



*Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network
Réseau Afrique Europe Foi et Justice*

ECHOES from AEFJN

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www.aefjn.org

aefjn@aefjn.org

FROM THE AEFJN DESK

The demise of health systems in Europe resembles the one in Africa

To cope with the crisis which has deeply affected the European Union, the EU has subjected its member states to massive budget cuts. Combined with other measures, this has badly affected health and social security systems which are undergoing great changes and fierce privatisation in both northern and southern Europe. These precarious European health systems, unthinkable a few years ago, followed the trend in developing countries where policies imposed internationally have greatly weakened the public health services. Health is a concern for everyone as much in developing countries as in the Western world to us. Our converging interests lead us to unite our efforts to obtain quality public health services everywhere, so as to protect the health of all. The stopping of the privatization process in Spain is a sign of hope and a sign that people power can achieve results. [Read more](#)

Taken from: [“Health and social security are not for sale”](#)

No to Carbon Trading and to Infinite Growth

Climate scientists have called for urgent measures to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions globally in order to avoid an out-of-control temperature increase. However, Environmentalists believe the newly proposed target by the European Commission is not enough to prevent out-of-control global warming. The cornerstone of the EU's climate and energy policy will remain the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) that allows polluters to buy “rights to pollute”. Therefore, it is very unlikely that the ETS has effectively reduced emissions. On top of that western economies are depleting the earth's resources to satisfy their soaring demand for new gadgets such as tablets and smart phones. So, the EU's climate policy should rather focus on reducing energy consumption and sustainable management of natural resources instead of the neoliberal of infinite growth of finite resources to effectively reduce climate change. [Read more](#)

ALSO IN THE NEWS

West African Civil Society Declaration on EPA Signing

The negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreement between West African Countries (ECOWAS) and the European Union (EU) seem to have reached the end of technical discussions and both groups are now ready to sign an Agreement. Civil society has tried to prevent this agreement because of the disadvantages that it holds for West African countries and their population. While the concession of the EU to African countries has been to liberalise 75% of trade over 20 years, countries like Ghana will have to waiver important products such as textiles, detergents, metals and pharmaceuticals, which are crucial for its industrial development. ECOWAS negotiators have sacrificed their national and regional markets for European goods - this is likely to lead to the demise of domestic manufacturing with the loss of thousands of factories, jobs and, above all, the prospects for the developmental transformation of West African economies. [Read more](#)

VOICES FROM THE NETWORK

Visit to UK Antenna

AEFJN policy officer Jose Luis Gutierrez Aranda attended the February meeting of the UK Antenna. In the morning, Christine Haigh from the World Development Movement (WDM) gave a talk on land seized by governments and multinational firms, highlighting how it exacerbates climate change, allows the agro-industrial takeover of small family farms, favours financial speculation on food which raises food prices and increases hunger and migration.

After lunch, Jose Luis spoke about the campaign for a five-year moratorium on Land grabbing that has been initiated by the AEFJN Secretariat. The Moratorium would mean all activities related to large scale land acquisitions (LSLA) for agriculture in its various forms would be suspended for five years. Many questions were raised about the complexity of the issue. [Read more](#)

Visit to Burkina Faso

Last October Sr. Begoña Iñarra from AEFJN Secretariat visited Burkina Faso. In Bobo-Dioulasso, where she led a seminar on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) for novices and formators, she also met with religious and lay people committed to Justice and Peace. She presented the work of AEFJN and the issues relevant to Burkina. Participants brought up their concerns about the economic issues affecting the people in the area. In Ouagadougou she participated at the General Assembly of Major Superiors where she gave a presentation of AEFJN's work and the issues dealt with by the network. She encouraged participants to form a group to work on the economic issues affecting the population and offered the support of AEFJN. [Read more](#)

Visit to Zambia

José Luis Gutierrez from AEFJN's Secretariat visited Zambia last November. He met some civil society organizations working on issues relevant to AEFJN, such as the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR), Caritas, Action Aid and the Centre for Trade Policy and Development. He also gave a presentation of AEFJN's work in Brussels and was keen to learn about the work and activities of these organizations and to find out how they deal with issues that are relevant to AEFJN's work. He attended the Annual General Meeting of both men and women Major Superiors as well as the Formation Day on Religious life. At these three meetings, he presented the work being done by AEFJN and its Plan of Action. Interesting debates followed. He went to the Copperbelt Province, the site of most of the Zambian mines, visiting open pit mines, talking with local communities and seeing the side effects caused by the pollution of the extractive companies. [Read more](#)

ACTION

AEFJN-Campaign: Moratorium on Land Grabbing

AEFJN has launched a campaign for a 5-year moratorium on large scale land acquisitions (LSLA) for agriculture. A moratorium will suspend all activities related to LSLA with the aim to stop harmful impacts on communities, nature and economy. During the moratorium policymakers worldwide can adopt binding legislation for agricultural investment that protects local communities and nature, while host countries will have time to undertake a simplified land reform. We invite you to read our documents on our [website](#) and to sign our call for a moratorium here. If you wish to actively cooperate with the platform advocating the moratorium on LSLA, send us an email at moratorium.land@aefjn.org [Read more](#)

Disarmament for development

The International Peace Bureau (IPB) has launched a campaign for the reduction of military expenditure in order to make those amounts of money available for social and environmental projects, domestically or abroad. IPB believes religious organisations can play a crucial role in national debates. It is an ethical and political issue that would allow for greater justice and diminishing poverty. [April 14th is the Global Day of Action on Military Spending \(GDAMS\)](#). [Read more](#)

VIDEOS

[Cap And Trade - Carbon Offset - Carbon Footprint - Climate Change](#)

An excellent and simple explanation with cartoons on how trading in carbon works. It clarifies how the cap and trade bill and the carbon offset works. It is all a big scam that makes the poor (and those who pollute LESS) pay MORE!

[There you go!](#)

The difficulty of imposing policies from outside... and the disasters they can produce.