

**WORLD COUNCIL ON POLITICAL ACTION AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY
REPORT (WCPAIS)**

Foreword: Emmaus International Board (Board) meeting on 11-15 April 2007 in Åland (Finland):

The Board reaffirmed the need for World Council members to (a) maintain ongoing close links with the work undertaken in the region throughout the year (emails, docs etc.) (b) take part in regional meetings and be involved in all activities linked to international solidarity and political action at local, national, regional and international level.

World Council members are the interface between their region (Europe) and Emmaus International councillors.

They must keep abreast of their region's solidarity projects, in order to be able to champion them at European councils and assemblies.

Activity report:

Over the course of this term of office, the main focus has been to evaluate solidarity practices at a time marked by an increasingly acute migration crisis.

1. We have taken part in debates on internal and external evaluations of solidarity pledges and practices launched at the 2012 World Assembly. This assembly set the Movement's priority areas for the next four years and solidarity was reaffirmed as being the core value underpinning all initiatives undertaken by Emmaus International.
2. The WCPAIS met in Montreuil in February 2013. (There was no meeting in 2012 due to budget constraints). World Council members looked at the initiatives undertaken in relation to Emmaus International's priority areas over the past 10 years, the 2013 container programme and the solidarity projects to be funded in 2013.

For European elected members, the main priority was to ensure the sustainability of the proposed activity; promote partnerships; work towards self-sufficiency and encourage both member organisations and individuals to assume responsibility both for their own and for societal change; empowerment was specified as an essential goal.

The criteria for accepting a project were re-examined, with the decision taken to insist on a minimum requirement for EI members: – they must have paid their subscription dues, held a solidarity sale and submitted previous project follow-up reports on time.

It was also proposed to provide better information on the projects funded by Emmaus International and to revise the project funding process in order to reduce the lead times between a project's funding and its completion.

Council members pledged their commitment to implement 16 initiatives over the next 4 years. This plan sought to secure the involvement of new groups across our region in the various priority areas and solidarity initiatives, including containers and solidarity sales.

(When we presented this work plan at the RCEE meeting in Lviv, Ukraine in October 2013, we found it difficult to get European delegates to understand why we needed their support in implementing the decisions taken by the World Assembly. But we eventually got the message across and we were able to hold a very productive debate

on solidarity at the RCEE meeting in Porto in September 2014.)

3. European group meeting in Verona, Italy, April 2013. This was a key opportunity to discuss the issues and challenges facing Emmaus groups and reflect on the responses they can offer within the context of their region's vision.
4. The RCEE met in Lampedusa, Italy in April 2014, courtesy of the inspiration and work of WCPAIS member, Franco Monnicchi. Here, delegates were able to see for themselves the full extent of the plight of migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean – thousands of people drowned, along with the suffering endured by the survivors who receive a very inadequate welcome. Tourism on the island is being affected by the label assigned to it by the media as a "migration destination". Organisations with a presence on the island also attended the RCEE meeting. Franco, along with 40 volunteers from *Legambiente*, an environmental organisation, took part in a litter pick and clean-up of the island. *Libera International* is working to combat the Mafia and uphold human rights. The RCEE heard the personal accounts of a number of migrants – who had come from Eritrea, Tunisia etc. They spoke of their country's difficulties and what led them to leave.
Franco Monicchi stood down from his role as WCPAIS member when he was elected president of Emmaus Italy in November 2014.
5. The WCPAIS met in Montreuil in November 2014 to discuss the EI survey on international solidarity. The survey revealed an inadequate level of involvement on the part of member organisations (MOs) throughout the Movement – with only 50% of MOs holding solidarity sales – along with a drop in participation in the container programme. This is the right time to rethink our concept of solidarity, refresh our programmes and find new ways of informing and motivating our groups within the context of globalisation. EI has done a great deal to make information more accessible but there is still a lot to be achieved in terms of language and use of social media as a communication tool, develop bodies at national level, raise awareness and motivate groups about every aspect of international solidarity. At this meeting, it was noted that there is sometimes a lack of coordination between EE, EI and EF and this is perhaps an area where European CMAPSI members have an important role to play since they are, in effect, the interface between Europe and the other regions. The Europe region has its own, distinct key solidarity programme but we need to recognise that we are the Movement's richest region and the source of the majority of Emmaus's solidarity and that the participation of everyone is essential. Our work to raise awareness, inform and motivate people is therefore vitally important.
6. Container programme: Marie-France attended the container days in Cologne, Montreuil and Chatou, while Margaret attended the Coventry meeting in November 2012 – a key moment for the UK as until then, little was known about the programme. Across the Movement, there are arguments for and against the programme – highlighting the tension between dependence and self-sufficiency. However, the sending of containers from Europe to Africa / South America along with intra-European shipments is a reality. Organisation of the programme has been improved, with everyone better informed and a fairer distribution between needs and projects. We must understand that in some countries, there simply are no donations to be collected – and that if we set the criteria for self-sufficiency too high, many projects will be ruled out. In any case, EI can meet only 50% of requests each year.
7. The Africa/Asia Mutual Health Fund: This mutual health fund is completely in step with the policy of developing joint initiatives within the Movement in order to move towards self-sufficiency. Marie-France Bedleem has served on the steering

committee since 2002 (Africa Mutual Health Fund). An important step was taken with the setting up, in November 2013, of constituent assemblies in Benin and Burkina Faso. Meetings take place every year, either in France or in the relevant countries, to review actions and record progress in each of the countries in question. The initiative requires further funds since, although technical self-sufficiency is well established, financial self-sufficiency is not yet a reality. Currently, the subscriptions paid by mutual fund subscribers only cover around 40% of needs.

8. Lobbying: We attended the round table discussion organised by EE in Brussels in May 2014 with the candidates for the 2014 European parliament elections.
9. RCEE: WCPAIS members always receive an invitation to Emmaus Europe Regional Council meetings where they take part in debates and provide information on solidarity and political action; however, they do not have voting rights. Marie-France and Jørgen are members of a task group looking at the internal regulations of Emmaus Europe. On the morning before the February 2012 RCEE meeting, a discussion was scheduled on the theme: "What is Emmaus Europe's scope for action in pursuit of solidarity". (17 February 2012).
10. Nokoué: We were represented by Jørgen at the Nokoué project annual meetings in 2011, 2013 and 2015. This is a project to supply pure water and sanitary conditions, managed in a democratic manner by a Water Users Association. At these meetings, we also addressed the global dimension of this work.
11. Miscellaneous activities: We took part in various regional salons that are becoming ever larger (Lille, Les Herbiers etc.) We attended meetings of the Migration Collective (of which Margaret has been a member since 2009) and in our respective countries, Margaret and Marie-France spoke on the solidarity theme at WAs and national gatherings and ran workshops on solidarity. Marie-France sits on the Solidarity Committee in France and was in Calais for the demonstration against the "wall of shame".

We work in different ways. Margaret Tuccori and Marie-France Bedleem have close links with a large number of Emmaus member organisations with which they meet fairly regularly. They are able to dialogue and share information with the members of these bodies and boost each other's motivation – both for Movement's solidarity at every level and the political programmes. By contrast, Jørgen Olsen has to content himself more with the written word, with less opportunity to chat! Thanks to his knowledge of three languages, he is able to correspond by email with Emmaus staff and elected representatives (from the 4 regions and at international level) and on many occasions with all the member organisations! But in addition, he forges new contacts - presenting Emmaus values and sharing information - in the Danish development sector outside the Movement.

12. Still to be done:

Set up Skype meetings – absolutely essential now in order to ensure effective team work.

Find a way to improve contact between the various EI regions.

Be more proactive in securing the involvement of member organisations on the issue of subscriptions and in the annual solidarity sale on behalf of Emmaus International.

Check that project follow-up is properly submitted by member organisations in receipt of funding.

- 30/6/15 Margaret Tuccori, Marie-France Bedleem, Jørgen Olsen.