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Bulletin of the International Federation of Resistance (FIR) – Association of Anti-Fascists

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Declaration of FIR to the 60th anniversary of the "Universal declaration of human rights" of the United Nations

The "Universal declaration of human rights" of the United Nations is a central political document of post-war history. The International Federation of Resistance fighters (FIR) - Association of Anti-fascists reminds in this connection of the fact that the political foundation for the foundation of the UN and the adoption of this declaration was the freedom fight of the peoples and nations against the fascist barbarism. Already the survivors of the KZ Buchenwald demanded in April 1945 as consequence: "Creating of a new world of peace and freedom!"

These principles were in the "Universal declaration of human rights" write out in full. The goals of the declaration base on the ideals of the French revolution and their promises of "Freedom, equality, brotherliness". Fascism in ideology and political practice tried to turn back these ideals. The common acting of the peoples in the anti-fascist fight overcame this threat.

Of cause we know that the principles of the "Universal declaration of human rights" do not determine actually the political and social reality in the today's world. We have however no cause to point with the finger only in one direction. Human rights cannot be reduced to freedom of the expression of opinion or the entrance to the Internet. Even in the developed industrial nations fundamental rights and freedoms are often not ensured, like in particular the right to work and education, to have a human being-worthy accommodation or the protection from racist discrimination.

The FIR and its member federations stand today and in the future for the implementation of the ideals of the "Universal declaration of human rights" as a whole. These rights are not given humans. Such rights and freedoms are realisable - in such a way the historical experience teaches - only by social fights. Veterans of the anti-fascist fight and the anti-fascists of today's generations are fellow combatants in such movement.

The memory at the 60th anniversary of the "Universal declaration of human rights" is in this way none "empty commemorating", but a request for acting for a better world.

**UNRIC****Greetings to the member associations of the 60 FIR Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

It is the most translated document in the world and in more than 360 languages. It has inspired the constitutions of many - particularly independent - states and young democracies, and was a benchmark for what we know as right or wrong - or should know. Throughout the year, the UN launched a campaign on the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is intended to remind people worldwide that the Universal Declaration, the first global character of this was what we today take for granted: the offered inherent dignity and equality of all people.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted on 10 December 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations as a reaction to the horrific atrocities during the Second World War. It is the best known human rights document, and simultaneously creates the foundation for international human rights.

Until the Second World War, human rights and their protection were almost exclusively a matter for each state. But in the years before 1945 politicians had begun to take steps to secure the peace after the war around the world and to bring it on a long-term basis. For the first time in history has been formulated so a catalogue of rights for all people - without regard to gender, social origin, political belief or cultural tradition. The fate of individuals in relation to state violence should be a matter for the international community.

So the former First Lady of the United States, Eleanor Roosevelt, supported with the founding of the United Nations Association in 1943, the emergence of the United Nations. End of the forties, shortly after the turmoil of the Second World War, Eleanor Roosevelt responded to the question of the origins of human rights as follows: "Human rights begin in small places, near the own home. So close and so small that none of these places on the world map can be found. As long as those rights do not apply, they are not relevant elsewhere." Each individual will have the responsibility in his personal life, the human rights protection. Exactly since that time, we know how important the responsibility of each is. Nobody can, not even today, close his eyes against human rights violations. This is precisely the attitude that the work of the International Federation of Resistance Fighters is so important.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations and binding for all countries worldwide, will coverage future generations from the threat and the destruction by war. It contains only recommendations and may be, in its basic structure is an explanation. It is not a contract.

Today, the Universal Declaration is as significant as the day of their adoption. The basic freedoms, however, they set are still not for everyone to become a reality. Too often, governments lack the political will to implement international standards which they have accepted willingly.

This anniversary year offers an opportunity to ensure that human rights are a living reality - that they are known and understood by everyone and everywhere to be enjoyed. Peace, understanding and freedom are the basis for the observance of human rights. There for we are all responsible, and therefore we must all search for improvements.

I wish you all success in your important task.

Arne Molfenter
Information Officer for Germany
United Nations Regional Information Centre
Brüssel/Bonn

Is a common commemoration of "victims of Stalinist and fascist crimes" possible?

Interview with Dr. Ulrich Schneider, Historian and General Secretary of FIR

Antifa:

In the European Parliament on the initiative of the European People's Party, the CDU is playing a central role, are collected signatures for an application, explaining August 23 as memorial-day to "victims of Stalinist and Nazi crimes". What is your opinion about that?

Ulrich Schneider:

This application is an ideological attack on the historical foundations of Europe's post-war development.

First of all, this application is totalitarianism thesis in pure form. This ideology of the "Cold War" tries ahistorically an equation of Stalinism and fascism. A few years ago, a "Black Book of Communism" tried to demonstrate that socialist experiments in the Eastern European countries are of equal quality criminal, such as the German fascism. In consequence, this means not only a historical wrong equation between fascist rule and various forms of socialist rule, but a reversal of policy priorities and a trivialisation and relativization of the fascist destruction policy.

The initiators of the request do not deny this. Is it true – as they say – that they want focussing the reflection on the impact and significance of the Soviet era and the occupation "in the post-communist countries".

Perfidious is this application in particular through the selected date of the "Memorial Day". What was the August 23? It is the date of signature of the German-Soviet non-aggression treaty in 1939 between the Foreign Minister of fascist Germany Ribbentrop and the Foreign Ministers of the USSR Molotow. Everybody who knows history is informed that before the Soviet Union signed this contract, USSR went ahead with the Western allied to forge an alliance against the fascist war policy. As these efforts remained without success, USSR signed the non-aggression treaty to get a time slot for the Soviet Union against a possible military attack by the German fascism.

Antifa:

But is the non-aggression treaty so easy to describe?

Ulrich Schneider:

Of course, you have to criticize that the added agreements made far-reaching arrangements, for example to send German anti-fascist refugees back to Nazi Germany. Also, from today's perspective, it is to argue that the Soviet Union not used the time they won effectively to strengthen defence. This has to be criticized from anti-fascist perspective.

But all this can not be considered a justification to declare the anniversary of the signing as a "totalitarianism Remembrance Day". This would however mean that for the Second World War and the victims of the administrative fascist destruction policy Germany and the USSR were equally responsible.

Such a position is trying to deny foundations of a central European post-war development, the joint action of the peoples and states in the anti-Hitler coalition for liberating their country from the fascist threat.

Besides the strengthening of anticommunist attitudes this seems to be to me the central task of these provocation – and this is the only name to describe such request.

Antifa:

Why we find this request directly in the European Parliament

Ulrich Schneider:

The European Parliament has been in recent years, always aware of anti-fascist positions:

I remember the decision of the European Parliament, to declare January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz extermination camp by the Soviet army, as an European day of remembrance for all victims of fascist persecution.

I remember the decision of the parliament in 1993 for the preservation of memorials and historic places for the pursuits of fascist and destruction policy. Specifically in this decision was rejected any connection with the

commemoration of the memory of other forms of political injustice.

And I want explicitly recognize the verdict to the European Court of Justice in the case of the Lithuanian partisan Vasily Kononov refer to his struggle for the liberation of his country from fascism.

Therefore, it is already of crucial political importance, if they succeed in destroying this anti-fascist consensus in the European Parliament.

Antifa:

What can anti-fascist organizations do?

Ulrich Schneider:

As Secretary General of the International Federation of the resistance fighters (FIR) – association of anti-fascists, I am very glad that several member associations, including from Greece, already published clear declarations against this provocation. I hope and expect that other member organizations will ask in notes and statements by their respective European MPs urge of that resolution at all. The totalitarian thesis is a product of the "Cold War" and can not be basis for a future Europe.

Antifa:

Thank you for this interview.

(from: Antifa, Newspaper of VVN-BdA, November/December 2008)

„We need a strong structure for our organization!“

Meeting of Executive committee of FIR in Berlin

Mid-October 2008 a meeting of the Executive Committee of FIR was held in Berlin. It was a regular date planned in connection with the scheduled annual conference.

You know, the Conference had to be canceled of organizational reasons and the present members of the EA have been informed about the details. The preparation of the subject and the pre-requisites were very good, but the number of excuses grew over by far the number of applications. The reasons for these cancellations were mainly financial. It is particularly apparent for our member associations in Central and Eastern Europe that their financial options are very limited. Therefore, we must also have effective ways of maintaining contacts and meetings, according to think that these conditions will be more equitable.

A second issue was the work and intern structure of the Executive Committee itself. First of all, it is important to have a small and effective working body for the management of the FIR. However, the problem is that in case of sickness or other forms of prevention no representation is regulated. This is not only concerning the working level, but also direct information ways to the member associations. This concerns in particular the involvement of elected Russian

representatives in the work of the Executive Committee. The EC made concrete proposals, how the integration of the Russian War Veterans Association can be guaranteed in future. Based on this situation and debate, the Executive Committee on a proposal by the Hungarian comrades came to the conclusion that in the summer 2009 a new Congress of the FIR is necessary to discuss these issues and to make appropriate decisions. As soon as details are fixed, the member associations will be informed.

These organizational issues were discussed against the background of a successful political work and great acceptance in the past few months. President Michel Vanderborght highlighted in particular the UN Greetings to members of the FIR (see reprinted in this bulletin) on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights". The apparent involvement of the FIR in the international mass demonstration in Cologne (as reported) and the participation on the history conference of URAP in Setubal/ Portugal are other examples. For the first time, Michel Vanderborght was invited officially as President of the FIR by the Belgian government to the commemoration ceremonies in Breendonk. For the following weeks there are already further invitations to conferences and meet-

ings. We come, therefore, to the limits of our human and organizational capabilities.

On Sunday, the members of the Executive Committee participated on two commemorative events in Berlin. In the morning, invited by the the Organization "Fighters and Friends of the Spanish Republic" has been a commemoration ceremony at the monument to Spain fighters. One remembered in a dignified and impressing ceremony the last appeal of the International Brigades in Spain 70 years ago. Michel Vanderborcht as for-

mer partisan and president of the FIR made a speech too. Subsequently, the members of the EC took part in the cemetery of the Socialists in Friedrichshain at a commemorative event for Georg Spielmann who would have in 2008 his 100th Birthday. Georg Spielmann worked for many years as a representative of the committee of the anti-fascist resistance fighters of the GDR as secretary for the FIR in Vienna.

U. Schneider

Antifascists need partners in the European Parliament Greeting words to the delegates of the congress of European Left (EL)

November 29-30, 2008: the European Left invited to an Electoral Congress in Berlin. The FIR as non-governmental organization was invited as a guest. On this occasion, the General-Secretary of the FIR presented the following greetings to the delegates and guests. On Sunday, the Congress held in the memorial concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, a commemorative event. On the next page, we document the speech by Hans Coppi, president of the Berlin VVN-BdA.

The International Federation of Resistance fighters (FIR) - Association of Anti-fascists is the largest umbrella organization of federations of former resistance fighters, partisans, members of the anti-Hitler coalition, deported ones and victims of the fascism and anti-fascists of today's generations. It has member associations in nearly all European states and Israel.

For many years, we have good political working contacts to members of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Group of the GUE / NGL. I speak about working contacts, because we always want to implement concrete political steps.

I want to give just two examples:

In the spring 2006, FIR held - together with the Group of the GUE / NGL - in the European Parliament an impressive international conference on "Anti-fascism in Europe" with participants from numerous European countries, from Israel and the United States.

Members of the Group of the GUE / NGL supported by funds in April 2008 the International Meeting of more than 1,000 young people from all over Europe in the Memorial concentration camp Buchenwald. Therefore we are obliged to thank the Parliamentarians of the European Left.

Similar contacts FIR is looking for as well to other groups in the European Parliament, for example, to the PSE group, because for us Europe and the European Parliament is of great political importance.

We believe and declared in several statements we made:

Europe's political bodies can play an important role in the fight against neo-fascism, xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism, extreme right and right wing populism. We know that we are supported in this struggle by members of various parties and groups.

Unfortunately, we are witnessing at the same time that the European Parliament is abused by political forces of right parties, to establish historical revisionism and totalitarianism as an ideological doctrine guideline. I mention in this context only the scandalous request, to declare August 23 as a "day of remembrance for the victims of Stalinist and fascist dictatorship". I certainly do not need to explain to you that such an equation distorts the historical reality and means a relativism of fascist crimes against humanity.

Against such attempts by the reorientation of Europe, we need a cross-parliamentary

organization of allies with whom we can implement the anti-fascist contents.

We need allies,

- to preserve the historical commemoration and the anti-fascist memorial sites in Europe and
- to secure the social and political rights of the veterans of the anti-fascist struggle.

Speech by Hans Coppi at the commemoration of the EL congress in the memorial Sachsenhausen

Already in the years 1933-34, there existed in the centre of Oranienburg the first concentration camp. Hundreds of communists, socialists, trade unionists and other anti-fascists were interned in the old brewery. Also my father were locked up there for some weeks. Then he was sentenced to one year in prison. The 17 year old young communists had turned with leafleting and other actions against the Nazi regime. After his discharge, he reactivated contact with his friends and comrades and participated since 1940 in resistance actions of the "Red Chapel". My parents were 1942 by Germany's high military court sentenced to death with many of their friends.

"The death is a master from Germany" - so Paul Celan's moving poem. Ten years ago, I started in the Sachsenhausen Memorial to create based on existing documents a personal data-base of concentration camp prisoners. It emerged now a dead book with the names of more than 20,000 dead and murdered prisoners of Sachsenhausen. Thousands of names we could not documented. The SS had started in April 1944 to destroy the documents of their crimes. We know only a few names of the more than 10,000 Soviet prisoners of war, they have been shot in the autumn of 1941. They were murdered a few steps from here. Here, for weeks burned the flames of four portable cremators. The smell of burnt flesh was often on the camp and the town of Oranienburg. To the uniqueness of Nazi crimes belong mass killings in Sachsenhausen.

The state politics in the Federal Republic of Germany is determined by the doctrine of totalitarianism. The International Committee

We count on you, the members and representatives of the European Left.

Let us work together - in the tradition of Europe's liberation struggle of peoples against fascism, together with the anti-fascist forces of today - for a democratic, social, peaceful and anti-fascist Europe.

of the survivors from the concentration camps in Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen, the Central Council of Jews and Roma and Sinti, the Left and the VVN criticised a memorable policy that equates the time before and after 1945. Our protests had the result that the new memorial concept of the Federal Government separates more clearly the uniqueness of fascist crimes and the situation in the SBZ and the GDR. We expect that in the Federal Republic and in Europe to commemorate and remember the unique fascist crimes of humanity and the critical engagement with the social causes remain a clear priority.

The memorials in former concentration camps may not be places of a German national identity. Since 1939 and strengthened since 1942/43, most of the prisoners came from the occupied countries. They remain European places of remembrance and commemoration of the crimes of the Nazi regime. It should also be in Strasbourg and Brussels are spoken, if they think about European identity. These include the experience of the Europe-wide resistance against the Nazi barbarism as well as the persecution and murder of millions of people by the German fascism.

"The destruction of Nazism with its roots and building a new world of peace and freedom is our goal," says the oath of the liberated prisoners of the Buchenwald concentration camp from 16 countries on 19 April 1945. This legacy of former prisoners should be our commitment to the 21st Century for Europe to argue that racism, anti-Semitism, Nazism and right-wing populism always overcomes.

The European Citizenship Award of the Sinti and Roma given to Prof. Dr. Wladyslaw Bartoszewski

On 18 December, in the Foreign Office in Berlin the awarding ceremony of the European Civil Rights Prize of the Sinti and Roma to Prof. Dr. Wladyslaw Bartoszewski instead. The FIR was represented by the member of the honorary Presidency Lore Krüger, the Secretary-General Dr. Ulrich Schneider and cashiers Heinz Siefert. On behalf of the organization, Dr. Schneider congratulated the winners.

The event is fully documented on the Internet (www.sintiundroma.de). At this point, only excerpts from individual contributions can be documented.

Professor Bartoszewski expressed in his gratitude speech the hope: "Much evidence suggests that Europe is mature enough to abuses responsibly with their own previous neglect against Roma. I hope and I wish you that the times were unrepeatable past in which the Roma and Sinti were seen as second class citizens or for a society as a social problem. It is not only in the interest of the Roma. It is in the interest of all people. "

Romani Rose, chairman of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma noted the present discrimination against the Roma - minority:

"The European Fundamental Rights - agency - as the most important institution for the control of the human rights in Europe - presented in 2008 unequivocally that the Sinti and Roma as no other groups in Europe are victims of massive discrimination in all spheres of life. This applies to the Roma - Minorities in Eastern Europe, but also for the Western European member states of the EU. ... With horror, we see the events of recent times in many countries of the European Union, where right-wing violence perpetrated with brutal attacks on the homes of Sinti and Roma and threatened and murdered women and children.

The quality of life of the Sinti and Roma is often sparked by a massive discrimination and marked by exclusion in education. Thus, they are robbed all long-term opportunities in the professional life. They are often forced to disastrous living conditions without decent supply of water, electricity

and other basic needs to live. Especially in the new accession countries have infant mortality and unemployment in the Roma - minority unimaginable proportions. This situation is disgraceful and contrary to our claim to human dignity and human rights within the European Community. ...

Sinti and Roma share with the Jews, the bare-terrible history of the Holocaust in national-socialist occupied Europe. The European community is quite right to react very sensitive to all forms of anti-Semitism and acts very early against such tendencies. We have the hope that the European Union now with the same determination opposes also racism against the Sinti and Roma." ...

László Kovács responds as a member of the European Commission and spoke about the possibilities of politics and civil society: "On 16 September 2008 in Brussels, the first Roma summit instead. This summit offered the invaluable opportunity to take the problems of the Roma on higher priority on the political agenda as possible. The success of this summit can be seen in the number of participants to read: From the European institutions, Member States and civil society came about five hundred representatives.

Following the summit, the President of the European Commission proposed to form a European platform for the integration of the Roma. This forum could serve as a basis when it comes to deeds to the results of our analysis of the instruments and policies. "

Commemoration of the "Night of Broken Crystals" in 41 countries all over Europe

9 November 2008 - 70 years after 'Kristallnacht' pogrom

Antisemitism tries to claim back the streets in Europe.

The numbers of victims of fascist attacks has been growing dramatically in the recent years and NGOs in Europe state their concern about this development all over the continent.

Smashed windows, antisemitic graffiti, radical attacks on synagogues and hate crimes in form of street violence are the most seen faces of fascism and antisemitism on our streets. Also the defilement of Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust memorial places are day-by-day indicators of nowadays antisemitism. A recent example of antisemitic vandalism was given during the general elections in Austria 1 month ago, where 90 graves on a Jewish cemetery were destroyed - the offenders are still not known...

Not only in Austria, but also in many other European states, there is an enormous lack of information and education concerning this sensitive topic. The local governments give not even rudimentary reports about antisemitic or fascist motivated delicts. This

ignorance forces thousands of potential victims to live in constant fear... a life long!

UNITED we are strong.

The European wide campaign on 9th November, the *International Day against Fascism and Antisemitism*, aims to counteract the worrying developments related to antisemitism, fascism and racism all over the continent.

In this way non-governmental organizations in 41 European countries will get active around 9th November 2008 to commemorate the 'Kristallnacht' pogrom in 1938. The 'Kristallnacht' pogrom is often seen as the symbolic beginning of the Holocaust.

Hundreds of activities, coordinated by the UNITED secretariat, will take place all over Europe during the annual action week. In diverse manners the NGOs draw also attention to contemporary faces of fascism, antisemitism, racism and discrimination; they prepare for example torchlight processions, lectures, exhibitions, demonstrations, poster and awareness-raising actions etc.

Press release of UNITED, Amsterdam.

Albania

Still commemorating on 28 and 29 November

Also this year the association "anti-fascist National Liberation fighters" (LANC) supported the commemorations of the 28th and 29th November. Because in past years, the conservative Albanian government wanted to reduce to commemorate only the day of National Foundation on 28 November, LANC organized together with the Socialist Party and the Movement for Social Integration, the commemorative events at 29 November, the anniversary of the liberation of

Albania from the fascist occupation, independently.

The newspaper of the association "Kushtrim Brezash" underlined the importance of both anniversaries for anti-fascist remembrance work in Albania.

Already some time ago, the political secretary of the LANC Adnan Qatipi said: "Nobody can make forget the memory of the heroic struggle of our people against fascism in the history books and our memory. Nobody has neither the right."

Spain in the heart Barcelona commemorated the International Brigades

How could we ever forget this land? One of the last songs that they have sang on Spanish soil. The song of farewell in October 1938. On the Gran Via in Barcelona marched international fighters on their last parade. The great street of the capital of Catalonia, cutting the cubic blocks, saw for the last time the volunteers of the International Brigades, lined up in twelve-rows, ordered by brigades and battalions, with their flags, commanders and commissioners at the top. Congratulated by thousands of Spaniards took the columns in step over, many soldiers raised their fists to last greeting, "Por vuestra y nuestra libertad!" - "For your and our freedom!" stood in gold ink on their flags. The 28th October 1938 was for many Interbrigadisten one day like none before, never had been joy and sadness so close together, many of them looked an uncertain future.

In October 2008, 70 years after the historic event, it is again the Catalan metropolis, the last fighter Spain receives. It is particularly hot in those days of October. And not only the sun means it well with the highly elderly passengers, accompanied by large delegations of families and friends from their countries, but again it is the gratitude, the kindness, the temperament and the exuberant joy of the Spaniards, for a feeling of warmth and care of welcome. And the joy is evident even among those who also have not seen for a long time, the Friends of the International Brigades from all countries, the least since the last meeting in 2006, connects an

invisible band of brotherhood beyond the borders of countries and oceans.

Only a few days left for the gathering, to exchange memories and new acquaintances to close to the circle of the assets to expand and strengthen the cohesion. Planned are common dinners, as in Sitges, a beautiful town on the Mediterranean, whose Old City seems to grow from the sea, the mountains and its houses with windows in the Moorish style testify an old history. General Viktor Lavski, once the pilots of the Red Army, in the service of the Republican Army shot down several times, using the short time in the program in order to swim in the sea.

At the opening of an exhibition about the Lincoln Brigade in the town hall of the place, pursuing journalists and film teams the rare guests and come with them into the conversation. Patiently, the witnesses answer the questions; it is perhaps the last opportunity to once again bear witness to their struggle for a better world. For many of them this began not only in Spain, but there was its peak and it is still not ending. But the days in October for some of the Voluntarios de la libertad were there last chance, to meet again the beloved country, its people and friends from around the world. A farewell after 70 years. But their battle will never be forgotten and we, the later generations will not abandon him. Salud!

Enrico Hilbert (aus: Antifa, Zeitschrift der VVN-BdA, November/ Dezember 2008)

Spain: Preserve the remembering the persecuted of the Franco era

We have the message noted on the 114,266 illegal arrests and disappearances during the Franco era, men and women who over many years have been pushed at the edge of the official discourse of our democracy, and now thanks to the organizations to rescue the historical memory (Asociaciones para la Recuperación de la Memoria

Histórica), the researcher and the families will be rehabilitated.

Their harrowing lives and their sacrifice for freedom and democracy must be accepted, like the many players who also reprisals during this time from all those who are recognized to be part of the Democrats and unforgettable Spanish victims in the 20th cen-

ture. We owe them recognition for their effort and their hope for a better world in the terrible years of European history.

That, and not the intention, to want to intervene in an ongoing process, which deserves our respect, we see in the laudable work of the presiding judge of the Court of Investigation Section 5 of the Audiencia Nacional, Baltasar Garzón, the summary trial on the Franco - Epoch procedure, after the law on historical memory (Ley de Memoria histórica) was adopted, a reason to celebrate, because it is a prerequisite for the upcoming restoration of our democracy. That

is why we deplore the disproportionate attacks on his work from certain circles, which should have for alarm in our society and vulnerability among the applicants.

Those who have by self-combustion of their life to democracy with dignity belong to one of the noblest chapter in memory of the 20th Spanish Century. For this reason we do not want to remain inactive, not before the obviousness of this crime against humanity, against them by a violent regime has been committed, even before the activities, to sell in this case, the competent court.

Hungary:

Active against extreme right wing and right wing violence

For the World Day against violence in early October 2008, a parade "Colourful Hungary" (Magyar Tarka) was organized in Budapest, on initiative of several civil organizations explicitly beyond any organized party politics. At the demonstration participated several thousand people.

The annual demonstration against violence and war was organized without political parties, this year - because of the events of recent months - from a much wider media

coverage accompanied as usual. On the violent riots of extremely right groups during the Gay Pride Parade last July, there were responses on both sides of politics as well as civil society.

The demonstration "Colourful Hungary" proves that the civilian sphere is going on to define its room for activities, and rules for the protest on the street. This helps to extend the participation of civil society.



MEASZ and the Vice - president of FIR Vilmos Hanti in the first line of "Colourful Hungary" (Tarka Magyar)

Zypern: Remembrance Day Ceremony 2008

For the tenth year the Cyprus Veterans Association World War II, a member organization of the FIR, took the initiative to organize the Memorial Day on 11 November 2008, in order to honour those who were killed during the two world wars. The event was held at the Cypriot war memorial in Nicosia, which was build in honour of the volunteers in the Second World War have been killed.

After a minute of silence and a recitation of the Cypriot Church spoke the president of the Veterans Association and the govern-

ment spokesman, representing the President of the Republic of Cyprus.

There followed an impressive wreath laying by representatives of the state, political parties and trade unions, the ambassadors of all the allied countries, the University and the Turkish Cypriot veterans.

In addition to this ceremony was explained on this day in all schools the spirit of this national commemoration day.

France Concours national de la Résistance et de la Déportation 2009

The FNDIRP (Fédération Nationale des Déportés et et Internés Résistants Patriot) took this year's competition for the reminder of the Resistance and the deported organization under the substantive focus on "Children and young people in the system of concentration camps".

In particular, the students should make interviews with time witnesses and analyse documents and reports from the deportation. So they should be connected with knowl-

edge of the fascist persecution in the concentration and extermination camps. They should also recognize that the solidarity with the weakest victims of the Nazi barbarity was possible and its rescue by the organized resistance.

By the end of March, the competition entries can be submitted.

Greece/ Italy: Compensation for the victims of Distomo Another ruling against the Federal Republic of Germany

In the dispute over the compensation of Nazi victims in Italy there was issued again a ruling against the Federal Republic of Germany. The High Court in Florence confirmed that the victims of an SS massacre of the Greek village of Distomo can be enforced claims against the Federal Republic in German assets in Italy. SS soldiers had massacred 1944 more than 200 people in Distomo.

The relatives obtained a ruling in Greece against Germany, which ascribes to them for damages. The Greek government, however, prevented the execution. Since then

the families are trying to enforce judgments in Italy, where the law decides in Nazi cases restorative friendly.

The Supreme Court has ruled in Rome, Germany could be not to invoke sovereign immunity in crimes against humanity. Germany wants draw on the other hand before the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 27. 11. 08)

Germany: Young people visit the concentration camp Bergen - Belsen

The youth group of the VVN-BdA Freiberg (Saxony), also took part with a large delegation to the youth in Buchenwald visited in the fall 2008 the concentration camp Bergen-Belsen Memorial and laid a wreath there. It was important to the young peoples, to carry the flag of the FIR with them.



Finances Last date for fulfilment of the duty 2008

The cashier Heinz Siefritz wants in this way to remind all the member associations to pay open contributions for 2008 promptly. Because he has to submit the settlement to the Finance Office and the regulators in early 2009, he asks for timely transfer of funds to the account below.

At the same time, he reminds of the statute that only this federation may designate delegates for the congress, which in the last two years has paid its membership properly.

Imprint :

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The International Federation of Resistant fighters (FIR) has been designated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations as a «Peace Messenger». The Federation is accepted as NGO at the UNESCO, Paris, at the UN standing committee of disarmament, Geneva and the European council, Strasbourg.

Bank account: Postbank Berlin (BLZ 10010010), Account: **543 054 107**, Owner **FIR**, IBAN **DE 04 1001 0010 0543 0541 07** SWIFT-BIC: **PBNKDEFF**

The bulletin will be delivered free to member federations and interested.