



**BERLIN WALL: 20 YEARS AFTER
CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE: 5 YEARS AFTER
ENLARGEMENT**

OUR COMMON HISTORY, OUR COMMON FUTURE

"We followed the development in all neighbouring countries. In East Germany, in Poland, in Hungary, and we knew that it is time to act now, that it is the end of at least the closed regime. We could not expect that it would fall so quickly and absolutely, but it at least it was time for us to move as quickly as possible to achieve what was achievable at this time."

– Jiri Dienstbier, President Rada Pro Mezinarodni Vztahy

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 symbolised the end of an era in which Europe, and the world, suffered ideological, political, social and cultural divisions. Twenty years later many of the previous political, economic, social and cultural divisions between the European West and East have been eliminated and Europe stands united for democracy, freedom, justice, peace and prosperity.

An important moment of bridging the divide between Eastern and Western Europe was the enlargement of the European Union on 1 May 2004 with Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus joining the EU, followed by Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. Both enlargements marked the final end of the East-West divide that dominated Europe and the World for over 40 years.

Today at the Annual General Assembly 2009, SOLIDAR and its members celebrate the fall of the Berlin wall and the enlargement of Europe; welcome that the countries in the Western Balkans recovered from the wars that wrecked the region in the nineties and are steadily developing towards integration within the Union; recognise that we should continue developing relations with neighbouring countries, whilst advocating for democracy and human rights throughout the Union.

SOLIDAR pledges today to keep on struggling for democracy, freedom, justice, peace and prosperity in Europe and expresses the intention to develop new relationships with partners in the Western Balkans and in other neighbouring countries. All people in Europe have a common history and will work together to shape a new common future!