

IMPACT

IN THE PUBLIC ARENA

EEA's Socio-Political Team, working together with EEA's members.

We hope you enjoy this fourth joint newsletter from our Socio-Political Team. With best wishes,
Gordon Showell- Rogers
EEA General Secretary

News from Tove Videbaek, Brussels.

The new European Platform on Religious Liberty (EPRID) has been established!

Religious Liberty is a key EEA priority. To respond effectively to the many violations of religious liberty and to have more impact at European level, the EEA, with Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) and Open Doors, has established this Platform (EPRID). "Together we are stronger"! The launch took place in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on September 26, 2006.

Religious discrimination is often a source of conflict in many areas where the EU is active. The EPRID endeavours to ensure that religious discrimination and intolerance are addressed in consistent and comprehensive ways in EU policy and practice.

The three founding organisations will invite other organisations and religious groups that are actively lobbying for religious liberty at European level to become EPRID members.

Several key people in the European Parliament and the European Commission are very interested in the platform. Two EPRID events a year will feature an internationally well-known speaker and focus on a country situation. Experts from the Council, the Commission and the Parliament will take part each time. The first event will be in

the New Year, when EPRID will recognise the 25th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Religious Intolerance and Discrimination.

Projects. For the EU's 50th anniversary, the EEA is seeking funding for **4 conferences in 4 different countries** to discuss where we are, and where we would like to go, as "Europe". The EEA also is planning a **European Student Forum** (also dependent on funding) with about 30 young people from all over Europe, to learn about Europe and about Christians and politics. And the EEA is applying for funding for "organisations working in the field of **Active European Citizenship**".

We really need your prayers!

The EEA office in Brussels needs funding to be able to carry on. Would you pray that these three recent funding applications may be accepted, and that the funding will be provided? God can grant that these applications are received favourably. Thank you ahead of time, for praying.

For more details about all that the EEA is doing in Brussels, please contact:

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A Unique Opportunity

Evangelicals on other continents believe that unique global promises have been made to act in ways that **echo God's will**. These are the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which could save and transform countless lives. As you know, "Micah Challenge" is the global Christian campaign to make these MDGs a reality by 2015. This is not a naive dream. The MDGs are humanly possible. And nothing is impossible for God.

WWW.MICAHCHALLENGE.ORG

Micah Challenge is **unique** because it unites the poorest and richest in equal partnership. Micah Challenge is not just for “powerful” countries. The action or inaction of **every** government affects the poor in their own countries or abroad. All EU governments impact the rest of the world through trade and aid policies. Corruption, conflict and environmental degradation cause poverty. **Every government** could do more to help.

EEA members are helping establish national campaigns to strengthen good practice. The website provides fantastic ideas and materials to make involvement easier. Each nation decides for itself what it can do. If an ongoing campaign is not yet possible, occasional actions are also welcome.

2007 is the half way point in the 15 year campaign. It is time to “**blow the half time whistle**” and, just as a football coach would speak to their team, so it is time to encourage our politicians and urge them to try harder in the second half. There will also be a G8 meeting in Germany 6-8 June, making Europe a key continent for campaigning in 2007. We have received some **specific requests**:-

1. Will we encourage our members to join the Micah Challenge prayer season 26 May – 7 July 2007?
2. Will we pray for and urge the EU to make decisions that help France, Germany, Italy & the UK to push the G8 to make radical progress in helping the poor?
3. The World Evangelical Alliance will gather Evangelical leaders from G8 members and from the “South” two days before the G8. This will be an opportunity to speak clearly & in unity about the MDGs. WEA needs our help to persuade the mass media to take notice.
4. Micah Challenge staff will prepare a statement for politicians. We could add points that are relevant for our countries. We could then present this statement to our own governments and media at an

appropriate time, e.g. before the G8 or during an election campaign.

5. Will we encourage churches to join in Micah Sunday (14 October 2007)?

To help to convince sceptics in your nations, here are a few stories of the difference Micah Challenge prayer and campaigning have made: **Zambian efforts** led to availability of **anti-retroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS** increasing by **43%** in Mwinilunga district. **Australians** persuaded their government to increase annual overseas aid by almost **1 billion euros**. **Americans** have dramatically changed the **US government’s commitment** to the MDGs.

We have ideas about the difference you can make, even with very limited resources. Please get in touch, if you would like help to get involved in this unique opportunity.

With best wishes as ever,
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