

**MINUTES OF THE CONSTITUENT GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF EMMAUS EUROPE,  
PARIS, FRANCE, SATURDAY 21 MAY 2005**

<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>Presentation by Serge PAUGAM</b>	<p>Mr. Paugam, sociologist and professor at the <i>Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales</i> (Institute of Higher Learning in Social Sciences), opens this Constituent General Assembly with a presentation of his theory on exclusions in Europe ("<i>The elementary forms of poverty</i>" – Serge Paugam). A discussion arises on the situation of Emmaus groups in Europe and the concrete actions being carried out.</p> <p>Following the discussion and questions, two people are asked to take the floor.</p> <p><b>Elli Kreul</b> (<i>Emmaus Krefeld, Germany</i>) would like to inform the participants of the situation of Emmaus Prague, a new group currently being created in the Czech Republic. The creation of this group was initiated by two people with extensive experience in the youth camps in Krefeld.</p> <p>The situation in the Czech Republic today is difficult, with many homeless, an increasing poverty rate and a lack of state aid. The leaders are having a difficult time finding the means to open the community. Emmaus International has granted financial aid to Emmaus Prague.</p> <p>The first residents will be people from the city's day shelters.</p> <p>Several European Emmaus groups are monitoring and guiding the establishment of the group; particularly the groups of Krefeld, Haarzuilens (Netherlands) and Nowy Sacz (Poland).</p> <p><b>Emir Nurkic</b> (<i>International Solidarity Forum, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Emmaus International consultant for Eastern Europe</i>) emphasizes the political importance of the creation of Emmaus Europe. Setting up this structure will make it possible to establish ties between civil society in Eastern Europe and in the European Union countries, even prior to the political unification of all of the European countries. The main goal is to create a strong Emmaus Europe which, in the future, can make its voice and its experiences heard in order to provide alternatives on a European level.</p>	

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<p><b>Assessing the number of organizations present or represented</b></p>	<p>This being a constituent General Assembly, by definition the statutes have not yet been adopted and cannot be applied. Hence, no quorum is mandatory and decisions are taken by a simple majority of the organizations present or duly represented.</p> <p>The members of Emmaus International, the only possible members of Emmaus Europe, currently number 253, i.e., Abbé Pierre, member as of right in a personal capacity, and 252 member organizations. In addition to Abbé Pierre, present at this constituent General Assembly, 134 organizations were present or duly represented, totaling a maximum number of 135 votes.</p>	
<p><b>Discussion on the organization of Emmaus EUROPE</b></p>	<p><b>Pierre Albet</b> (<i>Emmaus Friends Saumur, France</i>) reminds the participants that the statutes, as they are presented at the constituent General Assembly, are the result of six months of intensive work since the Emmaus International Board's decision establishing new regional delineation. More than 80% of the statutes are based on the existing Statutes of Emmaus International, with additions or modifications to adapt them to the particularities of the Europe Region.</p> <p>He also points out that after the adoption of these statutes, Emmaus Europe will have one year to verify their validity and, if need be, to propose amendments during the next Emmaus Europe General Assembly in 2006.</p> <p>Considering that all of the participants have had time to study the statutes beforehand, he proposes submitting the adoption of the statutes for a vote by the General Assembly.</p> <p><b>Franco Bettoli</b> (<i>Emmaus Arezzo, Italy</i>): Each vote on the statutes is accompanied by a discussion on the action to undertake, the political position, as well as processes and methods of implementation. To establish the Europe Region, it would be best to address all of these subjects in an orderly manner and come to an agreement on the orientations before starting work and discussion on the statutes. During the five or six months leading up to the proposal of these statutes, there was no discussion on these issues, so we must initiate this discussion now before we can adopt the statutes.</p> <p><b>Pierre Albet</b> (<i>Emmaus Friends Saumur, France</i>) proposes adopting the statutes first before engaging in an in-depth discussion of the issues.</p>	

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	<p><b>Damien Hecquet</b> (<i>Emmaus Bayonne, France</i>): The statutes of each organization or institution arise from political debate. The statutes cannot be voted on without previous discussion on the implications of what is written in the statutes.</p> <p>Several other participants having expressed their disagreement with the statutes as presented, Alain Capmas is asked to explain his proposal of a “compromise”.</p> <p><b>Alain Capmas</b> (<i>Emmaus Bougival, France</i>): It is essential to adopt the statutes to create Emmaus Europe today, to be able to make an official declaration to the Prefecture and begin to operate. But the vote may be followed by a second vote on a motion stipulating that these statutes are provisional and that we are allowing ourselves some time to think about what we want to do, before adopting the permanent statutes at the 2006 General Assembly.</p> <p>The discussion on the political side of the statutes will continue, but Emmaus Europe can already set out some foundations and common points. We must give ourselves the time to prepare statutes that are adapted to what we want to do in Europe.</p> <p><b>Roger Depoilly</b> (<i>Emmaus Ålborg, Denmark</i>): Graziano Zoni’s working paper (Emmaus Europe – Working Paper) clearly demonstrates how difficult the region’s work methods and processes are to implement. So as not to make these statutes divisive, it is best not to adopt them right away.</p> <p><b>Tadeusz Mlynarczyk</b> (<i>Emmaus Lublin, Poland</i>): Poland’s national structure discussed these proposed statutes and decided to vote against them (explanation?).</p> <p><b>Ulla Hoyer</b> (<i>Emmaus Helsinki, Finland</i>): We can adopt the statutes as they are presented. This discussion is not new. More than 90% of the statutes of Emmaus Europe are identical to those of Emmaus International, which we have been discussing for nine years. These statutes will enable Emmaus Europe to move forward on many things, particularly political matters. We have a responsibility towards the other Emmaus regions: that of creating Emmaus Europe today.</p> <p><b>Franz Valli</b> (<i>Emmaus Bayonne, France</i>): There is a great deal of confusion on the Sta-</p>	

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	<p>tutes of Emmaus International. We must first reach agreement, and only then, approve the statutes.</p> <p><b>Franco Bettoli</b> (<i>Emmaus Arezzo, Italy</i>) explains that he is not opposed to Emmaus Europe, but to the way in which Emmaus Europe is being created. Emmaus Europe is an autonomous region which decides on its own political orientations and spending. What the document on the statutes does not show is that Emmaus Europe alone encompasses 95% of the world's Emmaus groups and provides 99% of the Movement's funding. With such a strong Europe region, what will become of Emmaus International? It risks losing all of its autonomy in the long run, and that is why this discussion requires a minimum of reflection.</p> <p>A vote is proposed to decide in which order the Agenda items should be brought up. Two possibilities are submitted to a vote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue the General Assembly as planned in the Agenda, thus starting with an in-depth discussion on the organization to adopt based on expectations.</li> <li>▪ Vote on the statutes first.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Voting results :</b>  In favor of voting on the statutes first: 42  In favor of starting with an in-depth discussion: 58  It is decided to continue the discussion on the statutes with Graziano Zoni's presentation.</p>
	<p><b><u>In-depth discussion</u></b></p> <p><b>Graziano Zoni</b> (<i>Emmaus Florence, Italy</i>): The Europe region was created as a result of restructuring on an international level. Emmaus International's new organization requires decentralized structures which facilitate work on a regional level, with national structures and a regional structure.</p> <p>To respond to the criticism expressed on the lack of discussion, 90% of the statutes of Emmaus Europe are the statutes of Emmaus International, adapted to Europe. They take over aspects of Emmaus International's work that should become a part of Emmaus Europe's purview. Based on what was already done on the level of each group, each nation and each region, we needed statutes that would serve not only as a tool to foster meetings, but also to enable the new Europe region to react mainly to political matters, not</p>	

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	<p>theoretically but based on the experiences of groups in the field. If we limit ourselves to assistance, there is no point in creating Emmaus Europe.</p> <p>We are experiencing the reality of a Europe that is being created on a state level, with socio-economic consequences for each country. To be effective in this European Union, Emmaus Europe must confront all the problems of the region, must set an objective for itself to conduct more political work against the causes of poverty, in Europe as well as in the world, keeping in mind that Europe bears a large responsibility for situations of poverty in the rest of the world. We must work together so that the political Europe is not built without us and so that it does not alienate marginalized people and the destitute.</p> <p><b>Franco Bettoli</b> (<i>Emmaus Arezzo, Italy</i>) expresses his disappointment on the Ouagadougou General Assembly, a missed opportunity for true political reflection, and his disagreement with the new regional delineation, based on geography and not on human relations.</p> <p>Emmaus Europe must set priorities and strive to go ever further, e.g., trying to work together to support the emerging association sector in Eastern European and Northern African countries. This is an initiative that can only be taken on by the region and not by the different nations in isolation.</p> <p><b>Daniel Mauron</b> (<i>Emmaus Fribourg, Switzerland</i>) insists on the grass-roots groups' need to do something together. He wonders about the meaning of the word "political." The grass-roots groups conduct concrete actions, the most important one being taking in people who come to the community.</p> <p><b>Martin Hirsch</b> (<i>Emmaus France</i>) gives several examples of political matters concerning Emmaus and in which Emmaus Europe could play a role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asylum-seekers and the European directives, both existing and forthcoming.</li> <li>- Workers from Eastern Europe coming to work in Western Europe for wages that are too low.</li> <li>- The possibility of a petition initiated by the people (gathering 1 million signatures in several member states) to weigh on the texts and institutions of the European Union. For example, a petition for a social Europe.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifying European NGOs with which we are interested in collaborating.</li> <li>- Our activities (recycling, waste treatment centers), that overlap both the economic and the social (Ecological Measures - D3E)</li> </ul> <p>In two and a half years, in 2007, the next Emmaus International General Assembly will be held. We must be able to present to that General Assembly a report of what we will have done together in Europe, to show the impact we have had in various fields since having come together upon Emmaus International's impetus. Now is a time when anything is possible for Emmaus Europe.</p> <p>We are facing a lack of fora and time for discussion, but this can be resolved with a specific type of organization: a lightweight structure, a shared willingness to move forward and precise mandates for the people in charge of working on different issues.</p> <p><b>Antoine Sueur</b> (<i>UCC, France</i>) emphasizes that it is important not to limit ourselves to European problems, but to think of the region in its international context and to work also on interregional issues.</p> <p><b>Franz Valli</b> (<i>Emmaus Bayonne, France</i>) returns to the topic of helping people and recalls Abbé Pierre's intuition: "come help me to help". The consequence is that the person being helped becomes a fighter in a universal battle. Emmaus International had set up committees bringing together grass-roots groups that work on specific themes; this is a possible future course of action on a European level.</p> <p><b>Elli Kreul</b> (<i>Emmaus Krefeld, Germany</i>) agrees that Emmaus Europe should become involved in political battles against globalization and on the issues that affect communities: ethical finance, trafficking in human beings. The question arises when it comes to implementation, due to the gap between what a community can shoulder in terms of work force and all of the demands stipulated in the Emmaus International Statutes regarding grass-roots groups' involvement in the structures. Germany, the Netherlands and England have a problem with this Europe region which adds an administrative layer when they want to cut down on red tape. Elli Kreul observes a conflict between the grass-roots dynamic (in which the groups determine Emmaus International's policy) and the demands forced upon the communities by the new statutes.</p>	

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	<p><b>Jean Rousseau</b> (<i>Emmaus Angers, France</i>) observes that the debate on “what actions to undertake in Europe” is becoming a debate on the structure of Emmaus Europe. He insists on the need for human and financial means, thus the Europe region budget which will be discussed later.</p> <p><b>Renzo Fior</b> (<i>Emmaus Villafranca, Italy</i>) calls attention to the operational difficulties that the Europe Center-South region has had in the past and emphasizes that even if the statutes are not the solution to all the problems, they help to move forward. He reminds the participants that in the past, two documents were adopted by a broad majority in the Movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Solidarity for Justice,” which very clearly indicates what the Movement’s work should be on every level.</li> <li>- “Final Declaration and Work Program of the 2003 General Assembly”.</li> </ul> <p>On these two occasions, the grass-roots groups were the ones who voted for important and clear commitments. Today, the Movement has the responsibility of putting them into practice.</p> <p>He informs the assembly of a message received that morning in which our friends in Emmaus Africa ask us to take on our responsibility regarding the situation in Togo.</p> <p>He emphasizes the need to equip ourselves with rules and the means to work together. He fears that the money placed in the bank by each Emmaus group of Europe might make the groups feel that they do not need to work with the others.</p> <p><b>Damien Hecquet</b> (<i>Emmaus Bayonne, France</i>) refutes the hypothesis of a conflict between local initiative and national or regional initiative, and gives the example of an exchange project between the groups of southwestern France and the International Solidarity Forum (I.S.F.) in Bosnia on textiles as an economic activity. His expectation is that these structures, national et regional, will challenge him with innovative actions that would not have occurred to him otherwise. With Emmaus Europe, he hopes to be able to work for civil society as a whole, for example, by changing the conditions for exercising civic rights. For all of these human means are needed locally and on a European level.</p> <p><b>Frédérique Weixler</b> (<i>Emmaus Friends Rambervillers, France</i>) says that we all came</p>	

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	<p>here because we wanted to build something and because we have goals. Today we have a choice: remain neutral or try to provide ourselves with the human and material means required for the various fields of our work. But in any case, the groups' willing participation is needed in defining a number of things.</p> <p><b>Gianni Belletti</b> (<i>Emmaus Ferrara, Italy</i>) supports this view, saying that the priority is to work together and make Emmaus Europe work, so that our Movement can expand and not die. The new region will enable us to confront our perceptions of solidarity and to prepare ourselves to work together. Supporting those who suffer the most will incite young generations to act.</p> <p><b>Jorgen Olsen</b> (<i>Genvej Til Udvikling, Denmark</i>) emphasizes that diversity is important, even as we work together and hold discussions. He gives the example of GTU's work in Niger, which could serve as a basis for challenging the European Union on its policy of agricultural export subsidies.</p> <p><b>Antonio Molteni</b> (<i>Emmaus Poitiers, France</i>) emphasizes the importance of Europe for the companions in the Emmaus communities and would like Emmaus Europe to achieve a single voice in denouncing extreme poverty. We must once again become aware of the wealth of Emmaus and share.</p> <p><b>Emir Nurkic</b> (<i>International Solidarity Forum, Bosnia-Herzegovina</i>) explains that the Emmaus groups have the responsibility of remaining united in their diversity and that they must demonstrate this unity to the other regions. This assembly must indicate clearly whether it wants a weak or strong Europe region. We need clear common goals, and we need to show the other regions what we should do together.</p> <p><b>Moderator's summary</b> It clearly emerges from this discussion that the participants expect the following from the Europe region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A region that facilitates ties, cooperation and solidarity, which establishes "acting together" and serves as a contact with the outside, recalling a fundamental principle of the official construction of Europe, the principle of subsidiarity: to do, on the necessary level, what needs to be done on that level, while acknowledging the differences between the local, national and regional levels.</li> </ul>	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A region with a strong political voice on European topics, grounded in the reality of the people with whom we work (providing shelter, various forms of exclusion), the decisions taken on a European level (the need to be attentive to directives regarding recovery and recycling).</li> <li>- A region for a social Europe, inciting action based on the experiences of companions and everyone else we encounter.</li> <li>- A region that identifies other partners and forms the necessary alliances, particularly for the promotion of civil society and on the battles we wage constantly.</li> <li>- A region that puts the Movement's commitments into practice (water, ethical finance, the fight against human trafficking). We must serve Europe by continuing to demonstrate a spirit of fraternity and diversity.</li> <li>- For all of this, we must give ourselves rules and means, progressively.</li> </ul>	
	<p>Based on the opinions expressed during the discussion, two motions are submitted to a vote of the General Assembly.</p> <p><u>Motion 1</u>: The constituent General Assembly would like Emmaus Europe to be a forum for exchanging practices, for solidarity and for coordinating actions.</p>	<p><b>Voting results:</b>  In favor: 107  Opposed: 0  Abstentions: 0  <i>Adopted unanimously</i></p>
	<p><u>Motion 2</u>: The constituent General Assembly would like Emmaus Europe to take a strong political stance and make it known to the political authorities and civil society. For this purpose, the region must seek alliances with other groups representing similar values.</p>	<p><b>Voting results:</b>  In favor: 101  Opposed: 8  Abstentions: 3  <i>Adopted by a majority</i></p>
<p><b>Statutes</b></p>	<p>Before the constituent General Assembly proceeds to vote on the statutes, the moderator asks the participants if they wish to propose amendments. The following amendments are proposed.</p> <p>Article 26: To eliminate the contradiction between this article and article 55 on the majority for decisions concerning the modification of the statutes or the dissolution of Emmaus Europe, article 26 is modified by replacing "three quarters" with "two thirds".</p> <p>Considering the desire expressed by the constituent General Assembly for a strong Emmaus Europe, capable of stimulating the political leaders and civil society, the second paragraph of article 39 is modified as follows: "The term of office of the mem-</p>	

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	<p>bers of the regional executive committee is for four years, renewable once, except for the president, who is elected for a two-year term, renewable once."</p> <p>The second paragraph of article 46 is completed and should read as follows: "He/she can mandate any member of the regional executive committee to represent him/her."</p>	
	<p>The constituent General Assembly proceeds to a vote on the statutes, including the three aforementioned amendments.</p>	<p><b>Voting results:</b>            In favor: 100            Opposed: 7            Abstentions: 4  <i>Adopted by a majority</i></p>
	<p>The General Assembly then proceeds to vote on the following motion:            "The constituent General Assembly votes for the registration of the proposed statutes to create the association Emmaus Europe. Coordination work will be carried out on these statutes to adapt them to the objectives of the Europe region before their ratification at the next regional assembly, planned for late 2006."</p>	<p><b>Voting results:</b>            In favor: 107            Opposed: 0            Abstentions: 2  <i>Adopted by a majority</i></p>
<p><b>Budget</b></p>	<p><b>Jean Rousseau</b> (<i>Emmaus Angers, France</i>) opens a discussion on the budget of the Europe region. He emphasizes, in particular, the obligation of all the groups to pay their membership dues to the region, that these membership dues are a sort of pooled fund, and that the region has the responsibility of earmarking funds not only for its own operating costs, but also for the operating costs of other regions.</p> <p>The matter of how to the payment of dues will be organized arises. Will the dues be paid to the region or to Emmaus International and might there be provisional measures? Regarding the region's operating budget, it is made clear that the Board of Emmaus International has already allocated 18,000 € to the Europe region for the Eastern Europe secretariat. UCC/UACE and the International Solidarity Forum have also contributed a sum of 3,000 €. Thus, the Europe region treasury currently contains 21,000 €.</p> <p>The 250 groups who are members of Emmaus Europe include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 200 Communities,</li> <li>- 20 Friends' Committees</li> <li>- 30 Others</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Several proposals for dues payment systems are then presented.</p> <p>1) The first proposal for dues payments is based on the idea that there are <i>different types of contributors</i> :</p> <p>200 Communities and 20 Friends' Committees pay: membership dues of 200 €  30 Others pay: membership dues of 50 €  TOTAL : 47,500 €</p> <p>2) The second proposal is that of a <i>single amount of membership dues for everyone: 270€</i></p> <p>3) The third proposal comes from Northern Europe and entails <i>different levels of membership dues</i>.  Groups whose annual sales figure is, for instance:  &lt; 10,000 € - membership dues of 50 €  between 10,000 € and 17,000 € - membership dues of 100€.  between 17,000 € and 35,000 € - membership dues of 150€.  between 35,000 € and 85,000 € - membership dues of 200€.  &gt; 85,000 € - membership dues of 400€.</p> <p>One last proposal for membership dues payments uses the idea of a <i>percentage of annual sales</i>, e.g., 0,15 %. There will be no vote on this proposal.</p>	<p><b>Voting results:</b></p> <p>Proposal 1:  In favor: 0  Abstentions: 3 – <i>Proposal rejected</i></p> <p>Proposal 2:  In favor: 2  Abstentions: 7 – <i>Proposal rejected</i></p> <p>Proposal 3:  The majority of the participants being in favor of this proposal, the Regional Board is put in charge of determining the different levels.</p>
<p><b>Presentation of the members of the Regional Board of Emmaus Europe</b></p>	<p>According to the statutes that have just been adopted, the members of the Regional Board are either Councillors of Emmaus International (currently numbering 12), or national delegates, with the possibility of holding both posts simultaneously.</p> <p>Members as Councillors of Emmaus International: Carina Aaltonen (Finland), Giandomenico Belletti (Italy), Alain Capmas (France), Julio De la Granja (Belgium), Pascal Freléchoux (Switzerland), Birgitta Göranson-Iliste (Sweden), Martin Hirsch (France), Elisabeth Kreul (Germany), Antonio Matos Pinho (Portugal), Emir Nurkic (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Frédérique Weixler (France). One post is currently vacant, following the resignation of Jos Van der Meer (Netherlands).</p>	<p><b>Voting results:</b></p> <p>The members of the Regional Board are confirmed by acclamation.</p>

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	<p>Members as national delegates: Pierre Albet (France), Julio De la Granja (Belgium), Graziano Zoni (Italy), Elisabeth Serrate (Sweden), Carina Aaltonen (Finland), Mathieu Delarue (United Kingdom), Wilhelm Does (Germany), José Manuel Gomez González (Spain), Antonio Matos Pinho (Portugal), Daniel Mauron (Switzerland), Tadeusz Mlynarczyk (Poland), Ebbe Primdahl (Denmark), Dženana Šabić (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Adrianus van der Meer (Netherlands).</p> <p>Having read out the list above, the moderator asks if anyone is opposed to this composition of the Regional Board.</p>	
<p><b>Election of the Emmaus Europe representatives to the World Councils</b></p>	<p>After a short speech by Renzo Fior on the background and the importance of the World Councils, each of the candidates to the different World Councils is presented.</p> <p>The candidates to the World Council on Political Action and Solidarity are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ulla Hoyer (Finland)</li> <li>- Graziano Zoni (Italy)</li> <li>- Robert Opoka (Poland)</li> <li>- Xavier Vandromme (France)</li> </ul> <p>The candidates to the World Council on Training and New Generations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Franco Monnicchi (Italy)</li> <li>- Heta Muurinen (Finland)</li> <li>- Humberto Pereira (Portugal)</li> <li>- Helena Kusmanovic (Bosnia-Herzegovina)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Voting results:</b></p> <p>No other candidate having been presented for the two World Councils, the candidacies of the 8 Europe representatives are approved by acclamation.</p>