

Dear Members and Friends,

## **Conference in Lausanne**

Please see the invitation below from the Musée de l'immigration for the 23rd Sept 2017. You are all most welcome!

## **Assistance given to the victims of human trafficking**

Following our visit in May, we have been able to start supporting victims of a huge trafficking ring in a 2nd country in the Persian Gulf.

Enticed by a recruitment agency in East Africa, last year Mariam (not her real name), 18 yrs old, arrived in the Persian Gulf to work for a well-to-do family. Deprived of food, care, basic pay and any means of contacting her family, Mariam found herself to be living in a state of modern-day slavery. A small, courageous organisation working locally was able to rescue her and find a safe place for her to stay. They contacted us, passed on a letter she had written, and we were able to organise her repatriation.

Mariam was able to return to her country on the 20th August.

Photo

A victim of trafficking writing her plea for help.

## **Syria**

Bearing witness- Vivere -Syria tells the story of Hanine- a Syrian girl caught up in the conflict. Translated by Vivere- Syria.

*' Our war, in Syria, is so hard!.....We have no choice and it affects our everyday life!.....And death is the ultimate price!...*

*But, having seen all the dramas of this war- grief, hunger, humiliation, emigration.....I have seen that death itself is seen as a welcome release for many people, one of whom is Hanine's father.*

*Vivere-Syria have been supporting Hanine by providing her with a few tins of milk.*

*Hanine was born in 2013, the daughter of a family who had emigrated from H....., a suburb of D....., in R.....which is a town already scarred and destroyed by war. A family who had fled their own city, without clothes, furniture, possessions, money...they had lost everything!.....Unable to pay their rent in R....., this family left for a second time and made their way to M..., in ...W.... where life is a little cheaper.*

*The family is made up of a father, a mother, and three children, the youngest of whom, Hanine, born in 2013, is severely paralysed; tetraplegic, Hanine is only able to be fed via a tube that goes from her nose to her stomach, and needs milk and nappies on a permanent basis.....*

*Hanine's father is forced to take whatever work he can in order to meet the needs of his family.....*

*And then, unbelievably, on top of all of these misfortunes- war, forced migration, a handicapped child, poverty, in June 2016 Hanine's mother discovers that she has breast cancer. So now, a whole new list of needs to be met- medical care, operations, treatment, journeys from D..... to L..... to get to the clinic, and all the expense that entails.....how will they be able to pay?.....*

*So, here I am, completely beside myself at the misery this family has had to endure!..*

*But, Vivere has provided a small light at the end of the tunnel by giving this girl, Hanine, some tins of milk....Thank you, Vivere*

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Our team in Syria has , since the beginning of the conflict, been able to provide 444 newborns with complementary food assistance. We have been forced to reduce our monthly budget by CHF100, from CHF 1500 to CHF 1400 due to a lack of funds. Our

financial reserve for Syria will have run out by November. We thank you in advance for any contribution you feel able to make.

## **Humanitarian Situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

Vivere has been active in the DR Congo since 2004. Each year, one of our committee goes to visit our local partners, evaluates the work that has been carried out and gauges the possibilities of stepping up or adapting our projects.

According to a recent report by the Norwegian Forum of Refugees (1), last year, the DRC had the highest number of displaced people fleeing conflict and violence in the world. Whilst the UN has decided to reduce the number of forces they deploy in this country (MONUSCO), more than 922 000 people fled their homes in 2016. This is more people than in Yemen and in Syria.

(Refugee camp in Nyagongo)

2.2 million Congolese have been displaced within the country. 550 00 have sought refuge abroad.

7.3 million Congolese are in urgent need of humanitarian help.

In the East of the country, where we work, one out of ten people has had to abandon their home.

Life expectancy is 58

One out of ten children dies before reaching the age of 5

According to the human development index, the DRC is ranked at 176 th out of 188 countries in the world.

## **Our campaign to abolish the death penalty for minors**

Nearly every week we get the horrendous news of children being accused or condemned of some deed they have done in the past, and who now find themselves on a one-way street to the death penalty or life imprisonment. This is why we have to do absolutely everything in our power to free the young person in question. Not only are both penalties atrocious, they are also illegal. We have to mobilise as many people as possible to appeal for the abolition of the death penalty and life imprisonment for minors in the countries that still practice this. In our last update, we focused on our work in Pakistan; now we will focus on Iran.

Amnesty International Press Release (2): **On the 10th August 2017, Iran executed a young 15 year-old man.**

“By going ahead with this execution in defiance of their obligations under international law, and despite huge public and international opposition, the Iranian authorities have again cruelly demonstrated their complete disdain for children’s rights. This shameful act marks a critical turning point for Iran, and exposes the hollowness of the authorities’ claims to have a genuine juvenile justice system.

“Alireza Tajiki is the fourth person executed in Iran this year who was arrested as a child. His execution, which was carried out despite his allegations that he was tortured into ‘confessing’, consolidates a horrendous pattern that has seen Iran repeatedly send people arrested as children to the gallows, often after deeply unfair trials.

This execution is in flagrant violation of the obligations of the UN Convention on the rights of children which Iran ratified 20 years ago. By sending Alireza Tajiki to his death, the Iranian authorities prove that they are still willing to enforce this penalty but not to enact the minor reforms needed to save the lives of those who were condemned to death when still minors.

Tajiki, who was 21 years old, was sentenced to death at the age of 16 in April 2013 after a criminal court convicted him of murder and male rape. He had been arrested at the age of 15. His trial was grossly unfair and relied primarily on “confessions” which Tajiki said were extracted through torture, including severe beatings, floggings, and suspension by his arms and feet.

Iran is one of very few countries in the world to execute juvenile offenders. Amnesty has identified the names of at least 89 individuals (other than Alireza Tajiki) on death

row in Iran who were under the age of 18 when the crime for which they were convicted was committed.”

## **Vivere’s Facebook Page**

We need to increase the visibility of our Facebook page. In order to follow us, just go onto: <https://www.facebook.com/vivere.CH> et click onto ‘like’ then ‘follow’ to get the latest news on Vivere’s wall. Please help us increase the popularity of our site by clicking on ‘share’ so that your contacts get to know about us.

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Thank you for time and support.

Vivere