

News from the international Movement

→ Emmaus co-founds the OUC!



The Organisation for Universal Citizenship (OUC) was set up on 8 February by three organisations, including Emmaus International, which

have been campaigning for human rights for several years. It aims to promote global freedom of movement and settlement via two initiatives. Firstly, a universal citizenship passport will be issued to enable holders to settle in countries that recognise the passport and have the same economic and social rights as

nationals. The second initiative is to officially request the United Nations to hold an international conference on the issue. Jean Rousseau, President of Emmaus International will also preside over the OUC. France Libertés and Utopia, the two other French organisations that have set up the OUC are also on the Board, which will meet in two months' time. The next stage of mobilisation will involve taking part in the World Social Forum from 26 – 30 March in Tunis (Tunisia). The OUC will be presented there to global civil society activists, who will be called on to lend their support.

www.o-c-u.org will go live in mid March. ■

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→ World Councillors start the ball rolling



Following the 2012 General Assembly, the World Councils met in January and February. The new councillors' first job was to understand their role and responsibilities.

At the meeting of the World Council on Training and New Generations, the participants suggested working on the values of the Emmaus Movement and creating leaders for the Movement (see *The Emmaus Postcard* no. 22). A training plan for the next four years was drawn

up and is to be presented to the Board in April. It aims to boost groups' activities via training on techniques to mobilise groups, lead Emmaus groups and plan and manage projects. Work camps were also suggested as a way of making the Movement known, especially amongst younger generations.

At the meeting of the World Council on Political Action and International Solidarity, the councillors reviewed the activities undertaken over the past 10 years in the Emmaus International priority action areas. It also examined the 2013 container programme and solidarity projects to be financed in 2013. Over three days of work, the councillors agreed to undertake 16 activities, which are also to be presented to the Board.

Some of them aim to mobilise new groups to get involved in the priority action areas by taking part in World Water Day, holding regional debates about freedom of movement and using the Emmaus Ethical Fund for example. It was also suggested that the process to finance projects could be changed so the time between reception of financing and implementation of projects is reduced. The councillors also stated the importance of having access to information about the projects that receive financing.

The World Council has an interesting programme for the four years ahead!

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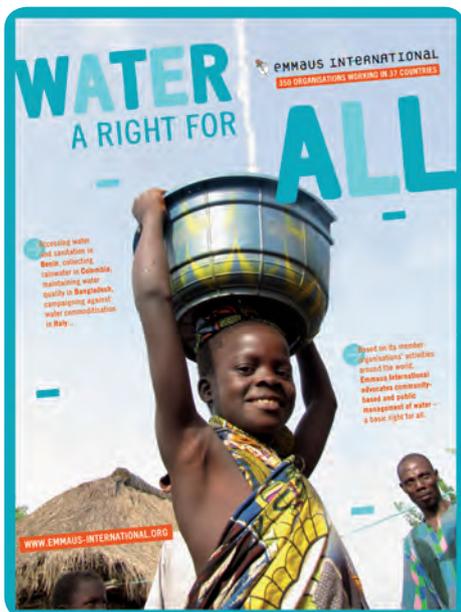
→ Emmaus International gains recognition for action in Benin

Emmaus International signed an agreement with the Beninese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 21 January. With this agreement, the government has recognised the social utility of Emmaus, upheld by the four member groups in Benin. Emmaus was set up in Benin 25 years ago. Since then it has been lending its support to the democratisation process, particularly alongside Albert Tévoédjré, a long-term friend of Abbé Pierre and one of the founders of Emmaus in the country and now an ombudsman for the Republic of Benin. In practical terms, the agreement means Emmaus groups in Benin will be exempt from tax, customs duty and VAT on imports. This will make it easier to send containers and import goods for the 'Citizens in Solidarity for Water on Nokoué' project. On signing, Jean Rousseau, President of Emmaus International was awarded the title of *Commandeur* of the Legion of Honour of Benin, one of the country's highest decorations. This is fantastic recognition of Emmaus International's action in Benin! ■■



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→ All aboard for 22 March!



Over 50 Emmaus groups in France, Italy, the UK, Sweden, Finland and Benin are getting involved in World Water Day on 22 March. Some groups are staging sales to support the Nokoué project, others are raising awareness and campaigning about water access as a right for everyone. Emmaus International has been fighting for this for several years. Based on Emmaus groups' activities and the priority action areas chosen by the General Assemblies, the 'Citizens in Solidarity for Water on Nokoué' project has got off the ground in Benin and Emmaus International is developing its campaign for

community-based and public water management.

To support their communications needs, posters, flyers, a press release and a PowerPoint presentation about the project have been sent to Emmaus groups that have agreed to get involved. The poster (opposite) is also to be sent to all Emmaus groups around the world to let people know about the Movement's water initiatives. For more information about Nokoué, see *Tam-tam* no. 53. ■■

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→ Dates for your diary

Emmaus International Board meeting in Roubaix, France: 8 – 14 April
 Emmaus Europe meetings in Verona, Italy: 26 – 27 April
 Asia Regional Council meeting: 17 – 20 March
 Salon in support of Emmaus International: Lille, France: 13 – 14 April

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