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SOLIDARITY IN A TIME OF CRISIS

The EU has designated 2010 the year for the eradication of poverty and social exclusion. This theme takes on a new significance against the backdrop of attempts to address the failed and unjust systems that caused the global financial and economical crisis. This crisis has proved to be a powerful reminder of the destructive potential of unregulated economic growth and models of development that fail to address issues of inequality and social justice.

This message, from the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions, representing 29 European countries, is an appeal to all European nations. We need to recognize that our only hope of achieving a long-term response to the current crises lies in a renewed commitment to solidarity and cooperation on a global scale.

Crucially, however, the present time is not without signs of hope. Above all, we should not underestimate our own ability to bring about change. With this in mind, the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions, makes an appeal to all European nations to:

- Take more effective measures to fight against poverty and social exclusion, recognizing that this is as essential to the future of all nations as the protection of the financial system.
- Introduce a system of standards and regulations that would ensure that economic and financial activity are not conducted to the detriment of human development and in contradiction of our obligations in terms of international solidarity.
- Encourage transparency by establishing an international standard or label that would be awarded to companies who sign up to the above norms and regulations.
- Introduce a tax (of approximately 0.005%) on financial transactions to generate income, which would be dedicated to Overseas Development Aid.
- Promote a development policy that fosters the best conditions for decent work and life in all countries.
- Remove unfair conditions attached to development aid.
- Continue to set an example for developed countries through measures to address and reduce the causes of climate change.
- Support developing countries in their efforts to address climate change through the provision of sufficient resources, taking into account the restraints they face in terms of their capacity to deal with the consequences.