




# ACTIVITY REPORT

## AEDH

### 2010-2011

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Through its constitutive charter and its statutes, AEDH aims at defending and promoting human rights in the European Union.

It supports any initiative that aims to train, promote and defend these rights within the European Union and so that these rights are recognized in their universality, their indivisibility and their validity. It campaigns for:

- A democratic and transparent Europe in which citizens have a real power;
- A Europe grounded on the respect of freedom of each and every person;
- A Europe which guarantees economic, social and cultural rights;
- A Europe respectful of the environment and engaged in sustainable development;
- A European without discrimination;
- A Europe, open to the world and taking into account its international responsibility.

AEDH calls for the existence and the recognition of a real citizen counter-power.


Among the important issues raised by the members of AEDH during its general assembly on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010, we can keep in mind:

- The cooperation between AEDH and its members is fundamental. It must be reflected by communication and sharing information and by partnerships for organisation of events or answers to European projects.
- Improving AEDH communication is an essential issue. The website must be more efficient and updated more often as to become a real tool for sharing information on European news and AEDH member news.

A reflection on the way to increase the number of individual members as well as include them in the association's development.

The working priority themes of AEDH which were chosen for 2010-2011 are:

- Asylum and immigration issues: the necessity to address the question of readmission agreements: an on-going dossier on the management of the EU frontiers by Frontex;
- Protection of personal data: in particular the outcome of the project to raise awareness on personal data (the comic-book) and a monitoring of the negotiations of the ACTA Treaty. But also the reform of the EU legal framework on data protection with the modification of the 1995 Directive;
- Economic and social rights in the economic and financial crisis but also the issue of social rights in the workplace;
- Roma, minority issues and the fight against discriminations, especially the future of the anti-discriminations directive;
- Imprisonment: prisons, detention centres, psychiatric hospitals; Democracy and European residency citizenship.



AEDH will achieve its goals thanks to:

- Political and legal monitoring;
- Addressing European institutions;
- Participation in the debates and collective actions in European networks which campaign for the respect of fundamental rights;
- The development and running of its network of member leagues;
- The writing of press releases, letters and thematic documents;
- Communication tools and dissemination of information;
- Material and human resources.

This activity report recounts all actions taken by AEDH during 2010-2011. Thanks to the support of its Board, members, employees, interns and volunteers, who are individual members or not, the association has been able to focus on its priorities and act according to its mandate.

# **I. Actions at the European institutions**

## ***1. Actions within the European Parliament***

The European Parliament is one of the main fields of work for AEDH. It is where the association is the most visible. This visibility has been strengthened in 2010 thanks to a great number of interventions of AEDH President or interventions by other members of AEDH Board, in hearings and conferences organized by the European Parliament. This development will not stop in 2011 since AEDH created an informal group of MEPs called “friends of AEDH”, which will improve and reinforce the presence and the influence of AEDH inside the European Parliament.

### **Regular committees**

AEDH visits the European Parliament for each parliamentary committee that discusses a topic related to human rights. It regularly attends the meetings of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) where topics such as immigration and asylum (covering issues such as: recast of the “qualification” and “procedures” directives as well as the recast of the “Eurodac” Regulation; proposals for directives on the so-called legal migration: “seasonal workers”, “intra-corporate transferees”, “single permit”), management of the Schengen area frontiers, data protection (recast of the 1995 Directive), internal security of the EU, especially the fight against terrorism and criminality (discussions on the “strategy on EU internal security”).

It is also present at meetings of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL) for any topics linked with economic and social rights (discussions on “the future of social services of general interest”), labour law (the three so-called proposals on legal migration for which LIBE is responsible), and on free movement of workers (discussions on “Promoting workers mobility within the EU”).

Occasionally, AEDH follows the activities of the Legal Affairs (JURI), Women’s Rights (FEMM), Development (DEVE), Human Rights (DROI) and Culture and Education (CULT) Committees. Each meeting is the subject of a report which recounts not only the debates but also gathers the official reference documents useful for the understanding of the interventions in the Committee. These reports are sent to Board members and are used as an important information base for the action themes of the association.

Moreover, besides the report for each meeting, “legislative forms” are written. They aim at summarizing the legislative state of play of each dossier. These forms are filled in after each meeting of the Committee by the person who attended it. As a result, it is easier to find out the state of play for each dossier that AEDH follows.

### **Public hearings**

Public hearings are regularly organised within the parliamentary committees. Open to everyone, they allow European citizens to take on current events and to understand how legal texts are discussed within the European institutions. Visitors or representatives from NGOs such as AEDH can take part in the public hearing debates only if they are invited to participate by the administration of the Committee responsible of the hearing. Besides, they are often encouraged to send their works to the MEPs on the topics examined.

AEDH has been invited by the LIBE Committee to speak in the public hearing on “The EU strategy on Roma inclusion” at the beginning of December 2010, as part of the preparation of the report of the European Parliament on the EU strategy on Roma inclusion (2010/2276/INI). Pierre Barge, President of AEDH, positively answered to the invitation and spoke among other invitees who represented the European institutions (many MEPs, Mrs. Viviane Reding, Vice-president of the European Commission, representatives of the EU Presidency, representatives of the Council of Europe, FRA), as well as the civil society (Greek Ombudsman, UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre, Policy Centre for Roma and Minorities). In his speech, Pierre Barge reminded the importance of a transparent and useful management of funds available for Roma; the importance of the availability of services of equal quality as those from which EU citizens benefit; the importance of monitoring EU decisions and finally, and especially, the recognition of an actual right to mobility.

AEDH also intervened in the meeting “Immigration and inclusion: dialogue with new generations for the development of a culture of peace” organized by the Culture and Education Committee in the frame of the UfM (Union for Mediterranean) in September 2010. Catherine Teule, Vice-president of AEDH, was one of the panellists. She also cooperated and participated in the writing of the report “Immigration and Inclusion” for which Patrick Le Hyaric (French MEP from the GUE/NGL political group) was rapporteur for the UfM.

During the year, AEDH also attended five public hearings organized by the LIBE Committee:

“The impact of the Charter of Fundamental Rights on the development of the area of freedom, security and justice” (June 2010);

“Democratic accountability in the area of freedom, security and justice: Europol, Eurojust, Frontex and Schengen” (October 2010);

“Data Protection in a Transatlantic Perspective in the framework of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters” (October 2010);

“EU counter-terrorism: main achievements and future challenges” (April 2011)

“Legal migration after Lisbon: seasonal workers and intra-corporate transferees” (April 2011)

AEDH also attended the Citizens’ Agora, a conference organized in January 2011 by the European Parliament together with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), as a conclusion to the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. Pierre Barge and Knut Albrecht actively participated in it especially in taking part to the panels on “the impact of the financial and economic crisis on migration flows and processes of inclusion” and on “access to a decent and sustainable way of life for people in precarious situations” as well as to the final consensus conference.

### **Conferences organised by political groups**

During the year, political groups organise many thematic conferences within the European Parliament. When a conference is related to the intervention themes of the association, AEDH attends the discussion.

As for the European Parliament public hearings, AEDH can as well either participate in these conferences or be invited as a speaker. That is how this year, Pierre Barge was invited to speak at a public hearing organized by the political group GUE/NGL in September 2010 called “Taking the lead: the European citizens’ initiative”. His intervention focused on data protection for data gathered in the framework of the citizens’ initiative.

Besides, AEDH was present at the following conferences:

- « Reacting to the crisis together: reflections from the labour movement and civil society » (June 2010), organized by the S&D group
- « Asylum : rights, duties and solidarity » (June 2010), organized by the S&D group
- « A new mandate for Frontex: a human rights perspective beyond the security obsession? » (September 2010), organized by the Greens/ALE group
- « EU and Libya - Strange bedfellows on Human Rights? Assessing current EU-Libya negotiations » (October 2010), organized by the Greens/ALE group
- « The futur of SSGI after the Lisbon Treaty » (December 2010), organized by the S&D group
- « Labour migration as a challenge for Europe : the Greens/EFA approach » (December 2010), organized by the Greens/ALE group

Every conference enables AEDH to improve its expertise on the topics examined but also enables representatives of AEDH to create contacts with MEPs as well as with representatives of the civil society.

The minutes from each one of these conferences is archived at AEDH.

#### **Intergroup on SGI and other parliamentary platforms**

Chaired by the MEP Françoise Castex, the European Parliament Intergroup on Public Services was created in January 2010. AEDH has been present since its early stages and is now registered and involved in the Intergroup as a civil society organisation. As such, we participated in seven meetings of the intergroup. This year, debates focused on social services of general interest while Belgium was holding the Presidency of the Council as well as on the possibility to create a new European framework for public services. The only regret AEDH can express is that the intergroup does not adopt a global approach on that issue but rather deals with topics in a segmented way, following the European Commission's agenda.

AEDH is also active in two new platforms within the Parliament: the European Parliament Platform on Secularism in Politics (EPPSP) and the Privacy Platform, both chaired by the MEP Sophia In't Veld.

## ***2. Relations with the European Commission***

Even though, to date, relations are less developed than with the Parliament, the relations and interventions of AEDH in the European Commission are not negligible.

AEDH attends indeed all meetings of the Active European Citizenship Group, organised by the DG Communication. They approximately represent four to five meetings a year.

Moreover, AEDH is present at the meetings, seminars and conferences organised by the Commission, where it is regularly invited. These invitations illustrate the recognition they have of AEDH. In the second half of 2010, AEDH participated to two stakeholders' conferences, one on the revision of the legal framework on data protection on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 and the other one on the Commission Communication on security scanners, on November 18<sup>th</sup> 2010. Following these two meetings, AEDH brought two written contributions to the European Commission, in which it detailed its position on the issues.

Besides, AEDH has been really active in answering to public consultations of the European Commission. In January 2011, it answered to a public consultation launched by DG Justice on "A comprehensive approach on personal data protection in the European Union" in which it insisted on the fact that it is more than necessary to include in the new legal framework for data protection the law enforcement field, but that it is also important to strengthen powers of data protection authorities and people rights to information as to ensure an actual and efficient protection of individuals. An executive summary of the answer to the consultation was made and both were diffused to the MEP in charge of the report in the Parliament.

In addition, AEDH, together with its German (Internationale Liga für Menschenrechte), French (Ligue des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen) and of Luxembourg (Ligue des Droits de l'Homme – Action Luxembourg Ouvert et Solidaire) member leagues, lodged an action for failure to fulfil obligations before the European Commission, against Luxembourg for indirect discrimination on grounds of nationality of workers in the treatment of transnational workers in Luxembourg who do not benefit from the same social rights than citizens of the country. This complaint led to the launch of proceedings for failure to fulfil obligations against Luxembourg.

### ***3. The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Civil Society Liaison Group of the EESC***

AEDH has been a member of the Civil Society Liaison Group of the Economic and Social Committee since 2007. It represents the human rights sector at the committee. The Liaison Group is a place for dialogue and proposals initiated by the EESC, and it includes EESC members and representatives of NGOs from the main sectors of civil society. A co-presidency includes the President of EESC and a representative for civil society organisations, currently, Jean-Marc Roirant.

During the year 2010-2011, AEDH went to four meetings of the Liaison Group. During one of this meeting the commitment of the Group's organisations into the European campaign for European statutes for associations was discussed. The campaign was then launched in November 2010 in the European Parliament with a written declaration.

In collaboration with other networks of civil society organisations which are members of the Liaison Group, AEDH contributes to further the value of a place for civil society organisations in talks and within the projects of the European institutions. Its presence within the Civil Society Liaison Group is a way to build closer links and work with the important civil society networks organised at the European level. Beyond the recognition it gains, being present allows AEDH to be informed and to strengthen relations with NGOs and trade unions from different European countries. With its participation in the Liaison Group, AEDH has been able to consolidate its relations with the Group II (workers) and the Group III (various interests) of EESC.

One of the Liaison Group priorities of 2011 is "The sustainable development and the well-being of the citizen". This priority fits with one of AEDH's field of work. That explains why it participated to a conference on sustainable development organized by the Liaison Group in March 2011.

In 2010-2011, AEDH attended several thematic conferences organised by EESC. It notably participated in the Press Officers seminar 2011 in January as to develop its communication policy; it also took part to a hearing on EU counter-terrorism policy in February 2011, to a hearing on the intra-corporate transferees' directive also in February and to the 106<sup>th</sup> meeting of the External Relations section, focused on the situation in Mediterranean countries.

Finally, AEDH was invited by EESC to participate in the open days of the European institutions on May, 7<sup>th</sup> 2011. AEDH accepted and held a stand in the EESC building where its representatives met a great number of European citizens. AEDH again thanks EESC for this invitation.

#### **4. The Fundamental Rights Agency**

AEDH is a member of the Fundamental Rights Platform of FRA. This platform is part of the Fundamental Rights Agency and was created by the Regulation of 15 February 2007. It works as a set of representatives from national civil society organisations and networks and makes proposals concerning the working programme and actions of the Agency. The platform meets once a year in a plenary session in Vienna, in the form of a Forum for the civil society, which includes conferences and debates on the situation of Human rights in EU and on FRA's activities. On April 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> 2010, Pierre Barge participated in the fourth meeting of the Fundamental Rights Platform and he took part to the workshop on "extreme poverty".

Pierre Barge is also a member of the Advisory Panel that regularly meets in Vienna. Its nine members support the work of the Director of FRA in organising and coordinating the Fundamental Rights Platform (FRP) and advise the preparation of associated meetings and events. They are regularly consulted apart from the meetings in Vienna by telephone or by electronic communication. As a member of the Fundamental Rights Platform, AEDH had to comment on the Agency's 2010 Annual Report. For that purpose, AEDH organized a meeting with other NGOs representatives from FEANTSA, the European Women's Lobby, and ATD Quart-Monde so that they can discuss the functioning of the Platform and then inform the Advisory Panel about the civil society positions.

Besides working within the Platform and the Advisory Panel, AEDH participates in the thematic conferences organised by FRA. Thus, Pierre Barge and some of AEDH staff attended FRA press conference for the publication of its report on "Homophobia, transphobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity". This press conference was held on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2010, in the presence of Morten Kjaerum, FRA Director. The report identified positives improvements regarding LGBT rights but underlines that some member States are still reluctant to authorize gay unions and that stereotypes persist and can therefore be at the origin of discriminations. On December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 2010, AEDH participated in FRA annual conference, jointly organized with the Belgian Presidency of the EU in Brussels, which dealt with "Ensuring justice and protection for all children". Pierre Barge and Knut Albrecht attended the conference as well as workshops in which they intervened.

AEDH widely spreads FRA reports, studies and positions. Every publication of the Agency is subject to a flashnews sent to all members of AEDH.

#### **5. Council of the European Union – Presidency of the European Union**

Concerning its relation with the Council of the EU and the European Council, AEDH's work consists mainly in following its activities as it is difficult for AEDH to be informed beforehand of when the Council is making decisions. During 2010-2011, AEDH participated in different events organised by the Belgian Presidency of the European Union. Through its participation in such events, AEDH ensures its presence in an institution which is typically difficult to access.



Thus, on July 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> 2010, AEDH participated in the “12<sup>th</sup> EU NGO forum on Human rights”, organized by the Belgian Presidency in Brussels. Pierre Barge, during the workshops, spoke about the necessity for the EU to adopt a more coherent approach between internal and external activities and policies of the EU.

AEDH was invited to attend the “3<sup>rd</sup> Forum on Social Services of General Interest (SSGI)” organized by the Belgian Presidency of the EU. AEDH represented the human rights aspect of SSGI. Major European persons in charge were present. Debates focused on the quality of SSGI and on the legal framework to be enforced as to obtain the expected quality. Following this Forum, AEDH started to work on a position paper summarizing its positions on SSGI in EU with the purpose of publishing an explanatory and argumentative document for European citizens, its member leagues and decision-makers.

Finally, AEDH also took part to the “4<sup>th</sup> Equality Summit on equality and diversity in employment”. This conference focused on analysing legal consequences of European directives on equal treatment which were adopted ten years ago and on development of policies of equality and diversity and tools in the field of employment. This summit was the occasion to discuss the role of key actors like social partners or public employers.

## **II. European NGO networks**

AEDH is more and more represented on the European scene. It is involved in different NGOs networks and has set up partnerships with NGOs which share its fields of work.

During the year, the association attends meetings organized by NGOs and networks based in Brussels. The proximity with associations and other lobbies which work at the EU level keeps AEDH informed. It enables it to gather documentation which includes converging and diverging points of view on different topics. These meetings encourage debates and reflections on the activities of AEDH. They also enable the planning of joint actions. AEDH sometimes deplores its lack of time and means to put a lot more of itself into its relationships with partners. However, in the present state of affairs, these meetings enable AEDH to be more and more know, to build ties, and to maintain relationships as to take part in joint actions. This year, AEDH indeed took part to several joint actions which will be detailed hereunder.

### ***1. Meetings in networks in which AEDH is a member***

#### **Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights**

In 2009, AEDH became a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights. Within this framework, it attends meetings organised during the year by the Network.

Moreover AEDH is involved, thanks to the participation of two members of AEDH Board, in two working groups of EMNHR: the working group “asylum and migration” to which Catherine Teule, Vice-chair of AEDH, participates in at the rate of two or three meetings a year, the last one was held in May 2011 in Rabat; and the working group “gender” in which Knut Albrecht recently replaced Kristiina Kouros. At the occasion of the first meeting he took part in, in Madrid in April 2011, he has been charged of keeping informed members of the group about European news on gender equality.

This year, AEDH has also been involved in the writing of the report “Calais, violence at the frontier”, together with EMNHR, FIDH and GADEM, which was issued in February 2011. Catherine Teule presented the report in one of the panel of the Maghreb seminar – a seminar organized by EMNHR in October 2010 – while Pierre Barge led a panel on European migration policies towards Maghreb countries.

### **The Euromed Non-Governmental Platform**

AEDH became a member of the Platform in 2009. This Platform gathers regional and local networks which act for the defense of human rights around the Mediterranean.

### **European Civic Forum**

Created in 2005, the European Civic Forum became an association in 2006. AEDH was a member of the Executive Board in the past. It is now a member of the Board of Directors, which does not prevent it from being very active within the Forum. It attends all meetings and has been particularly involved in the debate concerning the application of article 11 of the Lisbon Treaty (participatory citizenship and citizen initiative). This year, the European Civic Days, jointly organised with the EU Presidency, will be held in Warsaw during the Fall 2011. The AEDH will participate.

## ***2. Meetings in the networks AEDH works with***

### **Human Rights and Democracy Network, HRDN**

This informal network gathers NGOs working for the defense and promotion of human rights and democracy. This network gathers a high number of NGOs present in Brussels. Its works are led by a troika elected during the general assembly. The members of the network primarily work on the relations between the EU and third countries, which is why the discussions within the network are often about the question of human rights outside of the EU. However, in 2009, AEDH joined the working group on the Fundamental Rights Agency.

The network is well known by the European institutions to which it sends a lot of interventions in which it underlines the major challenges the presidency faces concerning human rights.

### **NGO Platform on asylum and immigration policy of the EU**

AEDH is part of the NGOs Platform on EU Asylum and Migration Policy. This platform is an informal group of NGOs present in Brussels. It meets approximately every three months. It is currently coordinated by UNHCR, which initiated the Platform in 1994. A high number of NGOs working in the field of asylum and migration are represented in the Platform (AI, ECRE, ENAR, Caritas Europe, JRS, Solidar, MdM, HRW, MPG, and others).

The Platform is shared into two subgroups: the asylum subgroup, coordinated by ECRE (European Council for Refugees and Exiles) and the migration subgroup, currently coordinated by MPG (Migration Policy Group). AEDH participates to every meeting of these subgroups in which informal discussions on the activities of each member, comments on the news from the European institutions and exchanges of information are taking place. These meetings enable AEDH to be updated on last news, to exchange information and to deepen existing contacts with members of the Platform.

### **European Network Against Racism, ENAR**

For many years now, AEDH has been a member of ENAR through its participation in the European coordination of ENAR. ENAR gathers European networks involved in the fight against racism in the European Union. Establishing coalitions and partnerships at the European and national level is one of the network's components. It is currently led by Saida Ounissi from FEMYSO, who replaced Doris Peschke from the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) in December. FEMYSO represents the organisation at the general assembly and at European seminars and conferences organised by ENAR.

### **CELSIG, European Liaison Committee on Services of General Interest**

AEDH is a member of CELSIG and participates in most of the network meetings. CELSIG is an action and reflection plan which gathers NGOs, research centres and trade unions. This year, AEDH participated in four meetings of CELSIG; one of them was about SSGI.

### **European Social Forum**

AEDH is also present at the European Social Forum. It participates in the discussions which continue by email through the mailing lists of the Forum. AEDH took part in preliminary meetings of the ESF in Istanbul where it finally decided not to go because of a difficult organisation. These preliminary meetings have been though useful since AEDH met other organisations and has been able to point out the importance of Human rights in topics tackled by the ESF.

Preliminary assemblies are still held, however, the future of the ESF is uncertain, that's why the location of the next meeting is still unknown.

### **European Platform for Migrant Workers' Rights, EPMWR**

We participated in the creation of the European Platform for Migrant Workers' Rights (EPMWR) network. This network is campaigning for the ratification of the United Nations Convention on Migrants Rights by the countries of the European Union and by the EU itself, which is from now on competent to ratify international conventions on its behalf, since it acquired legal personality with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. AEDH contributed to the campaign for the ratification of the United Nations Convention on Migrants Rights led by December 18 on behalf of EPMWR, in diffusing the appeal to its members, its network and MEPs.

### **FEANTSA**

The European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) is campaigning against housing exclusion in Europe. AEDH pays particular attention to their work since they are the only network which focuses on homelessness at the European level. Since one of the working themes of AEDH is the protection of social rights, AEDH tries to build closer ties with FEANTSA. AEDH thus participates regularly in its activities and it particularly took part in the high level conference on homelessness in December 2010.

### **ATD Quart-Monde**

ATD Quart-Monde, a worldwide working NGO, struggles for human rights, with the objective of ensuring the exercise of their rights to poor people and to move towards eradication of extreme poverty. AEDH has strengthened its

relationship with this network and in this context, it was present at the Adult Education University of the association in November 2010. This event was aimed at involving young people and people in precarious situation in the European debate on fight against poverty. A wide range of topics were discussed (education, training, work, place of young people very poor in society). Pierre Barge also participated in the seminar in March 2011 "Extreme Poverty and Human Rights" organized by ATD Quart-Monde and CNCDH in Paris.

#### **European Trade Union Conference ETUC-CES**

ETUC, which represents 83 unions in 36 European countries, is a network whose importance can not be ignored on the European scene. Indeed, ETUC is involved in many areas and organizes a large number of events. Therefore, AEDH thinks it is important to establish a strong relation with ETUC, particularly in the field of economic and social rights. To this end, AEDH met leaders of ETUI (European Trade Union Institute), including its Director, to discuss modalities of further cooperation. AEDH is now waiting for the renewal of the leadership of ETUC to resume discussions. In this context, AEDH participates actively in meetings of the Joint Social Conference.

#### **PICUM**

PICUM, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, is a non-governmental organisation based in Brussels. This NGO aims at promoting the respect of human rights for all undocumented migrants in Europe. AEDH maintains excellent relations with their representatives in Brussels and is regularly invited to attend the conferences they organise. Relations between AEDH and PICUM have been strengthened this year. In that context, AEDH collaborated on a work about the "seasonal workers" proposal for a directive. In that framework, AEDH met, with PICUM and other NGOs, the MEPs in charge of the dossier and published a joint declaration on April 2011.

Besides, AEDH participated in a seminar in the framework of PICUM's General Assembly.

#### **Migreurop**

Migreurop is a European and African network of activists and researchers working on a priority theme: international migration. It vigorously denounces European migrant imprisonment policies.

AEDH signed the "Appeal for a united intervention of the EU in the Mediterranean" launched by Migreurop in March 2011.

### ***3. Other thematic conferences***

#### **"Migrant Women in Europe: political issues and good practices for an inclusive Europe"**

This conference organised in Brussels in June 2010 at the occasion of the launching of the European network was about double discrimination that migrant women face because of their gender and their migratory status. Topics such as administrative proceedings concerning marital status or divorce, access to education, access to employment, violence against women, have been examined and debated. Isabelle Durant, MEP and Vice-chair of the European Parliament participated in the conference.

### **“Minimum income: laying the foundations for a fairer Europe!”**

The AEDH attended the EAPN (European Anti-Poverty Network) conference on minimum income in EU and fight against poverty, in September 2010. This conference was part of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. European institutions' representatives were present, such as M. Laszlo Andor, Commissioner responsible for employment, social affairs and inclusion but not only. Civil society as well as people living in precarious situation gave witness from their everyday life and called out European decision-makers.

### **“EUSTaCEA project – an European strategy to fight older people mistreatment**

The AEDH was invited by AGE Platform Europe to assist to their EUSTaCEA project conclusion conference on November 2010 at the European Parliament. Reflections focused on care providers and over the exchange of good practices between Member States and Serge Kollwelter, Board Member of AEDH who was present, raised the issue of internal controls and external standards responsibility towards the elderly. The conference culminated in the adoption of an oral question and a resolution on long-term care for older people which includes, inter alia, a request to launch a Green Paper on the issue.

### **“Roma, Sinti and Travellers: What future, what prospects in the European Union? ”**

AEDH was invited to attend and to intervene to the Conference of Experts "Roma, Sinti and Travellers: What future, what prospects in the European Union? ", jointly organized by the Platform Migrants and European Citizenship and the Jean Monnet Association on November 26, 2010. The conference was structured around three panels composed by individuals working on Roma issues at European and national level aiming to find ways of thinking and recommendations to improve national and communitarian mechanisms for Roma, Sinti and Travellers populations. Pierre Barge intervened in the first panel, in which he highlighted the discriminations faced by Roma in the EU underlining the existing instruments at EU level to ensure equal treatment of all citizens, as the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Pierre Barge pointed out the physical abuses suffered by Roma in many countries. Through this conference, AEDH has established contacts with many personalities including Karim MEP Delli.

### **“Data Protection: 30 years later: from European to International Standards”**

AEDH attended in January 2011 the conference organized jointly by the European Commission and the Council of Europe during the data protection day which highlighted the issue of reform of both European (including the 1995 Directive on data protection) and international instruments (ILO Convention No. 108 of the Council of Europe), issues on which AEDH is very committed.

As part of its work on the protection of personal data, and following the reforms on the legal framework of data protection in the EU and the ILO Convention No. 108, AEDH was heard by the Advisory Committee Convention 108 of the Council of Europe, consequently requiring for the observer status.

### **Left Behind: The Impact of Economic Migration on Children Left Behind and Their Families "**

Knut Albrecht, Board Member of AEDH, attended, in March 2011, a conference organized jointly with Fondazione Eurochild Patrizio Paoletti and L'albero della vita, concerning the situation faced by 500 000 children from Eastern European countries (Romania, Poland and the Baltics) deprived of a normal family life due to the departure of their parents, or their father only, in the western countries of the EU to work. These conditions often cause very serious consequences for these children, starting from psychological disorders to suicide following the burst of the family. The conference aimed to inform and build a new network to react to this little known drama at the European level.

### **"Supporting the development Of The EU Roma strategy "**

The AEDH visited in April 2011, the conference organized by Partners for Democratic Change International, the development strategy of the European Union for the Roma. Since the discussion was only about the strategy of inclusion of Roma, AEDH raised the issue of violence against Roma, a question that is never addressed by EU representatives. The Commission, who was present, said that this is an issue within the competence of Member States and therefore, it could not intervene. But other associations supported the AEDH urging the Commission to push Member States to make every effort in order to end this kind of violence.

## **III. Relations with AEDH members**

One of the principles that guide the AEDH action is to increase the exchanges with its members and to strengthen and lead its network. On the occasion of its visits in European countries, AEDH contacts its national member in order to visit, meet and discuss with its staff and organize joint actions.

These meetings with AEDH members' boards are an opportunity to have very fruitful exchanges, to have a better knowledge of our members' actions on the field, to explain the AEDH activities in Brussels, and to better understand what we expect from each other. During this past year, interactions between members and the Board or the AEDH office were numerous and diverse. The AEDH is very pleased about the network's vitality!

The other main objective of AEDH is to build a European network of associations working in the field of human rights that represents the diversity of the European Union. Thanks to a more developed and larger network, the AEDH tries to reach out more citizens, through its members. In that perspective, AEDH continues to establish contacts with new associations in order to establish itself in European countries where it is not already represented.

This year's new task was to make an effort to build partnerships with specialised associations and networks. These collaborations provide new expertise and give a particular dimension to our actions.

The enthusiasm of its individual members also led AEDH to meet with some of them to discuss how they could become involved in the association's activities.

## **1. AEDH members**

### **Trips and meetings**

#### **\* *Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía***

From 3 to 5 December 2010 took place the International Days of Human Rights in Cadiz, Spain. This event organised by the APDHA was entitled "Human rights, a utopia in time of crisis?". An important delegation of the AEDH attended this event, it included Pierre Barge, president, José Rebelo, vice-president, Knut Albrecht, member of the Board, Claude Brulant, individual member in charge of the working group on imprisonment, and a permanent employee of AEDH.

AEDH organised on Sunday 5 December a panel on "The crisis and the processes of impoverishment in the European Union" in which intervened Pierre Barge, Knut Albrecht, José Rebelo and Rui Pedrosa (Portuguese League of Human Rights-Civitas).

This trip to Cadiz also brought the opportunity to organise a meeting with several representatives of the APDHA (the president, the person in charge of migration issues, the person in charge of imprisonment issues, the person in charge of international relations). During this meeting AEDH and APDHA discussed their future collaborations, in the frame of the European project "Grundtvig" and of the AEDH project on imprisonment.

#### **\* *Liga Italiana dei diritti dell'Uomo***

In December AEDH participated in the annual Congress of the LIDU, one of its Italian members, that took place on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of December in Florence, Italy. Thanks to this trip, AEDH was updated on the LIDU activities and met a great number of its leaders and members. It was decided with them to strengthen the network of Italian citizens committed to the defense of human rights.

#### **\* *Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (France)***

AEDH met several times with LDH elected representatives and employees in Paris to work in particular on European projects (ongoing or at an early stage).

#### **\* *Ligue des Droits de l'Homme – Action Luxembourg Ouvert et Solidaire***

AEDH met Serge Kollwelter and Claude Weber, president of ALOS-LDH, in Brussels on several occasions, in the frame of conferences and in order to organise the AEDH General Assembly planned in May 2011 in the city of Luxembourg, in premises kindly put at the disposal of AEDH by ALOS-LDH.

#### **\* *Internationale Liga für Menschenrechte***

Several meetings with Knut Albrecht, representative of the Internationale Liga für Menschenrechte, took place in Brussels, in the context of conferences or to work at the AEDH headquarters.

## **\* Liga Portuguesa dos direitos do Homen – Civitas**

In the frame of a meeting of the AEDH Board, organised jointly with José Rebelo (Civitas), the elected representatives of the AEDH and permanent employees gathered in Lisboa at the beginning of April 2011 in order to discuss the organisation of the General Assembly and current affairs. AEDH took the opportunity of this meeting to visit Civitas premises and meet the President of the Portuguese league as well as its employees.

### **Invitations to conferences**

AEDH is always pleased to answer positively to invitations sent by its members.

It intervened in the APDHA conference on “Human rights: a utopia in time of crisis?” (see above).

Pierre Barge also actively participated in the January 2011 meeting of the French LDH working group on Europe as he gave a presentation of the state of human rights in the EU.

AEDH was invited to intervene in a conference on the situation in North Africa and its consequences in Europe, organised in Lisboa on 2 April 2011 by the Portuguese League-Civitas (member of AEDH). Pierre Barge had the floor for 15 minutes and insisted on the fact that it was more than necessary for the EU to welcome the migrants coming from North Africa and to grant them with legal status.

It is important to underline that sometimes member organisations invite AEDH to conferences and that AEDH is not able to answer positively to these invitations because of its busy agenda. For example it was the case for the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the human rights week of the Belgian LDH (French-speaking) on “Liberty, equality, security” that addressed the issue of securization.

## **2. New members**

During each trip in an EU Member State, for seminars, conferences or other matters, AEDH uses the opportunity to get in touch with organisations or people who could become member organisations or individual members of AEDH and/or could participate in establishing a permanent structure for defending human rights at the national or regional level.

### **United Kingdom**

In accordance with its work program aiming at developing its network in countries where it is not yet present, AEDH met in November 2010 with Mrs Amanda Ariss, director of the Equality and Diversity Forum in United Kingdom, a network of associations and NGOs working in the field of the fight against discriminations and of human rights. Pierre Barge and a permanent employee presented the AEDH activities to Mrs Ariss and got to know in details this important British network. Common views on the issues of equality and tolerance emerged between AEDH and Equality and Diversity Forum, in order to lay the grounds of future collaboration. It goes without saying that AEDH will meet again the representatives of Equality and Diversity Forum and its member organisations during a coming trip to UK.

### **Bulgaria**

Pierre Barge went to Bulgaria from the 20th to the 23rd of November 2010 in order to meet and support Bulgarian activists wishing to create a human rights organisation. This meeting was made possible thanks to the relations previously established with one of the Bulgarian activists through Generation



112, partner member of AEDH. AEDH was specifically asked to assist the creation of a Bulgarian association. AEDH was able to meet with numerous Bulgarian citizens committed to defending human rights and wishing to act collectively.

Following this visit during which Pierre Barge shared his expertise in management and associative commitment, the group of Bulgarian citizens has reinforced itself and is in the way of its institutionalisation. AEDH has great hopes that a Bulgarian human rights association will be created in the course of 2011, such a broad structure would be a first in this country.

### **Czech Republic**

In January 2011, AEDH went to Prague in order to meet again the representatives of the Czech Helsinki Committee, with whom initial contacts had already been established the year before. This trip was also the occasion to meet new human rights organisations.

This visit was very fruitful as the Czech Helsinki Committee is now partner member of AEDH since the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2011. Its candidacy as full members will be presented during the General Assembly.

Moreover AEDH got in contact with three other organisations (The Association for Integration and Migration ; Romodrom ; Inbaze Community Center), with whom we decide to mutually share information on our activities.

## **3. Partner members**

### **EDRi**

EDRi is a European network working on digital rights and privacy protection. EDRi and AEDH have often worked together in the past and EDRi became a partner member of AEDH in September 2009.

### **Génération 112**

Génération 112 was created in 2009. It is a reflection platform on 12 topics. The association aims at generations which experienced the fall of the Berlin wall. The objective is to encourage mutual understanding between Eastern and Western citizens, notably through the build-up of projects in Bulgaria and Romania. It is about seeing how problems are dealt with on the Eastern side and on the Western side in order to give a voice to all.

AEDH has developed very good relations with Erwan Quinio and Adrian Pantev, co-founders of Génération 112.

### **Solidar**

Solidar is a European network of NGOs working to promote social justice in Europe and in the world. It is composed of 52 member organisations, including 20 in the EU. Solidar cooperates with civil society organisations and trade unions.

AEDH has built and developed very good relations with Solidar over the past years and has many common objectives with this network. Solidar proposed its candidacy to become partner member of AEDH to the Board, and this candidacy was accepted on 28 February 2011. AEDH followed the same process and proposed its candidacy to the Board of Solidar, which was approved. The General Assembly of Solidar will take place on June 2011 in Brussels and will decide on the membership of AEDH. Pierre Barge was invited to attend.

On 1 March 2011 AEDH was invited by Solidar to attend an award ceremony called the Silver Rose Awards. The award was attributed to Robert Badinter. AEDH and Solidar also worked together on the current issue of seasonal

work.

#### **4. Individual members**

The AEDH network also includes individual members, who are more than a hundred, present in 11 European countries (including Switzerland). These individual members support AEDH thanks to their membership, but also in some cases thanks to their voluntary involvement in the association. They contribute to circulate information from the national level to the European level on specific issues regarding human rights.

AEDH also contributes to spreading initiatives undertaken by its members in their country, such the publication of books on human rights. For example, Gwendoly Albert, an American individual member who lived for a long time in Czech Republic, translates from Czech to English many articles from Romea (a Czech news website) on the situation of Roma people and extreme-right movements in Czech Republic. These translations are send to AEDH which then constitutes collections of articles on these themes.

A Spanish individual member, teacher at the Alcala University, regularly sends us information on initiatives in Spain around the issue of human rights.

### **IV. AEDH communication**

Today, it is time for AEDH to rationalize its communication directed to its members, but also to European citizens. We have to separate the website from other communication tools developed by AEDH for its global impact and its various purposes. The communication specifically directed to the members is based on several tools and uses internal communication channels.

On the contrary, external communication, which is a token of AEDH visibility, uses a different approach. Finally, the organisation of events during the past year allowed AEDH to gain more recognition at the European level.

#### **1. The website**

The website is indivisible from AEDH other activities because it represents a window for AEDH to the outside: organisations, citizens and institutions. It is particularly directed to all actors who want to find information and a position on human rights in the European Union. The update of the website is essential and the emphasis is put on current news. The general objective is to turn the AEDH website into a reference place concerning human rights for members and internet users. As it has always been, press releases are systematically published online. Thematic documents produced during the year are also added. For each thematic document, the internet user can also find the main legal texts which correspond to the theme, the AEDH position on the topic when it exists and general documentation regarding the topic. We pay special attention to the news section. The latest additions on AEDH website and the latest newsletter are now visible on the home page. The newsletter is sent to members on Friday and published online the following Monday. The latest works of members are also published under the section "News from our member leagues".

Statistics show a sharp increase in the use of the website during 2010, with a passage of some 300 daily visits in early 2010, to more than 400 daily visits in late 2010, with peak attendance to 615 visits in early December 2010. For the beginning of 2011, this increase is confirmed and a new attendance record was set in March 2011 with 635 visits. As a result, the average site visits reached 500 visits per days (488). Per month, this amounts to about 14 000

site visits.  
The efforts lead to a greater visibility of AEDH.

## **2. Communication directed to AEDH members**

### **Newsletter**

The Newsletter offers a weekly presentation of European current news regarding human rights. It is disseminated on a regular basis in its English and French versions. Beforehand, it contained a section for news, one for the agenda of the European Parliament and one dedicated to the agenda of AEDH.

The newsletter has been updated according to wishes of the Board members and individual members. As a consequence, three new sections have been added: a section on legislative news, one for the new case-law and the last one for members' news.

These sections are used to inform European citizens about Human rights situation in the EU and to strengthen communication with members. The newsletter is sent to all members on Friday and is posted on the website the following Monday as to educate the greatest number of citizens.

It seeks to create debate, or at least to encourage reflection. Since the last General Assembly, AEDH sent 46 newsletters to its members. The diffusion includes 300 people minimum knowing that this figure has to be re-evaluated upwards taking into account the multiplier effect of the posting online.

### **Flashnews**

AEDH regularly sends Flashnews to its members. This tool aims at informing in real-time the recipients about the vote of a European text or about the announcement of a new Commission project. The method is advantageous: it is more concise than the newsletter and is a way to daily update members of our network. It is a way to send limited and specific information, usually without any comment. As far as we can, information is published on the AEDH website, in the News section.

AEDH has sent more than 50 Flashnews during the past year. We therefore notice an increase in the number of flashnews sent. This figure is higher than the year before. AEDH choose to turn its attention especially to FRA and EDPS news. Indeed, every time EDPS and FRA publish a work, AEDH sends a flashnews.

### **Member news**

AEDH has developed a new means of communication during the year: the Member News. The aim is clearly to strengthen the network and encourage exchange. AEDH disseminates the information it receives from its members to its entire network. It includes forwarding the newsletters coming from some members, and announcements of campaigns launched by others and publications of reports or positions. It gives the opportunity to note common concerns and sometimes to exchange good practices in order to create a European movement for the defense of human rights.

Since June 2010, AEDH has sent about 50 Member News.

### **Letter to the Board**

Between June 2010 and October 2010, AEDH issued four Letters to the Board. This letter, sent to the members of the Board only, aimed at informing members of AEDH activities during the past month, and at spreading reports of parliamentary meetings in which AEDH was present. An "agenda" section then used to present the work program of the association for the next month. The dissemination of this letter has been stopped since October 2010 because it appeared to the members of the Board as a priority to improve and consolidate other communication tools, especially the newsletter distributed to a higher number of citizens and thus, which constituted a showcase of activities and positions of the AEDH. Adding new entries to the newsletter (legislative news, new case-law and members' news) shows the AEDH commitment to do so and justifies the decision of stopping the letter of the Board.

## ***3. AEDH visibility***

### **Press releases**

AEDH regularly takes positions at the European level to inform European citizens and call on policy makers when there is a breach of Human rights or even only a risk to violate fundamental rights. AEDH has often issued joint press releases with some of its member leagues, to draw attention to situations on violation of human rights taking place in the 27 EU countries and being related to European issues, such as the situation of asylum seekers or harmonization of social rights. AEDH leans its action upon reactivity of its members of the Board, representatives of its member leagues, as well as its employees. When AEDH took position on a national event, it always consults its member concerned as to get its point of view and gather accurate information and updates on the situation.

Through its press releases, AEDH encourages citizens to seize the great debates at the European level and to get involved in European democratic life. The press releases are disseminated within the AEDH network, to its members, to MEPs, to the relevant Directorates-General of the European Commission, to the relevant formation of the Council, to the national and European press, to European networks and NGOs as well as to a set of important persons. Each week, press releases are attached to the Newsletter. Press releases are widely spread to European citizens thanks to their posting on the website in their French and English versions and sometimes in Italian, German or Spanish.

During the past year, AEDH disseminated the following press releases:

<b>AEDH press releases in 2010-2011</b>	
<b>12 July 2010</b>	<b>The AEDH asks members of the European Parliament not to approve the readmission agreement with Pakistan (French, English, Italian)</b>
<b>2 September 2010</b>	<b>The European Commission and Parliament must intervene immediately; Roma cannot be used as scapegoats anymore (French, English)</b>
<b>24 September 2010</b>	<b><i>Joint Press release AEDH-LDH France-ALOS LDH Luxembourg :</i> Discrimination against cross-border workers: An unacceptable and intolerable "cure" for the crisis (French, English, German, Italian)</b>
<b>30 September 2010</b>	<b>The AEDH questions EU agency FRONTEX during the visit of the Delegation of the European Parliament (French, English)</b>
<b>20 October 2010</b>	<b><i>Joint Press release AEDH-Otwarta Rzeczpospolita (Poland) :</i> AEDH and Otwarta Rzeczpospolita denounce the Polish Government's silence on the recent discriminatory comments and acts (French, English, Polish)</b>
<b>17 November 2010</b>	<b><i>Joint Press release AEDH-Internationale Liga für Menschenrechte :</i> The AEDH and the Liga appeal to the authorities and the German government to immediately stop the expulsions of Roma to Kosovo (French, English, German)</b>
<b>19 November 2010</b>	<b><i>Joint Press release AEDH-LDH France-FIDH :</i> Aurore Martin must not be handed over to the Spanish special courts (French, English)</b>
<b>13 December 2010</b>	<b>The AEDH asks the EU to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers on the occasion of its 20th anniversary (French, English, Italian)</b>
<b>15 December 2010</b>	<b>The AEDH welcomes the reject by the European Parliament of the proposal for a directive establishing a "single permit" (French, English)</b>
<b>11 February 2011</b>	<b>Combatting child pornography is necessary but must not be used as a pretext to limit Internet access (French, English)</b>
<b>11 April 2011</b>	<b>The European Union must face its responsibilities in dealing with migration (French, English)</b>
<b>27 April 2011</b>	<b>The European Framework for Roma integration: the AEDH calls upon European Union to strengthen its position and to take into consideration acts of violence against Roma (French, English, Italian)</b>

## Translations

For many years now, AEDH has relied on volunteers to translate its texts and positions. The two working languages of AEDH are English and French, any communication has to be in both languages. Concerning the joint press releases made with a member, the text is systematically translated into the language of the Member State concerned. The member league is generally in charge of this version. AEDH wants to point out the work done by its network of professional translators and interpreters who are involved on a voluntary basis in the activities of the association. These two networks are managed by a translator and an interpreter; both of them attached to AEDH action. They take responsibility for leading these networks. This symbolic citizen involvement illustrates the spirit in which AEDH wants to work: citizens who give their time to defend fundamental rights according to their competences! AEDH can rely on the support of its former and current interns, who are and remain available for translations and proofreading in their mother tongue. All this work is a real challenge because it requires a lot of time and energy. It serves the AEDH cause and is justified by the obligation to be as multicultural and multi-linguistic as possible. AEDH wants to warmly thank all the voluntary translators for their excellent work and their precious help.

## 2010 greeting card

Every year, AEDH wishes its members and colleagues a happy new year. Each year, AEDH makes contact with artists willing to join its wishes. This year, AEDH picked a painting of a painter, Bruce Clarke, who has kindly made available one of his works titled "It's possible" to AEDH. AEDH thanks again Bruce Clarke.

## Interviews

This year, AEDH was asked repeatedly to give interviews and to express its position on many issues, including:

- On September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Pierre Barge was interviewed by EuroparlTV over the ongoing legislative procedure on the right to information in criminal proceedings. This interview was broadcast on European Parliament website.
- On September 17<sup>th</sup>, the newspaper *La Tribune de Genève* issued an article entitled "Discrimination affects the Roma throughout Europe" concerning the situation of Roma people in Europe, through an interview with Pierre Barge. This article enabled a diffusion of AEDH's position on discrimination against Roma and the importance of tolerance and intercultural dialogue in the EU.
- Pierre Barge was also interviewed by the newspaper *L'Humanité* in order to feed an article published on September 18<sup>th</sup> 2010 entitled "An isolated France at the coming out of the European Council". This article enabled the AEDH to widen the debate on the situation of Roma, and migrants in the EU in general, emphasizing in particular the role of Tampere and Stockholm programs.
- On September 21<sup>st</sup> 2010, a joint press release made by AEDH, ALOS-LDH (Luxembourg) and LDH France, was taken over by the Luxembourg press under the title "Luxembourg des 'Protectionnisme primaire' beschuldigt".
- On February 1<sup>st</sup> 2011, Pierre Barge participated to a debate organized by EuroparlTV on the construction of the wall on the border between Greece and Turkey to fight irregular immigration.

MEP Stavros Lambrinidis also participated in the debate. The debate is available online on the European Parliament website.

- In April 2011, LIDU, AEDH Italian member league developed, thanks to the initiative of Maricia Belfiore Bagnato, a television program called "Diritti, Doveri e Democrazia", which aims at promoting dialogue and discussion on Human rights and in which AEDH is clearly highlighted. Maricia Belfiore presents AEDH and she also transcribes the newsletter. The broadcast is continuously available on the Internet.
- On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2011, Pierre Barge gave two interviews, one to the EuradioNantes radio, on the reform of the Hungarian Constitution, and the other one to a reporter from *Aqui Europa*, a Spanish newspaper covering news from the EU. In this case, he intervened on the issue of migrants' freedom of movement, arrived in the EU after the revolutions in the Maghreb.

#### **Meetings with European citizens**

AEDH claims to be a citizen association. A part of its work is citizen education: explaining continuously its activities and positions helps for a better understanding of the political functioning of the European institutions. In 2009, it was approached several times by students interested by the actions of the association.

In November 2010 the team of AEDH went to meet students at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, to distribute its comics on the Protection of Personal Data developed under the project "Privacy, Rights? Inform and educate young adults" under the DG JLS European Programme "Personal data protection", explaining the importance of protecting privacy. AEDH employees had the chance to talk with many students over Human rights defense in the EU and over the European citizenship. Throughout the year, AEDH was contacted repeatedly by graduated or PhD students working on their final paper or thesis, who were looking for information on the situation of Human rights in the EU and on the activities of AEDH. AEDH permanent employees have shown themselves available to these citizens to answer their questions and provide them with information, including the functioning of civil society at European level, or on the EU human rights policy in the Mediterranean area, in connection with migration issues.

Finally during the EESC open day on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2011, the AEDH met many European citizens who came to visit EU institutions and civil society stands. This meeting point enabled a constructive exchange with a large number of students but also with European officials.

## **4. Events**

### **AEDH holds a meeting–debate on “Under surveillance”, European Parliament – June, 15<sup>th</sup> 2010**

Within the framework of its project "*Personal data, what rights? Increasing awareness and informing young European citizens*", carried out by the French LDH and AEDH as a partner, AEDH organized a meeting-debate between students and project partners. Mrs. Marie-Christine Vergiat, a GUE/NGL MEP, supported the meeting that took place in Strasbourg, during the European Parliament Plenary session.

### **AEDH holds a conference on “Personal data, what rights? Increasing awareness and informing young European citizens”, EESC – June, 24<sup>th</sup> 2010**

In order to conclude with the project "*Personal data, what rights? Increasing awareness and informing young European citizens*", AEDH organized a

conference with members of the EESC – by the courtesy of whom the premises were lent – members of the European Parliament and representatives from the European Commission. Such a conference aimed at submitting the project's conclusions and some of the national legislations on data protection.

**AEDH participates to the “Foundations of the Green meeting” – November, 13th 2010**

Pierre Barge was invited to embody the voice of Human rights in Europe during a round-table of the Foundations of the Greens meeting in France called “Environmentalism in politics, in Europe and throughout the world”. This round-table was led by Noël Mamère, Member of the French Parliament. Pierre Barge made a speech, along with Mrs Dominique Voynet, Mr. William Bourdon (lawyer), Mr. El Ali Haïdar (President of the Senegalese and West African environmentalist and green federation) and Mrs. Monica Frassoni (spokeswoman for the European Green party). Mr. Barge spoke about the EU asylum and migration policies and asylum seekers and migrants' human rights. The European founding values, such as reception and solidarity, were brought to mind, along with the required measures to guarantee the respect of such values and rights.

**AEDH participates to the World Social Forum, Dakar – February, 2011**

AEDH participated to the WSF in Dakar that occurred in February 2011. Mr. Serge Kollwelter represented AEDH in several workshops, some of them concerning migratory policies. The WSF enabled the question of the world's vision on the EU to be raised, in terms of migration policies for instance. Most of the time, because of Frontex's role, this vision is a negative one. The EU is seen as disrespectful towards fundamental rights. AEDH also participated to meetings organized within the framework of the Barcelona consensus, signed by AEDH.

**AEDH supports the documentary film “*Ninguri : the new face of Italy*” at the Best of One World Festival Film 2011 – May, 19<sup>th</sup> 2011**

The Best of One World Film Festival took place in Brussels from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2011. The Prague film festival, One World, is the most important European festival dealing with human rights. During the Best of One World, only the best movies selected in Prague are broadcasted. This year, the festival was organized in partnership with the Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN), to which we belong. On this occasion, AEDH supported the Antonio Martino's documentary film “*Niguri: the new face of Italy*” which is about immigration in Italia. Considering the success of last year's edition of the festival, AEDH expects a great audience this year.



## **V. AEDH ressources**

### **1. Headquarters**

The AEDH office is situated on the second floor of 33, rue de la Caserne in 1000 Brussels. AEDH has been in these premises since July 2007.

Since September 2010, AEDH premises were enlarged. Indeed, AEDH has an additional office adjacent to the first. For now, it allows AEDH to consider an increase in permanent staff and trainees without restraint of moving out, but it also enables small meetings with the Board or representatives of other NGOs and to store archived documents. In case of larger meeting, AEDH has a meeting room shared with several organizations.

### **2. Material**

AEDH updated its phone and internet service, which enabled it to reduce its spending on telephony and internet but AEDH will have to revise its informatics. Indeed, the current system does not allow trainees and permanent staff to work efficiently.

### **3. Financial means**

#### **Contributions of our members**

It is essential for AEDH to be able to rely on its members, notably concerning the annual contributions. This has not been the main financial resource for the last two years but it is still necessary for the daily functioning of AEDH and at some points during the year. It is time now more than ever to find new funding resources, always in a spirit of independence and development of common projects.

AEDH also counts on the contributions from its individual members. This contribution is important for us as well. This is the reason why AEDH wants to keep recruiting new individual members. In this perspective, AEDH began thinking about launching a major campaign of individual memberships. As to do so, some communication tools have been updated and others have been created. Work on the recipients of this campaign has been done and the campaign will be launched at the General Assembly 2011. This campaign was possible thanks to the work of an intern in connection with Noëlle Casanova, representative of individual members within the Board. It will be disseminated with the assistance of members of the Board in particular, who will take charge of the dissemination in their country. That dissemination is possible since AEDH translated the campaign tools in different EU languages.

Individual contributions enable AEDH in a short term period to justify its self-financing. On the other hand, the support of active citizens remains fundamental for AEDH action. Their involvement in AEDH activities, not really quantifiable but surely true, is one of the foundations of what AEDH intends to be, a citizens' movement.

The permanent staff is now in charge of managing individual memberships.

### **European grants**

AEDH received in 2011, for the fourth consecutive time, an operating grant from the DG Communication of the European Commission, "Europe for citizens", and measure for structural support to civil society organizations at the European level.

The proposal was submitted in autumn 2010 and AEDH was given notice at the end of February. It counts on the support of the EU for the programme of activities proposed in its application.

In February 2011, AEDH responded, as a partner, in the Grundtvig European project, led by the French League of Human Rights, under the "Education throughout life" program. This project aims at creating training packages on Human rights for migrants and Roma. It brings together five partners, all members of AEDH, who are present in five European countries. If the project is selected, the partners' work will start early 2012. AEDH wants to thank Viviane De Lafond, administrative officer of the LDH France, who provided valuable assistance to AEDH in the design of the project.

These grants show that AEDH is gaining ability to implement projects and is a strong partner. However, responding to calls for proposals and drafting final reports of activities are heavy administrative duties which sometimes take precedence over in-depth dossiers. It is therefore essential that AEDH gains independence by increasing its own resources.

### **Foundations**

To diversify its funding sources, AEDH wishes to contact foundations. An ongoing work is currently being undertaken since Fall 2010 as to identify foundations that can support AEDH for its projects or on its functioning.

Many foundations fund projects in the area of human rights, social justice, protection of minorities and vulnerable persons, or the promotion of democracy and peace. Searching for existing foundations which correspond with the objectives of AEDH requires a long term commitment. It can only bear fruit in several months, but it is one way to ensure the success of AEDH projects and sustainability of its financing.

## **VI. AEDH components**

AEDH gathers leagues and associations for the defense of human rights in countries of the European Union.

Since the last general assembly in May 2010, AEDH now has 26 members present in 19 countries including two partner members which aspire to become full members representing two other EU member States. It also has three European networks as partner members. Finally, it is supported by some individual members.

## 1. Active members

AEDH active members	
Austria	Österreichische Liga für Menschenrechte
Belgium (French-speaking)	Ligue des droits de l'Homme
Belgium (Dutch-speaking)	Liga voor Mensenrechten
Estonia	Legal Information Centre for Human Rights
Finland	Ihmisoikeusliitto - Finnish League for Human Rights
France	Ligue française pour la défense des droits de l'Homme et du citoyen
Greece	Hellenic League for Human Rights
Germany	Internationale Liga für Menschenrechte
Italy	Lega Italiana per i diritti dell'Uomo
Italy	Unione Forense per la Tutela dei Diritti dell'Uomo
Latvia	Latvian Human Rights Committee
Lithuania	Lithuanian Human Rights Association
Lithuania	Lithuanian Human Rights League
Luxemburg	Association Luxembourg Ouvert et Solidaire – Ligue des Droits de l'Homme
Malta	Malta Association of Human Rights
Poland	Otwarta Rzeczpolita - Open Republic
Portugal	Associação da Defesa e Promoção dos Direitos dos Cidadãos - Civitas
Spain (Andalusia)	Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía
Spain (Catalonia)	Institut de Drets Humans de Catalunya
Switzerland	Ligue Suisse des Droits de l'Homme
The Netherlands	Liga Voor de Rechten Van de Mens

## 2. Partner members

AEDH partner members
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Black And Ethnic Minorities Infrastructure in Scotland – BEMIS	Organisation for the defense of Human rights (NGO)
Czech Helsinki Committee	Organisation for the defense of Human rights (NGO)
EDRI – European Digital Rights	European network
Génération 112	European network
Solidar	European network

### **3. Individual members**

AEDH has individual members whose number is growing. They are a living part of AEDH. The management and development of individual memberships are now in the hands of the permanent staff of AEDH. We have to be more ambitious concerning our ability to gain new individual members at AEDH since they provide us with their political and material support (see page 20).

### **4. Executive Board**

#### The Board

AEDH is run by an executive Board, elected by the general assembly for a two-year term. A modification of the composition of the Board is planned for the general assembly of May 2011.

Since the last General Assembly in May 2010, the executive Board has been the following:

AEDH Members of the Board
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President	Pierre Barge
Vice-President	Catherine Teule
Vice-President	José Rebelo
Vice-President	Philippos Mitleton
General Secretary	Aleksejs Dimitrovs
Treasurer	Aleksejs Dimitrovs
Member	Knut Albrecht
Member	Alfredo Arpaia
Member	Maricia Bagnato Belfiore
Member	Serge Kollwelter
Member	Rafael Lara
Member	Marija Staciokiene
Representative of individual members	Noëlle Casanova-Rubechi
Representative of individual members	Gianmarco Cesari
President of Honour	Dan Van Raemdonck

### **AEDH team**

The two employees who have been working until now at the AEDH headquarters left at the end of June 2010 for Sophie Ngo and at the end of August for Mélanie Barthezème.

Since July 2010, Margot Génin has been working as a full-time project officer and Marie Bazin has been hired under the same conditions in September 2010. They have both been interns prior to their hiring.

### **Interns**

From June 2009, AEDH welcomed the following interns:

Marie Bazin (February 2010 – September 2010)

Amy Coulterman (March 2010 – June 2010)

Katerina Sergi (March 2010 – September 2010)

Camille Barreau (August 2010 – February 2011)

Géraldine Smeyers (September 2010 – February 2011)

Naïma Müller (September 2010 – February 2011)

Wirginia Loboda (January 2011 – April 2011)

Silvia D'Amato (March 2011 - ...)

Ninon Denormandie (March 2011 - ...)

### **Volunteers**

Throughout the year, the work of AEDH relies on the activity of volunteers, former interns, and individual members, activists from the national leagues or just supporters of AEDH.

Interns integrated at the headquarters bring daily precious support to the Board members. It is also thanks to the volunteers that administrative tasks such as accounting, ICT, internet, and budget monitoring.

This year, AEDH has been very sought about volunteer activities. Indeed, many requests were sent to volunteer at headquarters, especially in the fall 2010. However, for a large part of them, these are applications from students who in fact would like to get an internship. Nevertheless, AEDH, as a result of this wave of applications, has been able to constitute a small team of volunteers working on various topics: imprisonment, transnational workers' rights, "legal migration" directives, responses to call for projects, help for the newsletter, translations...

We would like to thank especially Viviane de Lafond, Clio Liegeois, Constance Ritz, Claude Brulant, Marie Georges, Miguel Angel Ayllon, Danielle Conge and Mercedes Conde for their involvement with us and their invaluable help.

The largest part of AEDH activity relies on volunteer and activist action. This is what gives meaning to our organisation, being an organisation of citizens and of active citizenship: because our member leagues and associations are themselves organisations of active citizens, because our individual members beyond their financial contribution bring us their knowledge and expertise, and because it is primarily volunteers who permit us to continue our daily work and activities at AEDH.

AEDH warmly thanks all of them.

## *Annexes*

### **PRESS RELEASES**

#### **12 July 2010 : The AEDH asks members of the European Parliament not to approve the readmission agreement with Pakistan**

The AEDH is deeply concerned about the content and practical enforcement of the readmission agreement signed between the European Union and Pakistan and calls on MEPs to reject it. It raises significant concerns about the respect of human rights and in particular those of refugees.

The AEDH believes that readmission agreements endanger human rights. Readmission counters the right to leave one's country, a right guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the case of Pakistan, readmission means forcing someone to return to a country where fundamental rights are not respected and which has not ratified the Geneva Convention on Refugees of 1951. The fact that this agreement will apply also to third country nationals, and here in particular to Afghanis, is worrying considering the ongoing war in Afghanistan.

The readmission agreement with Pakistan gives no guarantee concerning the security and the respect of fundamental rights of people evicted and personal data and privacy protection. It cultivates a dangerous legal uncertainty as to its implementation. The AEDH is greatly concerned with the risk of violation of the principle of non-refoulement created by this agreement.

This agreement contains numerous loopholes and ambiguities that work against the fundamental rights of the people to be readmitted. It does not specify whether the burden of proof concerning the migrants' entry date in the EU and their route taken will lie on the EU or on Pakistan. Yet these two elements are essential to the decision on readmission. The agreement contains no provision in case of a refusal by Pakistan to deliver travel documents for readmission. Will the EU deliver a European *laissez-passer*, even though its legal basis is uncertain? Or will the people to be readmitted remain in detention for an unlimited time while awaiting a decision to deport them?

The Commission's refusal to allow the participation of the European Parliament in the Readmission Committee is symptomatic of its lack of transparency which will likely continue during the agreement's implementation.

The AEDH therefore asks MEPs not to assent to the agreement and to demand strong guarantees concerning the respect of human rights and

greater transparency for the ongoing negotiations on readmission with third countries.

## **2 September 2010:** The European Commission and Parliament must intervene immediately; Roma cannot be used as scapegoats anymore.

Roma are considered as the main reason for insecurity in several European countries. By putting them in the news, the government makes them responsible for economic and social difficulties, for austerity measures happening in these countries and makes them hostages of political higher bids.

In 2007 in Italy, a Romanian national was charged for the murder of a woman. This event constituted a pretext for demolitions of camps, displacements and deportations of Roma. This summer in France, following confrontations between the police and French citizens of the travellers' community, Roma from Bulgaria and Romania are deported after having seen their makeshift houses demolished. Trying to go on better, the Italian Minister of Home Affairs requests from the European Commission "the right to deport" Roma in breach of European legislation. Denmark plans similar measures. Germany sends back Roma children to Kosovo whereas the Council of Europe underlines the risks of such deportations and recommends only voluntary returns.

In breach of international conventions and in breach of the EU Treaty, some people are discriminated on the basis of their origin. In breach of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, member States deport Roma collectively. In breach of the recent Cordoba summit, of the European Commission's recommendations on the social inclusion of Roma, and in breach of the European Parliament's reports and opinions, Roma keep on being considered as second-class people. They are scapegoats in their own countries and in countries where they try to find a better life. We can only agree with former Commissioner Vladimir Spidla who, in May 2007, declared that what was going on in Italy was not an isolated case, that *"the racial violence is fed on populism as we can see in several member States ... whereas... overcoming racial hate, pogroms and destructions by fire is the true meaning of the European Union"*.

The 10 to 12 millions Roma living in the European Union are European citizens; therefore they have the right to move freely within the territory of the EU and the right to set in an EU member State as to find a job. The AEDH notices that Roma face multiple discriminations and that their rights are being violated in a lot of EU member States. Today, the AEDH denounces mass deportations, confusions with the issue of insecurity that stigmatize an entire population because of its origin, as well as the weakness of the measures taken by the States in order to remedy marginalization and precariousness, whereas the EU does make available the means to do so. The AEDH recalls that all EU citizens have the same rights, ensured by the treaties, the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, and international conventions.

## **24 September 2010:** Discrimination against cross-border workers: An unacceptable and intolerable "cure" for the crisis

The AEDH, along with the Luxembourg League for Human Rights (ALOS-LDH) and the French League for Human Rights (LDH), supports the initiatives undertaken by trade unions and associations to denounce the legislative

changes introducing a de facto distinction between resident and cross-border workers in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Luxembourg has introduced new laws and regulations that both establish criteria limiting payment of family allowances and change how income taxes are calculated. Only cross-border workers will be negatively affected by these new provisions. Residents, however, will benefit from the new provisions on state financial aid for higher education that were presented by the government, not without cynicism, as "advantageous compensation" that does not apply to non-residents.

The AEDH, ALOS-LDH and LDH believe in the principle of equal rights for cross-border workers throughout the European Union, especially in the geographic area concerned by these new measures – namely Luxembourg, France, Belgium and Germany – in which tens of thousands of non-resident cross-border workers are concentrated. The economic and social crisis currently afflicting Europe must not be used as a pretext for European countries to fall back behind their national borders and favour their own residents.

The law, which was passed with a view to cutting expenditure, eliminates family allowances to children over 18, introducing instead an annual loan and bursary system. The restrictive criteria applied under this law penalise cross-border workers and benefit residents of Luxembourg, who must have lived in the country for more than five years to qualify. This clearly runs counter to the principle of equal treatment of workers within companies, regardless of their origin.

Member States of the European Union have made free movement a legal right for workers and, by virtue of this fundamental freedom, encourage mobility and integration between the different countries. Furthermore, every worker within the European Union must be treated in the same way, irrespective of in which Member State he or she is employed. This includes equal treatment in the professional field, as well as with regard to social and tax advantages.

The AEDH, ALOS-LDH and LDH are concerned about an increase in simple-minded protectionism. They are calling on the government of Luxembourg to reconsider the content of a law that is incompatible with the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the European Union and to repeal the discriminatory measures. They request that the advantages under the law be extended to all employed individuals and their families, regardless of where they reside. They support the efforts of the associations and trade unions working to achieve equal treatment for resident and non-resident workers, and applaud the success of the demonstration held on 16 September in Luxembourg. They are calling on Luxembourg and all the Member States to uphold the principle of equal rights for these workers and to eliminate all measures that discriminate against them. The European Union can only be built by respecting the rights and principles that it adopted to enforce the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

## **20 October 2010: AEDH and Otwarta Rzeczpospolita denounce the Polish Government's silence on the recent discriminatory comments and acts**

AEDH and Otwarta Rzeczpospolita are concerned about the infringement of equality and human rights which recently occurred in Poland and the indulgent



reaction of the Polish authorities on this subject.

In a recent statement the Polish Minister for Equal Treatment declared that it was justifiable for Catholic schools to fire homosexual professors based solely on their sexual orientation, therefore supporting discriminatory practices based on sexual orientation. Following this statement, at the very least problematic coming from a minister of equality, the highest State authorities did not denounce this behaviour. In addition to this incident, Polish authorities have turned a blind eye to acts of discrimination and xenophobic statements. The Polish police therefore decided to close an investigation on an anti-Semitic inscription, the reason being that according to only the interrogation of the perpetrator, in which he claimed that he had no intention to offend anyone, the inscription was not an offence.

It should also be reminded that in March 2010 the European Court of Human Rights charged Poland with discrimination based on sexual orientation, committed by a Polish municipality, and that an action was taken by the European Court of Justice in May 2010 against Poland for incorrect implementation of European law. AEDH and Otwarta Rzeczpospolita would like to emphasize that by entering in, and being part of, the European Union, Polish authorities have committed themselves to respect common values and rules and to apply them as any other Member State.

Acts of discrimination are in fact still common in Poland, based largely on ethnic origins, sexual orientation and religion, in spite of the creation of a ministry for equal treatment, and the implementation of a program to fight against racial discriminations between 2004 and 2009. These measures have shown their lack of efficiency when the Polish public authorities are silent and therefore supportive of discriminatory public statements, and ignore acts of discrimination related to the dignity of different social groups, which should be protected by the State.

AEDH can thus only express its solidarity and support for Polish civil society organizations that denounce discriminatory acts committed by public authorities. They must be listened to.

AEDH and Otwarta Rzeczpospolita reassert their commitment to the fight against all forms of discrimination and ask the highest Polish authorities to choose action over words, condemnation over silence, and to efficiently fight against discrimination and xenophobia. There is a need for a strong commitment of the Polish government in order to respect values that are common to all EU citizens and States and guaranteed by the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

### **19 november 2010: Aurore Martin must not be handed over to the Spanish special courts**

Six years after their initial attempt, the Spanish authorities are again trying to obtain the extradition of a French citizen due to her participation in various public political protests organised by a party, Batasuna, which is legal in France.

Aurore Martin's arrest through a European arrest warrant issued by the Spanish courts, following an initial recent rejection due to lack of grounds for an identical request, demonstrates a relentlessness which is perpetuated by the French authorities.

The European Association for the Defence of Human Rights, the International Federation for Human Rights and the French Ligue des droits de l'Homme once again condemn the use of a procedure that shows such little concern for the right of defence and individual freedoms. This leads to the authorities of a European Member State bringing proceedings against a person on grounds that the citizen's own national authorities do not recognise as being illegal.

This situation is even more unacceptable as the Spanish courts requesting the handover of Ms Aurore Martin are special courts which have been denounced by the Pau Court of Appeal for having supported acts of torture. For this reason, their extradition requests have been refused.

This procedure conducted jointly by the Spanish and French courts shows the two countries' governments' underlying desire to outlaw political opponents rather than fight against terrorism.

The AEDH, the FIDH and the LDH denounce this arrangement between States to silence political opponents by exploiting the justice system and calls on European authorities to completely revise the European arrest warrant procedure so that it ensures individual freedoms and prevents such misuse.

### **17 November 2010: The AEDH and the Liga appeal to the authorities and the German government to immediately stop the expulsions of Roma to Kosovo**

The AEDH, together with its German member the International League for Human Rights, condemns the readmission policy of refugees from Kosovo pursued by the German government and the governments of the *Länder*. This policy aims to expel thousands of people, the majority children, who have been living for several years in Germany, to Kosovo. This happens at a time, when several European states have been using the Roma as scapegoats for their policies.

Already in 2009, it has been revealed that the German federal government had the intention of expelling people that supposedly belong to the Kosovan Roma minority and who do not have a long term residence permit. These expulsions concern mainly children and adolescents, younger than 18 years old, the majority of which were born on German territory. In April 2010, the German federal government signed a readmission agreement with the Kosovan government, in which Pristina commits to receive these people from Germany without residence permits, and who fled the Serbian oppression and the war in Kosovo in the 1990s.

The numbers in the UNICEF report, published July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010, are startling: Half of the 12,000 expellable Roma people are less than 18 years old, of which three quarters were born in Germany. Moreover, 75% of the children who have already been expelled to Kosovo subsequently abandoned school, and two thirds of the Roma children in Kosovo live in extreme poverty and barely know how to speak Albanian or Serbian. These children were, in the majority of cases, born in Germany, lived there in average more than ten years and were rooted in the German culture and way of life. Expelling these families to Kosovo means sending them to an unknown country, whose language they can't speak, where they don't have accommodation or employment, and no expectation of decent living conditions. In Kosovo, a country where the unemployment rate is as high as 50%, and where the Roma people are already the poorest minority, these expulsions cause social exclusion and a lack of access to medical care and education. The Kosovan social minister himself confirmed that Kosovo does not have enough available resources to accept and integrate these people. Confronted with rejection, poor living

conditions, and ethnic discrimination in a country which most of them do not consider their own, the expellees will try to come back to German territory, where they do not have any choice but to live clandestinely.

Today Kosovan nationals, inhabitants for many years of Germany and having even been born there, who could one day be European citizens with the right to freedom of movement and residence, these people are victims of an absurd policy which is inconsistent with the values anchored in the treaties of the European Union. The expulsions violate both European and international law, and especially the UN Convention on the right of the child and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Considering these violations, the AEDH and the International League for Human Rights support the appeal of the Nobel Laureate in Literature, Günter Grass, who in the name of the *Stiftung zugunsten des Romavolkes* (Foundation in favour of Roma people) which he founded along with Ute Grass in 1997, calls on the German federal government and the governments of the *Länder* to revise their decisions immediately and to stop the expulsions. These two human rights organisations call on the members of the European Parliament, the European Commission, as well as NGOs who are involved in refugee issues, to work towards an end to these repressive measures that contradict the fundamental rights of the concerned people.

### **13 December 2010:** The AEDH asks the EU to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers on the occasion of its 20th anniversary

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers should be ratified by the European Union and its Member States. It is unacceptable that no country has signed this Convention over the past twenty years.

Today, the new Treaty gives the EU a legal personality and, thereby, the possibility to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW). Thus, on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, the AEDH wishes the EU would ratify this document and initiate, without any further delay, a legislative process in this direction.

Over the past few years, the AEDH has explicitly asked the Member States to ratify this Convention and has been involved in actions undertaken to achieve this goal. The ratification of the Convention would give the opportunity to protect the rights of migrant workers and members of their families. To the EU and its members, such a ratification will symbolise their positive commitment in favour of a migration policy in accordance with European values asserted in the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

That is the reason why, the AEDH invites all MEPs to vote in favour of the amendment 16 of the European Parliament legislative resolution project on the proposal for a directive on a "single permit", which will be put to vote in the next plenary session on Tuesday 14 December 2010. A positive vote would demonstrate the willingness of the European Parliament to support the ratification of this Convention.

The European Union shall ensure the same rights for every worker, without taking into account origins or nationality. It is a question of credibility towards third countries which have already signed the Convention or are currently

engaged in the process of ratification. On the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of this Convention, the AEDH is calling on MEPs, European Institutions, NGOs and their members and citizens to take action, so that the rights of migrant workers and their families could be recognized in the near future.

**15 December 2010:** The AEDH welcomes the reject by the European Parliament of the proposal for a directive establishing a “single permit”

**The AEDH can only welcome the responsibility that the European Parliament took in voting against the proposal on a “single permit” by a 350 to 306 vote during the plenary session this Tuesday December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010.**

The Commission’s proposed directive, using the implementation of a single process for the application of both work and residency permit as an excuse, led in fact to exclusion and discriminations between workers, based on their origin, their qualifications, and the nature of their job, thus violating the Charter of Fundamental Rights which proclaims equality for all people living on the EU territory.

Far from safeguarding rights, the proposed text strengthened the paths opened by the “blue card” directive on highly-skilled immigrants, in creating different statutes within the EU, particularly in the field of social law and the right to social welfare. The proposal would have led to differences in treatment between EU citizens, long-term residents, refugees, highly-skilled immigrants, skilled immigrants, seasonal workers or third-countries nationals in the framework of intra-corporate transfer. The text established the requirement of getting a work visa before leaving its country of origin, a requirement which constitutes *de facto* a hardening of conditions for the entry on EU territory. As a result, this would have also reinforced irregular immigration and workers’ exploitation networks.

The rejection of the proposal questions the choice of having, since the 90’s, a fragmented and utilitarian legal migration policy. In voting against the proposal, the European Parliament took the right track. Workers, wherever they come from, are first human beings and must all benefit from the same rights in their work.

The AEDH sees in this vote, a sign of inflection towards an EU policy which categorizes, stigmatizes, discriminates and excludes immigrants. The AEDH calls on MEPs to continue their efforts in that way and calls on the Council and the Commission to take into account the meaning of this vote.

**11 February 2011:** Combating child pornography is necessary but must not be used as a pretext to limit Internet access

AEDH welcomes the European Union's commitment to combating sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography. However, this must not be done at the expense of the basic right to access means of communication and information, including Internet access.

Consequently, Article 21 of the proposal for a directive on combating sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography - on which an indicative vote will be held on 14 February 2011 by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs at the plenary sitting of the European Parliament in Strasbourg – must be amended. Its sole objective must be the removal of child pornographic content from Internet sites at the source, and it must not authorize Member States to block access to Internet content.

The AEDH recalls that no one may be denied access to a means of communication, be it mail, radio, the Internet, etc. In accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, Internet access must be guaranteed not only as a right to freedom of expression and information, but also as a right to a “[service] of general economic interest” that is recognized and respected by the Union. Network communication services allow for the circulation and sharing of information and access to knowledge, and must be accessible without restriction.

The AEDH considers that the proposal for a directive as well as the draft report on the proposal and its amendments are important legislative tools. However, the combating of child pornography websites and the related exploitation and traffic of children must be based on a concerted effort by Member States. Furthermore, any filtering of Internet access must be ruled out.

The AEDH therefore urges European parliamentarians and the Council to amend article 21 of the proposal for a directive. The AEDH also urges citizens and their representative organizations to refuse any attempt at filtering Internet access and to take action to that end. It is the content and offenders that must be prosecuted and convicted.

## **11 April 2011: The European Union must face its responsibilities in dealing with migration**

How many tragic deaths in the Mediterranean Sea will it take before the European Union acknowledges its international commitments and receive migrants from the Maghreb who are now waiting at its doorstep?

AEDH laments the death of hundreds of Somalian and Eritrean migrants, who perished when their vessel sank off the coast of the Italian island of Lampedusa last 6 April. While it recognises that the European Union could not have predicted the influx that would be generated by the uprisings in the Arab world, AEDH contends that Member States still have the responsibility of providing a proper reception to the migrants who have arrived in Europe these past weeks, and to propose solutions that would help reinstate tens of thousands of refugees who, in fleeing Libya, had no other choice but to go to Tunisia or Egypt.

The consequences of Europe's border security policy are obvious. Obligated to take greater risks to avoid border controls, many migrants meet their death as they try to get past the barriers placed before them. The fact that the

European Union, through the Commissioner in charge of migration, Cecilia Malmström, plans to reinforce Frontex's powers, shows just how little value Europe places on the lives of "foreigners".

In this difficult yet jubilant period of Tunisia's economic and democratic reconstruction, the EU persists in wanting to impose its vision of border control upon the country. In turning people back to Tunisia, it demonstrates the lack of ambition it accords to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

AEDH states once again that no one can be denied the right to leave their country. Migrating, leaving one's country, regardless of motive, is always a painful but deeply personal choice that no state-mandated measure, including confinement, can prevent in a world where goods, services, and capital move freely, and where the free movement of persons is and should be a right.

AEDH maintains that Europe cannot pass on its responsibility to take in asylum-seekers to third countries, and that it must grant access to EU territory to migrants seeking asylum or protection because of the situation in their countries of origin. The acceptance of migrants by Member States should not be limited to tolerating their presence on European soil, but lead concretely to the granting of residence permits. In this context, AEDH finds the migration ping-pong played by certain Member States both shocking and degrading.

Consequently, AEDH asks the Council of the European Union to bring into immediate force the instrument that will allow the granting of temporary protection, as provided for by the directive of 20 July 2001, to all persons who can claim such protection.

AEDH also calls upon the European Union and the Member States to demonstrate their international solidarity and their commitment to the Geneva Convention by taking in sub-Saharan refugees, and upon the solidarity between Member States in receiving migrants.

## **27 April: The European Framework for Roma integration: AEDH calls upon European Union to strengthen its position and to take into consideration acts of violence against Roma**

AEDH welcomes the new framework for Roma Integration in the European Union released by the European Commission on April the 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 but considers that it is not enough to stop discriminations against Roma people.

While approving the majority of the provisions of the new framework proposal, AEDH believes that in order to achieve a real improvement on the situation of Roma people in Europe, it is necessary to go beyond a simple economic and social point of view and to adopt an approach based on the respect of fundamental rights and human dignity.

AEDH deplores the lack of measures designed to stop physical acts of violence against Roma. The issue of anti-Roma violence is extremely serious, and for this reason it should be included into every European Framework aiming at improving Roma integration in Europe. Before speaking about integration we need to assure protection. Roma people are everyday victims of crimes and discriminations, and several member States are weak and do not adopt necessary measures against this violence. Analysing member States reaction over 44 cases of anti-Roma violence, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) observed that in the majority of these cases, the perpetrators have not been condemned and more often they have never been



taken to court neither.

In addition to the need to fight against this anti-Roma violence, AEDH renews its call to European Institutions to recognise a real right for Roma minorities' mobility in order to end the European Union contradiction that encourages certain European citizens' displacements, penalizing the ones of poorer and vulnerable people. This kind of policy violates the Charter of Fundamental Rights which recognizes equal rights to every citizen, without any kind of distinctions regarding their origin. Roma are European citizens and an effective fight against discriminations and acts of violence toward minorities, requires above all, the recognition of equality in rights.

AEDH is aware that concrete measures need to be taken by member States. Nevertheless, European Commission has to set a strict framework to national authorities and provide some mechanisms in order to compel member States to enforce these measures. Without clear and global rules defined at a European scale, the goal of a true Roma people inclusion for 2020 will remain illusory.

AEDH calls upon European Institutions to react and give a strong and concrete signal to guarantee that anti-Roma abuses and discriminations will be no longer tolerated.