



## In this edition

### **Staff member evacuated from Chad**

A staff member of the German St John had to be evacuated from Chad in early February, due to the hostilities between rebel and government troops. [Page 2](#)

### **Consultation on Europe's Social Reality**

The European Commission launched a Consultation on Europe's Social Reality. A number of Civil Society organisations participated. The Consultation aimed to generate debate and sought views on current social trends. [Page 5](#)

### **Commission Communication on Civil Protection**

The European Commission has published a Communication on reinforcing the Union's disaster response capacity in early March. It calls for more coordination, coherence and transparency in EU civil protection. [Page 7](#)

## Content

<a href="#">JOIN News</a>	1
<a href="#">Members News</a>	2
<a href="#">St John Worldwide</a>	3
<a href="#">Health and Social Affairs in Europe</a>	3
<a href="#">Humanitarian and Development Aid</a>	5
<a href="#">Volunteering</a>	6
<a href="#">Civil Protection</a>	7
<a href="#">Other EU Policy News</a>	8
<a href="#">Past Events</a>	8
<a href="#">Upcoming Events</a>	8
<a href="#">EU Funding Opportunities</a>	9
<a href="#">Publications</a>	9

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## Our Top News

### **Towards a European Year of Volunteering**

Johanniter International has joined forces with a number of NGOs in signing a position paper to make 2011 the European Year of Volunteering. The European Volunteer Centre (CEV) presented the paper in the European Parliament in February.

The undersigning organisations believe that having a European Year attributed to volunteering would raise awareness of its importance to the European Union in economic as well as in social terms. The Union is still lacking a comprehensive approach that promotes, recognises, facilitates and supports volunteering. The Paper therefore calls for a volunteering infrastructure at local, regional, national and European level. A European Year could also spread information on the possibilities of volunteering, and reduce the barriers that people who want to volunteer are facing. Please click [here](#) for more information.

### **Moustache-Campaign raised nearly €1 million**

The Swedish St John in 2007 had initiated a fundraising campaign for research and information about prostate cancer. To raise public awareness, it organised a nationwide moustache competition. The Swedish King Carl XIV Gustaf adopted the cause and thus the campaign from the very start had prominent backing as well as great fundraising results. The actual contest was launched on 14<sup>th</sup> November. Participants paid €50 for three competitions: most money raised, most sponsors engaged and the most beautiful moustache. Participants, sponsors and the public followed the progress of the contest on the campaign website. A great amount of money was received from individual donors. The campaign was well-publicised and thus the Swedish St John is now much better known in the general public and is on its way to becoming the number one charity of the Swedish business world.

The campaign officially ended with a dinner in the presence of the Swedish King and Queen on Valentine's Day, 14<sup>th</sup> February, where prize ceremonies, entertainment and an auction were on the programme. All in all, the Swedish St John collected with the Moustache Campaign nearly €1 million for the prostate cancer research.

### **Carer support programme saves a life**

Stephanie King, a mother and carer from Dorset saved her disabled son's life after receiving vital training from the St John Ambulance Carer support programme.

Stephanie knew what to do when Matthew started choking after finishing his dinner. She placed him on his knees and started doing five back slaps and five abdominal thrusts. When Matthew stopped breathing, she started resuscitation, and only when she became exhausted did Stephanie place him in the recovery position and ran to her next door neighbours who called an ambulance. Stephanie said: 'If I had not attended the St John Ambulance Carers support programme I would not have known what to do. St John Ambulance gave me the knowledge and confidence to help save my son's life'.

The St John Carers support programme teaches emergency and basic first aid skills based around accidents that are likely to occur in the home, along with safe handling and information about how to keep both the carer and the person they care for well.

## JOIN Members News



**St John Eye Hospital**

### **St John and Red Crescent together against the effects of diabetes**

The St John Eye Hospital intends to eliminate preventable blindness in the Middle East. Diabetic retinopathy is one of the major causes of blindness in adults. Over 14% of the Palestinian population are affected by diabetes, a disease that increases the risk of blindness by 25 times. Only by early detection can all related blindness be prevented. As the Palestinian health sector suffers from a perpetual lack of funding and is in shatters because of the ongoing crisis, the new joint programme of the St John Eye Hospital and the Palestinian Red Crescent is an important contribution to combating the effects of Diabetes.

Responding to the movement restrictions enforced on their patients, the St John Eye Hospital opened a third satellite clinic in Anabta in May 2007. It covers a region inhabited by close to a million people in the isolated North of the West Bank. This year, it looks to expand and intensify its screening programmes and treatment of Diabetic patients. The Red Crescent Society operates eight primary care centres in the North of the West Bank, five of which are for diabetics. The joint programme will provide an efficient route of referrals for diabetic patients in need of ophthalmic treatment.



**Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe e.V.**

### **Evacuation of a colleague from Chad**

The German St John staff member Roger Meyer had to be evacuated from Chad in early February, due to the hostilities between rebel and government troops. He first travelled to Libreville (Gabon) before he was flown out to Berlin on 4<sup>th</sup> February. Heavy equipment and helicopters were used in the fighting after rebel troops had occupied the capital. Meyer was in N'Djamena for a planned six-week assignment. The German St John still managed to deliver relief supplies to refugees in need. Until the situation in Chad stabilises, the St John Office will remain vacant.

### **First-aid and prevention training in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh regularly suffers from floods caused by monsoon rains, high tides and cyclones. Only recently, in summer 2007, 600 people lost their lives due to heavy floods, and only four months later cyclone Sidr destroyed about 360,000 houses and killed more than 3,000 people. The German St John reacted with immediate emergency measures, but is now also plan-

ning to deliver long-term help in order to better prepare the population for future disasters.

First Aid and Prevention courses are to be provided in the region. Additional funding will be used to train ten members of BRAC (the largest Bangladeshi NGO), who will then share their knowledge with local teachers and women; also in remote communities.

### **German St John stresses its public utility**

The German St John organisation has reacted strongly to a recent verdict by the German Federal Finance Court. According to the court's opinion of early February, ambulance and patient transport services did not serve the public good, as charity organisations only provided medical services to make money.

Objecting this position, St John emphasises that its Statutes underline the mission of relieving the distress and suffering of persons. The charitable character of the German St John's activities is thus clearly defined. The court verdict contradicts the organisation's statutory mission statement and the commitment of its ca 22,000 volunteers.



**Joannici Dzieło Pomocy**

### **St John wins prize in competition „Safe Streets 2007“**

The regional association Warminsko-Mazurski of the Polish St John association was awarded a prize in the category "Initial care/Ambulance sector" in the "ORLEN-Safe Streets" competition in Warsaw, receiving around €7100 for its achievements. St John had been hosting events to spread knowledge and expertise on initial care and has trained some 600 people. Within the "Safe Olsztyn" Project it has educated 150 participants and held a summer workshop on how to teach the basics of initial care to young people. A new series of events that trains St John volunteers for providing first aid in schools began last summer.



**Johanniter Hulpverlening**

### **MADD made a difference**

More than 43,000 people participated in the Make a Difference Day (MADD) in November 2007 in the Netherlands. MADD puts voluntary commitment into the spotlight and has become an important tool to enhance the image of voluntary work and promote social commitment. The Dutch St John organisation actively took part in this event – it provided volunteers and organised several programmes where "trial" volunteers could get a feel of the services just for the day or for longer.



## **More St John youth work in Budapest**

The Hungarian St John organisation is offering more and more interesting youth activities in the capital. Since last autumn there has been a special first aid course for young people. Another youth group has been caring for children in a "problem school", who need particular support and supervision due to their difficult family situations. The St John youngsters have organised excursions and a Santa-Claus gift giving for these kids. There is a regular exchange with the school psychologist. A third St John youth team organises the storage and distribution of clothes and other donations in kind that the organisation receives. The Hungarian St John organisation is also running youth groups in the towns of Szeged, Szombathely and Oradea.

## **St John Worldwide**

### **St John Ambulance Sri Lanka takes over post-Tsunami projects**

Last December, the German St John organisation closed down its office in Colombo (Sri Lanka), having been there for three years in the aftermath of the Tsunami. Its projects (i.e. first aid training and the building of five training centres) will now be overseen by its partner, St John Ambulance Sri Lanka. After providing immediate emergency relief aid following the tsunami, the German organisation had carried out projects such as helping to build houses for 90 families, holding first aid courses and staging a campaign against the sexual exploitation of children. Between December 2004 and December 2007, €3.8 million were invested in projects in Sri Lanka.

### **St John Ambulance Kenya helps victims**

More than 1000 Kenyans have died and around 300,000 Kenyans were internally displaced due to the outbreak of violence after the allegedly rigged elections in Kenya on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

St John Ambulance Kenya has been treating victims since the beginning of the crisis. 150 members contributed to initial care and transportation to hospitals when the hostilities first broke out. As the conflict persisted, HIV medication, sanitary products and blankets were given out to the victims. The German Foreign Office gave €100,000 to the German St John organisation to support its relief activities in Kenya. St John Ambulance Kenya has more than 10,000 members trained in first aid, and is one of the largest relief organisations in the country.

On 28<sup>th</sup> February, President Kibaki and opponent Odinga reached a power-sharing deal. Odinga will now become Kenya's Prime Minister, a position that is new

to Kenyan governance. While this deal will hopefully end violence, few people in the camps believe that they can return to their homes. Hatred and mistrust are too deeply entrenched for people to go back to ethnically diverse places, says Ewa Mwai, coordinator of St John Kenya. More than 270,000 people remain in Kenyan camps, and 12,000 are estimated to be in Uganda. The rain season has begun, resulting in deteriorating conditions in the camps. Medical treatment needs to be maintained over at least the next few weeks.

## **Health and Social Affairs in Europe**

### **European eHealth policy – ambitious plans and critics**

eHealth means the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) across all functions affecting the health sector – from doctors to patients, from hospital managers to social security administrators.

In a [report](#) published in late December 2007, the European Commission concluded that the eHealth sector had the potential to be a lead market and the prospective return of investment would be relatively high. Lead markets are high-growth potential markets for research and innovation-rich goods and services. The Commission believes that an eHealth lead market would increase economic benefits and improve the quality of health services.

However, preliminary findings of an EU-backed study that assessed the financing needs for eHealth are revealing an over-emphasis on ICT to the detriment of organisational change and real benefits for the health systems. According to this study, which will be published in September 2008, organisational change can be achieved by freeing up medical staff's time for eHealth purposes and training, as well as re-designing current working and clinical practices. An effective engagement of doctors and nurses is needed and the whole eHealth user chain has to be convinced of the benefits of eHealth.

According to Dr. Daniel Mart from the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), doctors feel they have been excluded from the EU eHealth policy. They criticize that the European eHealth industry is too powerful and the competitiveness of the sector has taken priority over proven benefits to patients and health systems.

### **Health services directive again postponed**

The long-awaited EU health services directive, which was supposed to codify the circumstances under which EU patients can legitimately be covered for treatment received in other Member States, has again been postponed. Health systems are primarily the responsibility of the Member States, but in some cases health-care may be better provided in another Member State,