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PEACE, FREE MOVEMENT AND SETTLEMENT OF PEOPLE AND UNIVERSAL CITIZENSHIP

tam-tam: the Emmaus news wall

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Editorial

Patrick Atohoun, Chair of Emmaus International

At the World Assembly in Jesolo we adopted three struggles to fight against poverty. Of these the struggle for ‘Peace, Free Movement and Settlement of People and Universal Citizenship’ has been part of our initiatives since the early days of our Movement.

Emmaus was born from a desire for peace and a wish to allow all people to move and speak freely thanks to our practice of unconditional welcome. With increasing numbers of migrants the Emmaus groups are continuing to offer welcome and continuing to hammer home the message that everyone should and can have the same rights. Only by keeping the peace

and maintaining freedom of movement and settlement can we guarantee the economic, social and political development of our world. In Chili, Rwanda, Bosnia and Benin... Abbé Pierre never stopped fighting for peace. As his sole legatees we have to share what we have inherited from Abbé Pierre in order to ensure we can all live together in harmony.



All aboard →

- Discover the initiatives led by the Emmaus groups from across the globe on the Act Emmaus platform: www.actemmaus.org
- Vote for the initiatives which you think are the most relevant.
- Do you fight for peace and freedom of movement and settlement? Then share your initiative on the Act Emmaus platform!

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Emmaus international

Emmaus on the move ↓



AFRICA | Faustin Busimba, programme manager in the Emmaus CAJED group in Congo (DR).

“Our association is committed to protecting children and we work alongside the UN to help get child soldiers out of armed groups. We make these groups aware that they could be prosecuted for this and we also help re-integrate these children into social and economic life in their communities. Since 2005 this activity has helped get 10,047 children out of armed groups. We work on the grassroots level and we also lobby the government on children’s rights. Our initiative is becoming more difficult given the current context of political instability and security risks in the DRC. This situation has led to displacements, a lack of schooling for children and deepening poverty. But we remain hopeful for the future. We should continue to show our disdain and be activists for change in order to reach out to the hearts of leaders and to strive for peace”.



THE AMERICAS | Rosa Stella Cano Arango, a volunteer in the Emmaus Pereira group in Colombia and political specialist who focuses on matters related to peace.

“For over 50 years Colombia has been in a situation of armed conflict which has had a long-term impact on civilians. 60% of the people that come to our group for help have been displaced because of the conflict. Emmaus gives them opportunities to socialise, become independent, have training and gain employment. My role in academia meant that I closely followed the peace process in Colombia and I work with different stakeholders from civil society (economic and educational stakeholders, trade unions, the Church) to implement the La Havana peace agreement. I think that Emmaus Pereira is a true example of reconciliation thanks to our recycling activity which means that we work with businesses as well as with families and associations and we also join government campaigns.”



ASIA | Raihan Ali, the leader of the Emmaus Thanapara Swallows group in Bangladesh, was recently given an award for his commitment to peace keeping and human rights.

“At 13 years of age I miraculously survived a massacre carried out by the Pakistani army, they killed all the men in my village. I later joined Emmaus Thanapara Swallows as I felt a responsibility for helping the women to carry on living and for ensuring their rights were respected. When law and order is flouted injustice rises and threatens peace. With our association we have developed mediation activities. When a rights violation is reported to us we try to find a compromise on the local level. We also raise awareness with the local people so that they know their rights and their duties. We are all the guarantors of law and order and this helps to calm the majority of the tensions on the local level.”



EUROPE | Johanna Azar, Project Manager and Head of International Advocacy for Emmaus Bjorka in Sweden.

“A few months ago Sweden suddenly adopted one of the strictest laws on migration in Europe. Bearing in mind the urgency of the situation we decided to focus our solidarity action on helping migrants and refugees. Via three partner organisations we provide these people with material support and help them access housing and healthcare as well as food and legal support. In recent months we have been present in the political debate in Sweden, denouncing violations of right of asylum. One of our challenges is to change public opinion, which is currently strongly against migrants, with awareness raising initiatives (demonstrations, shop windows on different topics). We need to strive for freedom of movement and residence and universal citizenship but we have many small steps to take before we make it there.”

Next port of call... Pamiers (France) ↓

Michel Frédéric is a companion and librarian at the Emmaus community in Pamiers, in the South of France. On 22 January 2017 he arrived in Paris, completing a 900km walk across France to defend Article 13.

How was this project started? We were involved, alongside Emmaus France, in the discussions for an event with a powerful impact to start this year of commemoration after the loss of Abbé Pierre 10 years ago. I’ve always enjoyed walking so the idea came to me quite naturally. I departed from Toulouse (France) on 27 December 2016 and I walked between 25km and 40km per day all the way to Paris. The idea was to remind people of the existence of Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantees that “everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State” and that “everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.”

Why are you committed to this cause? My family was living in Algeria but we were repatriated to France when Algeria became independent, I was 5 years old. So I know what it means to not be able to move around freely in a war-stricken country. I’ve lived in Crete, India, Afghanistan... I think that it should be compulsory for every young person to spend a year or two elsewhere so that they understand that people elsewhere simply do things “in a different way”. We all live



in the same world, on the same planet. For me talking about borders, homeland or countries is just absurd.

Did your march give you strength? During the march I talked to the communities and Emmaus Friends Committees who hosted me but I also spoke a lot to people I met on the road and they were very interested in this struggle. The march has given me a desire to keep moving forward and (why not!) visit all the capitals of Europe in 2017 - but maybe not on foot this time around! I also got involved in Emmaus France’s ‘Lobbying’ committee. I think that, fundamentally, people are good and understanding. I haven’t witnessed the inward-looking France that the media and politicians have been depicting.