



# NEWSLETTER

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## **MIDDLE EAST CRISIS**

### **PALESTINE – VOICE Sends Statement to EU Institutions**

On 15 April 2002 VOICE, together with Save the Children UK and the International Federation Terre des Hommes, issued a statement on Palestine to EC President Romano Prodi. The statement supported the fundamental right of the Palestinian People to receive all necessary Humanitarian Assistance required in the current humanitarian crisis. VOICE urged the EU to take all and any appropriate measures in its power, in order to avoid a further and unacceptable humanitarian crisis, asking therefore for necessary

measures to be taken to provide relief items to the population in crisis and to ensure that aid workers can operate.

*Copies of the Statement were also sent to the Council officials and the European Parliament. For a copy of the statement please contact the secretariat.*

### **UN – Security Council Resolution 1405**

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, the Security Council issued a resolution focusing on humanitarian issues. In the resolution, the Security Council says it is “concerned by the dire humanitarian situation of the Palestinian population”, is “calling for the lifting of restrictions imposed (...) on the operations of humanitarian

*organizations*”, is stressing the need to respect the international humanitarian law and it “*emphasizes the urgency of access of medical and humanitarian organizations to the Palestinian civilian population*”.

On the same day but in a separate initiative, **OCHA** dispatched a 17 members “UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination” Team (UNDAC) to the occupied territory.

### **Terre Des Hommes - Medical mission expelled by Israel**

A medical mission of IFTdH which was aiming at helping war victims, in collaboration with a Palestinian medical assistance organization, was thrown out by the Israeli authorities. The charity singled out the Israeli Interior Ministry’s justification for its expulsion order, which based itself on the banning of humanitarian NGOs working in military operation zones. IFTdH intends to complain to Israeli representations in Europe regarding the violation of the Geneva Convention through negating access to humanitarian aid for the Palestinian People. Representatives of other NGOs trying to visit the Palestinian territories have been expelled earlier.

### **Israel/Palestine – Women Testify**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of April in the EP’s Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defense Policy, a group of 6 women, from Bat Shalom and Jerusalem Centre for Women testified.

Apart from reading a common declaration, the women were each accorded two minutes speaking time. Based on the International Community’s failure to protect the Palestinian population in an effective manner, as mandated by International Humanitarian Law, the unanimous demand from all the women was *an immediate, effective international intervention and protection of Palestinian people*.

In the ensuing discussion, the dismal position of the EU was mentioned with reference to the General Affairs Council, where the Spanish Presidency only was able to highlight the difference between the position of the EP and the Council. The EP passed a resolution calling for the suspension of the EC-Israel Association Agreement. Nevertheless, both the Commission and several countries in the EU (Germany, UK and Denmark) were against suspension of trade and other special cooperation agreements with Israel, inspite of these being conditional on both parties’ maintaining respect for human rights and democratic principles. The three Israeli and three Palestinian women all pleaded for suspension and that the Member States, the Commission and the Council should be pressed to act.

### **PALESTINE & LEBANON – Humanitarian Aid Decisions**

On April 2nd, the Commission adopted a humanitarian aid decision of **€5 million** to deliver essential relief to the most vulnerable victims of the crisis in the Palestinian Territories and Lebanon.

Given the increasing needs, **ECHO is currently preparing a new emergency Decision for around €1.7 million** to fund the following emergency activities: distribution of food and hygiene items through ICRC to the most vulnerable families in both the West Bank villages sealed off by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and in Gaza. Target beneficiaries are estimated at 10,000.

Distribution of food, medicines, gas and fuel for cooking and water pumps by Save the Children in the city of Jenin; Dispatch by Terre des Hommes - Italie of a team of ten doctors to the cities in the West Bank currently reoccupied and sealed off by the IDF; To strengthen the logistic capacity of ICRC, six Land Cruisers as ambulances will be airlifted from Brussels (with non-Palestinian number plates).

*ECHO and its partners are poised to respond to the worsening humanitarian crisis but cannot do so if access is denied. This problem and the fact that humanitarian workers are being targeted poses a real threat to the effective and efficient implementation of relief operations. The Commission is taking the necessary measures to ensure that relief can be delivered immediately once conditions allow.*

## **PALESTINE – Food Aid from the EU**

IP/02/538

The Commission has approved food aid worth **€5 million** for the Palestinian populations of the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 10 April. This decision is designed to ensure that those in need have access to adequate food supplies in the coming months. This assistance will fund the purchase of 7,400 tons of wheat flour and 3,200 tons of rice which will be distributed among the poorest families of the non-refugee Palestinian population in the Territories.

## **VOICE NEWS**

**The VOICE FORUM (General Assembly) will take place in Brussels on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May until Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May.**

The Programme is a mixture of internal business for the network coupled with political debate, designed to give direction to further work by VOICE.

Outside of matters such as approval of the Strategic Plan, Work Plan, elections of President and SCHA, there will also be policy/working group themes under discussion. The overall focus will be on the new policy environment for humanitarian aid, with particular emphasis on the following (plenary and workshops):

1. Civilian/Military Relations – opportunity or threat?

2. Forgotten Crises: Who decides?  
3. NGO-Donor: Strengthening Quality through Partnership.

**For further information or enquiries please contact Asja at the VOICE secretariat.**

**Tel: + 32 (0)2 5411360**

**[voice@skynet.be](mailto:voice@skynet.be)**

## **Friends of Europe, 4 March 2002**

Kathrin SCHICK participated in a debate meeting with Commissioner Poul Nielson, organised by Friends of Europe. She gave an introduction to VOICE and the role of NGOs as political actors. Mr. Nielson mainly focused on the role of NGOs as project implementators and called into question the representativity of the NGOs.

## **VOICE Director On Tour**

### **Geneva, January 22 to 25, 2002**

#### **Sphere Management Committee Meeting**

VOICE attended the meeting as an observer on January 23 to 25, 2002. VOICE's presence was much appreciated. The handbook will be revised and the project will be prolonged. Furthermore, the issues of Gender and environment will be integrated into the handbook. Finally, an evaluation conducted by the University of Columbia is currently being undertaken.

#### **• IASC Committee**

VOICE and its activities were introduced to the **IASC** (UN *Inter-Agency Standing Committee*, the primary UN mechanism for inter-agency coordination relating to humanitarian assistance). Meetings were also held with the **UNHCR NGO responsible, Craig Sanders, OCHA, the ICRF and ICVA.**

### **2) Madrid, February 21 to 23, 2002**

VOICE Director, Kathrin SCHICK, has been visiting most NGO Members in Spain on the occasion of speaking on gender and humanitarian aid at a conference on gender

and development, organised by Medecins Du Monde Spain.

During the autumn, several Italian members were visited. Further visits to members in other countries are under planning.

## NEWS BRIEF

### **UNHCR/SAVE THE CHILDREN – Report On Sexual Exploitation in West Africa**

The UNHCR and Save the Children UK, co-authors of the report, are currently working together on **measures** that they hope will stop endemic sexual exploitation of refugees and deal with its consequences. The report has indeed motivated humanitarian organisations to improve existing means of curbing such practices and protecting the vulnerable. The authors have announced they will not publish the names of NGOs mentioned in the report.

### **AFGHANISTAN - Key Repatriation Agreement For Afghans In Iran Signed In Geneva**

A key refugee repatriation agreement was signed Wednesday in Geneva by the **governments of Iran, Afghanistan and the UNHCR**. The Tripartite Agreement lays down the main legal and operational framework for the voluntary return of Afghan refugees in Iran. The document allows the refugees to take home all their belongings and savings, maximising the prospects for a sustainable return. It also stresses that the return should be voluntary.

### **ZIMBABWE - NGOs resume food distribution**

Aid agencies in Zimbabwe have resumed the distribution of food to more than half a million needy people. The agencies, including Save the Children and World Vision, had suspended food distribution after being accused of collaboration with the opposition during the election campaign. The country's food shortage worsens and the international pressure is

not foretelling well for a solution. It is estimated that Zimbabwe will need the financial resources to import up to 2.2 million tones of maize between now and the 2003 harvest. The seizure of white-owned farms, the disruption of commercial agriculture and floods have combined to exacerbate the country's food shortage.

### **BURUNDI – Refugees movements**

Around 50,000 Burundian refugees have signed up for voluntary return and are being progressively repatriated from **Tanzania**. 350,000 of them have fled to Tanzania in 1993, where 200,000 Burundians were already present since 1972. The Tanzanian government, unable to cope with this number, has appealed to the international community for help.

Simultaneously, some 4800 families were displaced in Bujumbura Rural after a clash between the army and the rebel forces, joining 1800 families already displaced. These IDPs are out of reach for aid organisations, owing to the security situation.

## ECHO/EU NEWS

### **!! ECHO Annual Partner Meeting 2002 !!**

The 2002 ECHO Partner Meeting will take place on **14-15 October 2002**.

### **DIPECHO - Call For Proposals For Projects In Southeast Asia**

In the framework of its Disaster Preparedness Programme, called DIPECHO, ECHO is launching a call for proposals for projects in **Southeast Asia**. The necessary documents i.e. guidelines and annexes, are available on [http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/en/whatsnew/whatsnew\\_8.htm#dipecho](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/en/whatsnew/whatsnew_8.htm#dipecho)

**Deadline for submitting proposals is May 31, 2002.**

**Grant Facility – Call for proposals is still under preparation.**

## FPA Update

On April 25 the FPA Watch Group and the Red Cross met with ECHO who outlined and explained the new procedures for humanitarian aid and their implications for partners. There are many changes which only have an effect on ECHO, however, NGOs should ensure that they carefully read the Information Pack on the new Procedures which will come from ECHO in the coming days. There are implications for NGOs, in terms of the timing of contracts, the use of global plans (now a list of *potential* partners rather than definite partners will be attached), the need to apply for global plan projects by objectives/sectors, etc.

With regard to the FPA ECHO asked for the Watch Group/ Red Cross to devise a payment format for staff, the FPA Task Force will meet in order to discuss a proposal for this. You will be contacted in due course.

This week there is a hearing to finalise the inter-service consultation on the financial regulation, before the final decision on the regulation is taken on 16<sup>th</sup> May. ECHO needs derogations on the following: Bank guarantees, Audit and Evaluation. After the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May ECHO will be in a better position to know what it can and cannot offer on the new FPA. The financial regulation requires a co-decision procedure (agreement of Council and Parliament) both bodies have withheld their agreement until they see the implementing mechanisms decided by the Commission. The new FPA is still due to be launched on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2003, therefore, there is a great time pressure on the consultation process which ECHO wants to finish over the summer. For further information please await your Information Pack from ECHO or contact: Jennifer Tangney: [Jennifer@ngovoice.org](mailto:Jennifer@ngovoice.org)

## RECENTLY GRANTED AID

### SERBIA – 2002 Global Plan

IP/02/554

The European Commission has approved a **€35.9 million** global plan for Serbia. The aid will maintain assistance to refugees, displaced persons (IDPs) and other vulnerable groups for the rest of this year and the beginning of next year. The aid addresses the immediate needs of about half a million people.

Since the end of the fighting in Kosovo, humanitarian needs have increasingly been dealt with, and **ECHO has therefore been able to reduce the volume of aid to the region**. The way is now opening for longer-term aid, in which other donors and Commission Directorates and the European Agency for Reconstruction are actively involved.

### COLOMBIA – 2002 Global Plan

IP/02/509

In the next few months, some 125 000 people will benefit from **€8 million** emergency assistance provided via ECHO. This humanitarian aid is targeted at IDPs and highly vulnerable groups in rural areas. Assistance will be provided as near as possible to the communities of origin in order to encourage people to return and to prevent migration to marginal urban areas. In the short term, emergency humanitarian relief will be provided for IDPs immediately following displacement, followed by more sustained post-emergency assistance designed to improve their living conditions and promote social integration.

### INDONESIA - Education Support For Displaced Children

IP/02/618

The European Commission has decided to fund two NGO projects worth **€2.58 million** in support of primary school aged children in **North Maluku Province**, Indonesia, where education has been disrupted by conflict, violence and displacement. The

projects will be implemented over three years by Save the Children (UK) (€1,720,000) and World Vision Deutschland (€860,000).

*This financing decisions has been taken in the framework of the new regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning Community Aid to Uprooted People in Asia and Latin America.*

### **BURMA/MYANMAR - Projects for Refugees and IDPs**

IP/02/619

The Commission is to provide **€ 4.9 million** to three NGOs projects supporting the population in **Rakhine State**, Western Burma/Myanmar and in refugee camps in Thailand. These projects will be implemented by Action Contre la Faim, Malteser Hilfsdienst and the Burma Border Consortium.

*(Idem).*

### **SRI LANKA - Support Programmes For IDPs in Northern Sri Lanka**

IP/02/620

The European Commission is to finance two assistance programmes for IDPs and households affected by the conflict in Sri Lanka. The two projects are worth **€3.35 million**, and will be carried out by CARE Deutschland (€1.4million) and the UNHCR (€1.95 million). The objective of the project is to minimise internal displacement, facilitate voluntary return and re-integration and to help internally displaced people to find solutions as well as to improve living conditions and rights for victims of conflicts.

### **GREAT LAKES AREA – European WB Contribution**

IP/02/560

The European Commission is to propose an initial contribution of **€20 million** to the trust fund set up by the World Bank to finance a regional programme of demobilising and re-integrating former fighters in the Great Lakes area.

### **HUMANITARIAN AID - Commission Adopts Decisions Granting Almost €12 Million**

The European Commission has taken five humanitarian aid decisions concerning:

- **Laos (€400,000)** for mine clearance and support of IDPs);
- **Burkina Faso (€175,000)** to tackle a meningitis epidemic);
- **ECHO Flight operations (€8.4 million)**, ensuring the continuation of the humanitarian aid air service's operation for a further year);
- **Somali refugees (€1.6 million)** for voluntary repatriation from Ethiopia);
- **Burmese refugees (€1.2 million)** to improve living conditions in 5 refugee camps along the Thai border);

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Findhorn Foundation - Conflict & Transformation**

This Open Space Conference will offer a forum to address conflict as a meaningful part of the process of transformation and healing. It is followed by 3 days Professional Training workshops to ground the experience of the Open Space work and advance professional and personal development: Conference **May 25 – 28**; Training workshops **May 29 – 31**.

#### **Post-Conference Courses**

Three-day intensive training courses will offer opportunities for deeper professional and personal development.

*Online booking, updated information and links:* [www.findhorn.org/conflict](http://www.findhorn.org/conflict); Tel: +44 (0) 1309 691653; e-mail: [accomms@findhorn.org](mailto:accomms@findhorn.org)

### **ICRC - Protection Of Civilians: Operations On Behalf Of Specific Group**

The ICRC organises a practice-oriented seminar for experienced professionals. The events take place in Ecogia (Geneva, Sch), on **14-16 May 2002**. To get more information, please visit the website: [www.icrc.org/ecogiaprotsem](http://www.icrc.org/ecogiaprotsem)

### **IDRM - 2nd Executive and Leadership Development Program for Emergency Managers**

IDRM and its partner AIPM, will conduct the 2nd Executive and Leadership Development Programme for Emergency Managers in **Manila, Philippines** from **19-30 August, 2002**. This programme is designed for emergency executive and senior managers in the public and private sectors and NGOs globally. For further program details and application forms, please send a request to [info@idrmhome.org](mailto:info@idrmhome.org).

### **CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LAW ON IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM - Protection of Refugees and the Concept of a Single Asylum Procedure**

Center for International and European Law on Immigration and Asylum – Conference, **7-8 June 2002** in Potsdam jointly with the Human Rights Centre of University of Potsdam: <http://www.uni-konstanz.de/FuF/ueberfak/fzaa/english/>  
Or contact: [Ulf Häußler](mailto:Ulf.Hauebler@uni-konstanz.de)

### **COMMON GROUND NEWS SERVICE - Middle East**

The Common Ground News Service - Middle East (CGNews) provides news, op-eds, cartoons, features, and analysis by local and international experts on a broad range of **Middle East issues**. CGNews syndicates articles that are accurate, balanced, and solution-oriented to news outlets throughout the Middle East and worldwide. With support of the European Community, UNESCO and the Dutch Government, the service is a non-profit initiative of the European Centre for Common Ground and Search for Common Ground, international NGOs working as partners in the fields of conflict resolution and media production. In the framework of

improving the quality of humanitarian aid, this service can be useful to headquarters and field staff as it provides a better understanding on the current developments in the region. It also provides an insight into constructive perspectives and alternatives to the actual situation on the ground.

*If you wish to receive this free, weekly selection of 3 to 5 articles from regional and international press, please send your request by e-mail to Geoffrey Weichselbaum, MENA programme Manager - European Centre for Common Ground; e-mail: [gw@eccg.be](mailto:gw@eccg.be), tel: +32-2-234 3663. You may also visit: <http://www.sfcg.org/cgnews/middle-east.cfm>*

## **JOB VACANCIES**

### **World Vision – Programme Adviser - Brussels**

We are looking for candidates with 5-7 years of experience, at least 3 of which should have been in programmes in the field, preferably with Southern NGOs, to assist the office in coordination of its members, training of Southern members and capacity development of our Southern members on EU procedures,( grant proposals, programming and EU relations), and representation to the EU. Experience with EU rehabilitation and development grant management and programme design would be a great asset, as would former training and coordination experience. Candidates should have strong interpersonal and networking skills, be a team player and able to coordinate across cultures. For this position, which reports to the Director of the Brussels EU Liaison Office, ease with French and English is required, and other languages would be an asset.

EU nationals are preferred for work permit reasons, but applications are also sought from candidates of Southern LDCs.

Candidates are invited to send their Letter of Intent and CV in English to:

European Recruitment

Email: [dieter\\_osmers@wvi.org](mailto:dieter_osmers@wvi.org)

Deadline- Friday 17 May- 12.00pm CET (Brussels)

Interviews: for week of 20 May in Brussels

Candidates should be in sympathy with World Vision's Christian commitment and Core Values.

For more information please visit our websites at [www.wveurope.org](http://www.wveurope.org)

### **CHILDREN'S AID DIRECT – Country Representative, Macedonia**

To provide direction for CAD's programmes in Macedonia through monitoring and advising CAD field staff on the development and management of the programmes, through ongoing technical assistance and visits to the field projects; to ensure that the programmes are well managed and meeting objectives; to build the capacity of and train local staff in their respective roles; to produce a Country Strategic Plan and provide appropriate information flows between the field and Reading, including preparation of monthly, quarterly, and security reports; to identify potential new project areas and prepare proposals accordingly, taking into consideration the interests, strategies and funding criteria of donors.

To apply please send your CV to request an application pack, to the Personnel department at [personnel@cad.tele2.co.uk](mailto:personnel@cad.tele2.co.uk). The closing date for completed applications is **10th May 2002**. You can also visit CAD's website: [www.cad.org.uk](http://www.cad.org.uk)