



**Nothing can justify chipping away at
fundamental rights!**

**AEDH supports the November 14th
2012 day of action**

Brussels, 13 November 2012

The European Association for the Defense of Human Rights wishes to publicly express its support for the calls issued by the European Trade Union Confederation for mobilization on November 14th in many European Union countries. This involves general strikes in Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece as well as demonstrations in other member countries.

The fundamental rights of citizenship in most European Union countries are being dismantled by government responses to the crisis that are increasing unemployment, threatening democratic instability and exacerbating racism, xenophobia and violence.

The origin of this deep crisis lies in the abuses of the property finance sector, and in the complete deregulation that allowed it to develop practices with the sole aim of making immediate profit, and this at the expense of the people and their countries.

The policies developed by the European institutions and the different governments in order to cope with the crisis do not aim to determine the responsibilities of the irresponsible speculators and bankers, or to control and regulate the market – the opposite is true.

The control of the deficit and the debt payment became an absolute priority for all European leaders and together they decided to apply austerity measures. But most of this debt does not belong to state budgets; it is for the most part insufferable and illegitimate because the debt and the deficit were created precisely by the bank bailouts and by lowering taxes for the big companies and the wealthy, for the benefit of the richest people in each country.

Apart from empty declarations, no measure was taken in favour of a productive economy, investment, sustainable development, or reactivating the economy. The set of policies which are being developed placed themselves at the service of the speculative economy, banks, and they excluded the people and citizens' needs.

The consequences are visible. Unemployment rates continue to soar particularly amongst the young, poverty and social marginalization are on the rise, brutal cuts in fundamental rights are affecting healthcare, education, pensions, labour laws, public services, and privatizations. Furthermore, restrictions are destroying administrations who are then incapable of ensuring services and fulfilling their duties towards citizens. We are witnessing systematic destruction of the European model. This is unacceptable, and we must take action.

We cannot simply refer to the current state as a crisis – the process of robbing entire countries for the benefit of financial and speculative economy is being implemented. At the same time the process of degrading democracy is taking place. Despite their protests, citizens are distanced from decision-making and the institutions have never seemed so out of touch.

The social state and the economic and social rights that were once won through hardship and were once thought to lie at the heart of building a new Europe are now increasingly being questioned. Southern countries, in particular, are suffering from a full-scale assault which is leading to innumerable violations of human rights and the suffering of millions of people who are finding themselves without a future, in misery and without hope. The rights of future generations are equally at risk. The concept of peace that was once central to European construction may be questioned.

The way out of this unbearable situation requires an important change of direction in European policies, to really activate democracy and to put the economy at the service of the people and their needs, instead of submitting ourselves to omnipotent speculative financial markets, to shameful interests and to insufferable and illegitimate debt.

European citizens and all those who actively participate in European society must act as protagonists and must demand this necessary change of direction. The November 14th mobilization is a democratic answer in this way, which the European Association for the Defense of Human Rights supports entirely.

Press contact:

Serge Kollwelter, AEDH chairman

Yvonne Ebner, AEDH coordinator

Rafael Lara, AEDH board member

AEDH, Association Européenne pour la défense des Droits de l'Homme

33, rue de la Caserne. B-1000 Bruxelles

Tél : +32(0)25112100 Fax : +32(0)25113200 Email : aedh@aedh.eu

The European Association for the Defence of Human Rights (Association Européenne pour la défense des Droits de l'Homme - AEDH) consists of associations and leagues defending human rights in the countries of the European Union. AEDH is an associate member of the International Federation of Human Rights (Fédération internationale pour la défense des droits de l'Homme - FIDH). For more information, visit www.aedh.eu.