



ENTRAIDE – SOLIDARITE

Activity Report 2000-2001

This report, exceptionally, covers two years.

The Entraide-Solidarity Association is ruled by Articles 21-79 of the local Civil Code (Alsace-Moselle) and has been registered in the *Registre des Associations* (volume 49, folio 21) since 23 May 1985. The Association recently agreed to add the word “Solidarity” to its title in order to avoid confusion with the Solidarity section of *Amicale Femmes*.

Under the statute of the Association, the Bureau is in principle limited to 10 members. The present Bureau members are: Christine Meunier, President, Denis Oehler, Treasurer, and

Mélina Babocsay, Françoise Bauer, Philippe Frison, Sheila Hirschinger, Judith Ledoux, Danièle Lévy-Puech, Alfredo Sixto and Anita van de Kar.

Two staff members have been co-opted: Jean-Pierre Lamy and Marion Wurtz.

The Bureau meets fairly regularly, but works mainly by means of consultation by e-mail to deal with the requests for assistance that it receives. Decisions are taken by consensus.

The aim of the Association is not to provide assistance to members of staff of the Council of Europe but to show the staff’s solidarity with others who are in need. Under its statute, this takes the form of:

- action in favour of developing countries;
- assistance to the underprivileged in the region;
- and assistance to victims of emergency situations.

The Bureau follows these three lines of action and devotes approximately one third of its annual resources to each one.

In practice the Bureau takes decisions, on a case-by-case basis and taking account of the urgency or seriousness of a situation, on the amount of financial aid to be granted for each request. It also decides on which actions to support: often those launched by an NGO at local, national or international level, or an undertaking in which a member of the Bureau or a member of staff is specifically involved.

The Bureau also supports current humanitarian activities.

The Association's funds come from subscriptions and donations from members of staff who make a regular monthly or quarterly donation to the Entraide-Solidarity bank account by direct debit. There are about fifty members of staff who do this.

The Association's regular income is therefore not great – approximately 1,265€ per month (8,300 French francs).

Those interested will find a direct debit form containing details of the Association's bank account with the *Société Générale* appended.

The Bureau also organises appeals to staff for specific events or emergencies. Collections have been made by means of electronic circulars – in future via its site on the Intranet – for displaced persons in Chechnya (February 2000), for an open heart operation for the Kosovar boy Albert (summer 2001), against hunger in Afghanistan (December 2001). A collection of coins that would become obsolete with the introduction of the euro was made at the end of 2001 – again in favour of the people of Afghanistan.

As usual, during the period under review, financial help at the regional level was given principally in response to the numerous requests received through the social assistants at the Strasbourg hospitals, who come into direct contact with urgent and often dramatic social cases. Mostly this consists of allowing people who are in hospital for a long time, or those suffering from incapacitating diseases, or old people or pensioners, to cope with unforeseen expenses or catch up on outstanding payments, such as rent, electricity, heating, etc.

The local section also includes regular support for the Strasbourg *Restos du Coeur*, and assistance to schools in underprivileged areas of the city to enable children to take part in summer and winter school camps.

The Association makes a regular contribution to local NGOs such as, for example, the “*Alsace/Biélorussie*” association which, in particular brings children victims of the Chernobyl disaster to visit Alsace, or the “*Les parrains de l'espoir*” association at Illkirch-Graffenstaden that helps the people of Albania or victims of the earthquake in India.

Regular action is taken in South-East Europe, in particular in Bosnia; for example, during the winter 2001-2002 a contribution was made to the Sarajevo soup kitchen to prevent its closure. In Sarajevo help was also given to a centre for the mentally handicapped and to vulnerable families in the town, particularly for multiple births. Thanks to the commitment of one of our former colleagues, Gaby Lamy, help is given directly to those in need.

Every year Entraide acts as spokesman for the “*Guinée-Solidarités*” association and encourages staff to take part in its annual charity sale and, thanks to the presence in Guinea of a former colleague, Nadine Barry, who takes an active part in this association, action is often taken, at her request, on individual cases like the intestinal operation on a child, Awa, in Conakry, or the baby Mamadou's journey to Marseille for an operation on his congenital glaucoma.

In Africa, again, the Association supports the “*Village SOS enfants*” in Kara, Togo.

After helping the Palestinian girl Hadel with her heart operation in Strasbourg, the Association added its efforts to those of other associations to enable the operation on the Kosovar boy Albert at the Hautepierre hospital. The remaining funds were given to “*Terre des homes*” for similar cases.

The education of girls is one of the constant preoccupations of the Association. It contributes regularly to the education of girls in Afghanistan through the “*Afrane*” association by making periodic contributions; it also contributes to a Belgian association “Books, paper and pencils”, devoted to schooling for girls in an underprivileged area in Morocco and more specifically at Marrakesh.

The Toulouse disaster recently led the Association to help a family – a single mother with a handicapped child who lost their house in the explosion.

This is not an exhaustive list of our activities, but they cannot all be listed.

Finally, during the period under review, the Association tried to make itself better known within the Council of Europe. An awareness campaign was aimed at the judges of the Court of Human Rights and the Permanent Representations. In addition, an Intranet site is being set up in order to keep staff better informed.