protection floors, we are demanding that the post-2015 development framework includes a specific objective on national social protection floors, including the four social security guarantees formulated in ILO Recommendation No.202.

## Lifelong Learning

### Register: SOLIDAR Round Table on Decent Work and Quality Employment for NEETs

On 15 October, SOLIDAR is organising a conference ([register](#)) in the European Parliament, hosted by Emer Costello MEP, which will look at how to promote decent work and quality jobs for young people who are not in employment, education and training (NEETs)? How to reach out to NEETs and equip them with skills, competences and knowledge needed in the labour market? And how to support their personal development and participation in society?

During this final conference of the “Decent work for European youth – active methods and best practices” project, young trade unionists will also present their testimonies on the labour market demands in Denmark, Ireland and Italy, and recommendations developed in the project will be shared with decision makers.

## Members News

### *Switzerland*

Sign **Solidar Suisse**'s [petition](#) to stop tax exemption and special laws for FIFA. Solidar Suisse has been carrying out a long-term campaign for decent working conditions for workers around the football World Cups.

See also **ETUC**'s [statement](#) No World Cup in Qatar without labour rights.

And **Euractiv**'s breaking [article](#) on Anti-slavery group calls for boycott of 2022 Qatar World Cup.

### *Italy*

Read **ISCOS**' [China news](#).

Read **Auser**'s [statement](#) on the International Day of Older Persons (1 October).

## Partners News

Read the **Social Platform**'s [media release](#) on "Social Scoreboard will not “heal the social scars” without generating action".

Global Network partners, **Escuela Nacional Sindical** in Colombia, have launched their documentary [photo competition](#) "Work and Days".

Read **HKCTU**'s [press release](#) on "Striking is not a crime! Free Wu Guijun and other Imprisoned Labour Activists NOW!"

and [see photos](#) of the protest.

Read the **Progressive Economy** [newsletter](#).

Honduran union leader Victor Crespo, general secretary of the **Sindicato Gremial de Trabajadores del Muelle** (SGTM), has been forced to flee Honduras for his own safety after months of intimidation. [Urge](#) the government of Honduras to provide police protection for Victor and ensure workers can exercise their legal right to collectively bargain.

Read **PICUM's** [new report](#) on "Local and regional authorities provide innovative solutions to ensure health care for undocumented migrants".

## Agenda

15 October: SOLIDAR Round Table: Decent Work and Quality Employment for NEETs, European Parliament (register now)

16 October: SOLIDAR Silver Rose Awards 2013, European Parliament (register now)

13-14 November: SOLIDAR International Cooperation Forum, Brussels

*SOLIDAR is a European network of 60 NGOs 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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