



Réseau Euro Méditerranéen de la Solidarité
Red Euro Mediterránea de la Solidaridad
Euro Mediterranean Network of Solidarity
للشبكة اليورو متوسطة التضامن

4th General Assembly, Istanbul 29th May – 2nd June 2011

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1. List of participants

Algeria	Nacima HAIDOURA, Association Algérienne d'Action Sociale
Egypt	Ashraf A. FATTAH Abid, Egypt's Daughter Association
Finland	Kirsti PALONEN, Finnish Psychologists for Social Responsibility
France	Audrey CHAMPSIAUX, Secours populaire français Ismaïl HASSOUNEH, Secours populaire français Julien LAUPRETRE, Secours populaire français Corinne MAKOWSKI, Secours populaire français Anthony MARQUE, Secours populaire français Charlène ROLEE, Secours populaire français Marine SAMSON, Secours populaire français Henriette STEINBERG, Secours populaire français
Great Britain	Marie-Charlotte MACAUD, Faith Matters
Greece	Nikoleta ATHANASSOPOULOU, Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity Marie LAVRENTIADOU, Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity
Iraq	Jamal ALJAWAHIRI, Iraqi Al-Amal Association
Italy	Gaetano D'OVIDIO, Un Ponte Per Emira SGHAIER, Ricerca & Cooperazione
Japan	Yukiko MAKI, Correspondent of SPF
Jordan	Natasha SHAWARIB, Sisterhood is Global Institute
Lebanon	Kassem AINA, National Institution for Social Care and Vocational Training Rami SHAMMA, Development for People and Nature Association
Libya	Amin SAID, Libyan Society for Social Solidarity Farah GEBLLAWI, Libyan Society for Social Solidarity
Luxembourg	Henriette STEINBERG, Fondation Aide Populaire d'Urgence
Morocco	Selma SKALLI, IKRAM
Palestine	Mohammad ABOUSHI, Palestinian Medical Relief Society
Spain	Jordi GARRELL, Associació Catalana per la Pau
Tunisia	Mezri SGHAIER, Union Tunisienne pour la Solidarité
Turkey	Abdurrahmane AYDIN, Association AKAD Servet DEMIR, Centre de Solidarité



2. Context

In this time of crises in the Mediterranean region and in North Africa, strengthening civil society in these countries has become a central element. Uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Algeria and Yemen affected the precarious living conditions of the most fragile people.

That is why the existence of our network is essential: gathering 22 members and partners, its vocation is to promote the development of South-South and North-South concerted actions. It aims to strengthen Euro Mediterranean solidarity among populations and to support community life in countries currently experiencing significant changes, where the life of the most vulnerable must be protected.



Our Network met for its 4th General Assembly, the first one having taken place in Corsica in 1998, the second one in Cairo in 2003 and the third one in Paris in 2005. When the Network was created, its members agreed to meet alternately in a Northern country and in a Southern country.

From 29th May to 2nd June 2011, the Network positively responded to the invitation of its Turkish member AKAD and gathered its members in Istanbul, crossroads of civilizations, a window looking at the Mediterranean, a bridge between Europe and Asia.

3. Opening ceremony of the General Assembly



The Network is hosted in a prestigious room of the Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, on the shores of the Bosphorus.

Servet DEMIR thanks the members of the Network for their presence, as well as the Rector of the University and the French Consul General for their support in the organisation of this General Assembly. He also thanks Julien LAUPRÊTRE and Dr. Ismaïl HASSOUNEH,

respectively President of the Secours populaire français and President of the Euro Mediterranean Network of Solidarity.

The Rector of the University, Professor Yalçın KARAYAĞIZ, welcomes the members of the Network and is delighted with the choice of Istanbul for this meeting. He is convinced of the important role played by the Network and each association in the Euro Mediterranean solidarity.

The French Consul General, Mr Hervé Magro, thanks the Network for choosing Istanbul and reminds the role of the civil society in the development of international solidarity. Mr Magro also refers to the Barcelona process launched in 1995 by the European Union and ten other states bordering the Mediterranean. The Euro Mediterranean dialogue initiated so far enabled the creation of the Union for the Mediterranean in 2008. The Consul encourages the members of the Network to be in line with its strategy. He wishes the Network a productive General Assembly and many projects in common.



Julien LAUPRETRE, President of the Secours populaire français, expresses his heartfelt joy and pride in thanking the members present. He reminds the goal of this meeting: globalizing solidarity. To handle injustice and poverty, we must act together. He also calls attention to the importance of youth and in particular, the necessity to carry out activities towards young people and for young people.

Dr Ismaïl HASSOUNEH, President of the Network and National Secretary of the SPF, welcomes the members of the Network and their guests. He introduces each member association and assesses the global action of the Network since the last General Assembly. To focus on continuity and cooperation, three key ideas appear:

1. To find the organizational means to improve the working conditions of the Network ;
2. To broaden the Network to new partners. As such, partners of our members, *Un Ponte Per* – partner of Iraqi Al-Amal and NISCVT – *Faith Matters* – partner of DPNA – and *Finnish Psychologists for Social Responsibility* – partner of NISCVT – were invited to the meeting. They will then decide if they want to join the Network ;
3. To define strategic working lines.

4. Findings and report

Since the last meeting in 2005, the **socio-political situation has changed**.

Taking into account that poverty spread itself in Europe, making difficult fundraising for international projects,

taking into account the upheaval of the “Arab Spring” for the Mediterranean region, both politically as well as socially,

our Network is called to develop its resources and, to this end, must find new means to collect funds and adapt its organization.

The “Arab Spring” means hope: it enabled the emergence of a civil society – in particular young people – more present and which is getting stronger. One of the objectives of our Network is to support and help this new civil society to develop in order to improve living conditions.

We have to strengthen capacities at local level, intensify cooperation at regional level and develop Euro Mediterranean work.

Although the socio-political situation is different in each of the countries represented by the members of the Network, humanist feelings bring us together, in particular the aspiration of people for a better life.

The challenge today is to address changes that are shaking the Southern border of the Mediterranean. That is why we need to work hand in hand, ensuring sustainability. NGOs have to take this new situation into account and cooperate, more particularly when it comes to the affected countries. They need to elaborate a cooperation and partnership strategy for a better Euro Mediterranean solidarity.

Each member and partner presents a report of the activities implemented by her/his association* and this different presentations show the key role played by associations in the development of their countries.

5. Actions during the meeting

- [Presence of Yukiko MAKI, correspondent of SPF in Japan](#)



Answering to the invitation of the Turkish children « copains du Monde » (Friends of the World) for the solidarity campaign in support of Japanese children, Yukiko Maki honours us with her presence to testify to the situation in Japan after the triple disaster that hit her country in March 2011. She reviews the assistance provided to the victims of the tsunami, more particularly the activities of AKAD and Secours populaire.

* See Appendices, page 10

- Cultural event at the Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts

Turkish children are part of the movement « copain du Monde » within the Euro Mediterranean solidarity. After the disaster in Japan, the campaign “A word, a brick, a tree for Japanese children” was launched. For this 2011 General Assembly, a cultural evening was dedicated to solidarity towards Japanese children. A show was created thanks to the participation of children of 12 Turkish primary schools: fashion show, traditional dances, songs...



The drawings of the children were exhibited at the University to show their solidarity towards Japanese children.

- Tree plantation



This 2011 meeting was also the occasion to plant 200 trees to symbolize Euro Mediterranean solidarity as part of AKAD’s environmental project by the Black Sea. Each member of the Network, accompanied by children from the movement “copain du Monde”, was invited to plant a tree to show her/his solidarity towards Japanese people.

- Symposium

This seminar enabled to gather the members of the Network, actors of the Turkish civil society and local authorities. Its aims were to exchange our practices and to show to representatives of the Turkish civil society the role of our Network and the experience of its members in the Mediterranean region.

Professor Ahmet INSEL (Galatasaray University, Istanbul) clarified the definition and the evolution of the civil society in Turkey to explain the situation of Turkish NGOs in 2011 and their role in this civil society.

In order to share experience, Julien LAUPRETRE presented the practices of the Secours populaire français to develop solidarity in France and in the world.

The following guests also took part to the symposium:

- Mr Ufuk URAS, Member of the Parliament
- Mr Rachid MEDDAH, Consul General of Algeria in Istanbul
- Ms Adèle BAZIN, Attaché of the Consulate General of France in Istanbul
- Mr Huseyin ELMAS, Vice president of the Alevi-Bektachi Federation
- Mme Gizen KÜLEKÇİOĞLU, Representative of the Centre for Migration Research at the BİLGİ University in Istanbul
- Mr Hulusi ZEYBEL, Human Rights Association
- MOR ÇATI Association (Association for women)
- Teachers Trade Union

- Prof. Ahmet İNSEL, Galatasaray University
- Members of the Euro Mediterranean Network of Solidarity

As part of the General Assembly and the symposium, Servet DEMIR, Ismaïl HASSOUNEH, Julien LAUPRETRE and Yukiko MAKI were interviewed in live on a Turkish TV channel.

- Election of the Board

Ismaïl Hassouneh is re-elected as President of the Euro Mediterranean Network of Solidarity with unanimity. After having thanked the members of the Network for their trust, he adds that he will contact the members to establish an operational board.

6. Working themes

Through debates and discussions during the working time of the General Assembly, 6 major subjects were particularly pointed out to lead to common decisions.

a. Communication

The Network needs to implement a communication strategy.

❖ *Internal communication*

The development of the capacities of our Network and of each of its members must be done through:

- Exchange of experiences;
- Creation of training sessions (for example: youth citizenship, fundraising, mobilization of actors, development of associative life...);
- Development of an internal system to communicate information (emails, intranet...)
- Improvement of the visibility of each association's activities for all other members of the Network;
- Reactivity of the Network towards emergency thanks to a warning system (common mailing list).

❖ *External communication*

The need to create a website was widely debated. Through this website we could notably write a newsletter to be distributed in our networks. The website should be at least in 3 languages: English, Arabic and French. We need to rely on young people to create this website. Rami SHAMMA (DPNA's representative) offers to coordinate the implementation of the website.

Social networks like Facebook or Twitter played a huge role in the mobilization of young people during the "Arab Spring" and continue to play a role in the development of actions of solidarity. The euro Mediterranean Network should be present through these communication tools which are now fundamental.

It is also necessary to insist on the strength of audiovisual media (television, radio, Internet...). Each member has to use its respective networks to improve the visibility of our actions, to increase the resources of the Network and to play the role of goad for public authorities. The tools of communication created for media could also be used in our campaigns/activities.

It is decided to make a leaflet to introduce the Network in order to strengthen its identity and its involvement in the euro Mediterranean solidarity.

b. An approach of cooperation and solidarity

The Network must be a tool for euro Mediterranean solidarity and a driving force for its development. Southern and Northern NGOs should cooperate in a partnership and mutual respect approach.

Each association has its own skills, a strong knowledge of the reality on the field and human and material means. It is necessary to join our forces to act in an approach of cooperation and partnership.

To globalize solidarity, we first need to “globalize activities”. We need to create strong partnerships to elaborate projects together and lead them together. Northern associations must bring their skills to the Network in project cycle, applications for funding and training on proceeding.

We need to acknowledge the difficulty to lead concrete projects in common regarding the uniqueness of each country. It is decided to agree on themes in order to present and implement projects together, taking the characteristics of each country into account.

We could also carry out actions on behalf of the Network, common campaigns, in particular in favour of children (theme which bring together all associations). This is why we should identify what we could do in common and form alliances (bilateral or multilateral projects) in order to lead concrete projects. It is decided to share efforts of those who work with the same partner. We need to create consortiums of partners within our Network to present and realise common projects in each country, submitting application for funding to potential donors, including the European Union.

c. Funding of the Network

Raising funds must be one of the main concerns of our Network. The creation of a website has a financial cost and is supplemented by the cost of human means (working time). We need to evaluate this cost and insist on the quality of the information’s content and its updating. The Board of the Network will have to ensure the creation, the development and the maintenance of this website.

Thanks to the presentation of a file made by one or several members of the Network, it is decided to canvass big companies which have subsidiaries in the countries concerned in order to get funds.

Each member association is invited to make a financial contribution to endow the Network with its first financing, first condition of its independence.

d. Identity of the Network

We need to give a public identity, a personality to the Euro Mediterranean network of Solidarity. This is why we have to go beyond the communication and exchange of information issues, and initiate actions on behalf of the network.

Each member has to play a part in the promotion of the Network to strengthen its identity.

Citizenship and culture of peace could become flagship themes for the Network in order to strengthen its identity in developing common projects.

e. The importance of youth

Youth represents the future. The Network and all its members need to put youth at the centre of their concerns. It is for this reason that we could develop international voluntary work camps and exchanges between young people (intercultural exchanges, exchanges of technical skills, of know-how...)

The children's movement "copain du Monde" of the SPF, with the participation of other movements in our Network, is in line with an active approach of children for a euro Mediterranean solidarity.

f. A call for solidarity

A call for solidarity, nourished by the ideas of each participant, is presented to the Assembly. After debate and amendments, the publication of this common appeal is voted with unanimity by all members. It is decided that this call will be distributed publicly within the respective networks of each member to strengthen the visibility and the identity of our Network and to mobilize different actors around solidarity.

7. Propositions

- 1) To distribute the call for solidarity in each country thanks to the members of the Network.
- 2) To create a website and put the Network on social networks (Facebook, etc.).
- 3) To exchange our communication tools within the Network to share our information and experience.
- 4) To encourage exchange of practices, skills and knowledge through the implementation of training sessions between members thanks to the creation of a database listing offers and needs of each member.
- 5) To implement working groups on the following themes: communication, projects, campaigns, financing, impact of social networks...
- 6) To encourage each member of the Network to be active in NGO platforms in its country, carrying the identity of the Euro Mediterranean Network of Solidarity in order to gain visibility for our actions.
- 7) To present development projects in consortium with two or more partners in different Mediterranean countries and lead them together.
- 8) To organise an international youth meeting in Lebanon.
- 9) To create the Board of the Network (President, two Northern and two Southern representatives), which has a decision-making power, and the Secretariat of the Network (two Northern and two Southern representatives), which has a coordinating role.
- 10) To prepare the next General Assembly of the Network in Rome following the invitation of our Italian member « Ricerca e Cooperazione ».

8. Appendices

1. Introduction of the members of the Network

ALGÉRIA – Association Algérienne d'Action Sociale (AAAS)

Founded in 2002, the Algerian Welfare Association concentrates its efforts on improving the living conditions of the most vulnerable people, in particular young people and children. It also carries out solidarity programs for a wider public, particularly at the time of natural disasters (flood in 2001 in Bab el Oued, earthquake in Boumerdès in 2003...): emergency distributions, construction of a library and a technical training centre, donation of medical material...

BELGIUM – Secours Populaire Belgique-Wallonie

The Secours populaire Belgique-Wallonie acts on two levels. Locally, in Wallonia and Brussels, the association develops actions to make shelter, education and employment available to all. Internationally, the association work with partners with potential projects and provide them the assistance necessary to complete them.

<http://perso.infonie.be/secours.populaire/>

EGYPT – Egypt's Daughter Association (EDA)

Since the creation of EDA in 1993, five orphanages were built and the sixth one is almost finished. 315 children are catered in these shelters. The association pays constant attention to these children in order to ensure them a high-quality education until they become grown-ups, independent and completely integrated with society.

<http://www.bintmasr.org>

SPAIN – Associació Catalana per la Pau (ACP)

The Catalan Association for Peace was founded in 1990 by a group of men and women coming from different organizations and involved in the fight for peace, disarmament and transformation of the North-South relations. Thanks to solidarity, cooperation and development, it aims at creating a new model of socio-economic relations at international level to ensure proper living conditions to people all around the world.

It developed two complementary lines of action:

- a. To support initiatives of local development in the South.
- b. To inform, sensitize and mobilize the Spanish public opinion (conferences, training seminars, awareness campaigns...)

<http://www.acpau.org/>

FRANCE – Secours Populaire Français (SPF)

Established in 1945, the SPF is an independent NGO whose resources come at 80% from private funds. It fights against poverty in France and in the world. The SPF acts both in emergency case and for development in order to support local populations on various projects: education, professional training, food safety, access to health and culture...

The SPF also encourages exchanges between children through its movement « copain du Monde ».

www.secourspopulaire.fr

GREECE – Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity (EEDDA)

Created in 1981, EEDA is a NGO whose purpose is to develop solidarity through rural mobilisation in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as in any other place fighting for the respect of its independence and sovereignty, for peace and social justice.

Greece must cope with an inflow of migrants since the “Arab Spring”, what is deeply affecting the activities of the association. Active in the Arab world since 1988, it notably acts in Palestine (sponsorship of young Palestinian girls...) and in Jordan.

<http://www.eedda.gr>

IRAQ – Iraqi Al-Amal Association

Founded in 1992 during the Gulf War, Iraqi Al-Amal carries out projects for the wellbeing of the Iraqi population without any distinction of origin, political or religious belief.

It aims at providing aid to relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people and establish a just and democratic society for Arabs, Kurds and other nationalities in Iraq. Iraqi Al-Amal implements activities improving the social conditions of the Iraqi population: clinics and mobile clinics, health and hygiene education, sponsorships, income generating activities, training centres...

<http://www.iraqi-alamal.org>

ITALY – Ricerca e Cooperazione

Ricerca e Cooperazione is an Italian non-profit NGO involved in the field of international cooperation, targeting countries in the southern hemisphere. In Europe, it promotes actions of Public Awareness and Education for Development.

RC is independent, secularly inspired, and based on values of solidarity and human dignity since its creation in 1985. The key aspects involving RC's activities are the safeguarding and appreciation of diversity at risk of disappearing, more precisely, biodiversity of indigenous cultures and cultural heritages. Furthermore, the promotion of fundamental human rights: food, instruction, health, work, freedom of movement and expression, and good governance.

<http://www.ongrc.org>

JORDAN – Sisterhood is global Institute (Sigi)

Sigi was founded in 1998 to spread and strengthen women's rights as human rights. It also aims at developing women's capacities, the skills of youth and at providing social and legal services to women victims of violation of their rights. Although the status of Jordanian women has improved, some of their rights are still denied. That is why the association “Sisterhood is global Institute” also acts on a political level to improve the participation of women in decision-making.

<http://www.sigi.org>

LEBANON – Development for People and Nature Association (DPNA)

Founded in 2003, DPNA works through a wide range of networks of civil society organizations (CSOs) to meet the needs of the local community on the basis of sustainable development. It aims at protecting natural and environmental resources, encouraging young people to have a civic behaviour and empower citizens with needed skills to improve their quality of life.

<http://www.dpna-lb.org>

LEBANON – National Institution for Social Care and Vocational Training (NISCVT)

NISCVT is working within the Palestinian refugees community in Lebanon. It was established in 1976, after the Tel Al-Zaatar massacre, to provide assistance and accommodation for surviving orphaned children. Today, NISCVT provides services for all Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Its mission is to contribute to the developmental process of the Palestinian community in Lebanon, through services addressing the needs of the families and through various gender-balanced projects empowering the potentials and skills of the children, youth and their parents or guardians.

www.socialcare.org

LUXEMBOURG – Fondation Aide Populaire d’Urgence (FAPU)

The FAPU is a European foundation registered since 1996. It funds small projects on every continent except Europe. Local communities, usually associative, create projects and seek a first contribution to launch income-generating activities or to address basic needs.

The purpose of the FAPU is to help the forgotten groups of our life time. The Foundation is mainly known through its website.

<http://www.fapu.org>

MOROCCO – Ikram

Ikram works on helping and creating links between various humanitarian associations in Morocco. In partnership with other actors of solidarity, it provides assistance to affected people in emergency responses and continues with the implementation of rehabilitation and development projects, in particular in the health and social fields.

PALESTINE – Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS)

PMRS was founded in 1979 to supplement the decayed and inadequate health infrastructure. Among the Palestinian largest NGOs, it provides curative and preventive care for populations, especially for families living in isolated regions. In addition to its emergency assistance, PMRS develops medical facilities to answer the sanitary needs of the population on a long-term basis and to overcome the failure of public health services. PMRS aims to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all Palestinians, without discrimination in terms of race, political opinion, social or economic origin or religious belief.

<http://www.pmr.ps>

TURKEY – AKAD

The AKAD association is developing and carrying out projects to help the most vulnerable people in the fields of education, culture, health... Its action is particularly directed towards environment, in particular with a plantation project of 200 000 trees made available by public authorities.

TURKEY – Centre de Solidarité

Created in 2005, this social development and professional training centre in Istanbul is aimed at the underprivileged population in Perpa district (young people from 18 to 25 years old and women). They suffer from economic and social difficulties whose origins are mainly school failure and lack of training, making restricting the access to labour market.

The centre provides short professional training in various fields: computer science, secretarial work, accounting, management, languages (French, English), tutoring...

2. Introduction of guests of the Network

FINLAND – Finnish Psychologists for Social Responsibility (FiPSR)

Founded in 1982, its aim is to promote the universal right to mental and social well-being of all people. It works since 1984 in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon with NISCVT on the theme of mental health. FiPSR participates in the organisation of Beirut marathon and in the commemoration of the Sabra and Shatila massacre (in September 1982).

The association is also in partnership with PMRS on a mental health project.

<http://www.vastuu.fi>

GREAT BRITAIN – Faith Matters

Founded in 2005, this non profit organisation works to reduce extremism and interfaith and intra-faith tensions. Faith Matters has been involved in the international scene for two years. With the British Council, it carried out a project of active citizenship in Lebanon (in partnership with DPNA) and a training project of community leaders in Egypt.

<http://faith-matters.org/>

ITALY – Un Ponte Per

Un Ponte Per was created in 1991 to provide assistance in favour of Iraqi people who suffer from war. It intervenes in several countries of the Mediterranean region: Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Its activities address many fields: women's rights, non-violence sensitization, access to education and health, support to refugees... Un Ponte Per works with Iraqi Al-Amal on a project providing medicine and medical supplies to Iraqi children affected by chronic diseases. It also works with NISCVT on a project offering economic support for Palestinian children who belong to family groups facing economic difficulties in the Lebanese refugee camps.

<http://www.unponteper.it/>

ITALY – Affabulazione social and cultural center of Rome

Affabulazione is a socio-cultural centre acting in favour of children, adolescents and young adults. It promotes an open society based on the respect between cultures by organizing intercultural events. It is active in Italy but also in West Africa and in Palestine. It promotes art as a mean for personal development and civic action, to strengthen the links among different social and ethnic groups. It also fights for the rights of the underprivileged groups (immigrants, women, young people) offering free consultations and material support.

LIBYA – Libyan Society for Social Solidarity

The Libyan civil society is experiencing a major crisis. Before the crisis, the only NGOs existing in Libya were controlled by the Colonel Gaddafi regime. The Network and its members provide assistance to the civil society in order to create new NGOs and to enable them to play a role in Libya, but also in the world. Currently being created, the association "Libyan Society for Social Solidarity" takes an active part in the distribution of emergency aid at the borders of Libya, in coordination with other members of the Network (Egypt's Daughter Association, Secours Populaire Français, Union Tunisienne pour la Solidarité). Then its purpose is to carry out development projects in order to promote democracy.

TUNISIA – Union Tunisienne pour la Solidarité

The purpose of the Tunisian Union for Solidarity is to coordinate the actions of Tunisian NGOs, in particular in the field of health. It provides support in the organisation of emergency aid at the Tunisian border after the “Arab Spring”: creation of a school for Libyan refugees, food and health aid... Activities in favour of elderly people have also been implemented: creation of a mobile clinic and a day care centre, centre for people with Alzheimer’s disease...

3. Pictures of the tree plantation and cultural evening



Members of the Network during the tree plantation by the Black Sea.



Yukiko MAKI, correspondent of the SPF in Japan



Kassem AINA (NISCVT) and Marie LAVRIENTADOU (EEDA)



Julien LAUPRETRE, President of the SPF



Cultural evening – Turkish children “copains du monde”