Around Europe
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David Ferrard – Singing For Change

David Ferrard was a programme assistant at QCEA from 2001 to 2002. After leaving Brussels he has developed a musical career as a singer-songwriter and has just released his debut album, *Broken Sky*. He sings about political issues close to his heart and in this way gives his activist work an artistic expression.

David has always liked singing, but didn't consider making it a career until recently. He wrote a few songs whilst at university, but didn't start performing in public until he returned to Edinburgh from Brussels in 2003.

"There are quite a few 'open mikes' around town, and with the Iraq war taking place at the time there were also things I wanted to write about. I started to realise how much I enjoyed making music and performing."

Social commitment

David's music reflects his social commitment, with titles such as *Hills of Virginia* featuring an American soldier in Iraq:

Every night/I'd go back to my days as a boy/ When I'd wake with the sun/My weapons were no longer toys.

David says that he, like many other artists, shies away from being labelled as a 'political' or a 'protest' singer.

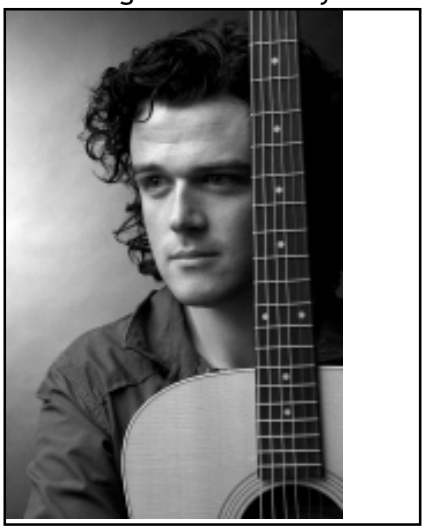
"We sing what is important to us, and making a distinction would be to marginalise ourselves. Music as a political comment appeals to a certain audience, to the already converted, but in order to reach a more general public the music also has to be artistic."

An important chapter in David's development as a peace activist was the time he spent at QCEA. The experience added to his conscience and motivated him to continue working with peace issues. It was shortly after his time here that David recognised the role that music can play in encouraging members of the peace movement. Over the years he has seen his music acknowledge, motivate and complement the ongoing work of peace activists and believes music can add to and strengthen the sense of solidarity within the movement.

"In 2006 I participated in the Long Walk for Peace against nuclear weapons. We were sixty people walking for five or six days from Faslane to the Parliament in Edinburgh. We walked through towns and sang songs and held meetings; it's a great example of what I really enjoy doing."

Acoustic singer-songwriter

David describes himself as 'one man and his guitar'. His music is inspired by country and traditional folk songs; two genres he has always loved. From the age of fifteen he has enjoyed singing ballads and American folk. He was captivated by the stories told by and through folk songs and country music. Although still regarded as niches in the UK, they have a loyal following. In North America they are hugely popular genres and the singer-songwriter approach is becoming increasingly popular in the UK.



(See page 2)

In this Issue:

An EU Budget Reflecting EU Priorities — Page 2
EU Mission in Chad - What Issues Does It Raise? — Page 3
QCEA/QPSW Conference — Page 4

(continued from page 1)

Release of new album

Broken Sky was officially released in March 2008. David has worked on the album for a year. Recording in a studio has provided new challenges totally different from his solo live performances, which are his mainstay and passion in music. He is excited about the launch and will promote the album through gigs and through radio play in the UK, Europe, and North America. He is currently talking with labels in North America to distribute his album there.

Apart from writing his own music David is also the founder of Songs For Change, an internet community for songwriters wanting to write and share music about contemporary issues. In November 2007 David produced the album *Not In Our Name* through this project. It is a collection of songs about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan from the perspective of soldiers, civilians and anti-war protesters amongst others. For this album David spent time at gigs rounding up top-class artists whose music matched his vision. Some of these include Roy Bailey, Dick Gaughan, Eliza Gilkyson, and Leon Rosselson.

Sara Erlandsson/Calum Shaw

You can listen to some of David's songs on his website, www.davidferrard.com, where you can also find information about how to purchase his debut album, *Broken Sky*, and *Not In Our Name*.

In December you have a great opportunity to see him live, when he performs at QCEA's/ QPSW's Conference here in Brussels.

See also David's Songs for Change website, www.songsforchange.com, with the opportunity to download (for free) over 100 songs about topical issues.

An EU budget reflecting EU priorities

The European Commission is currently undertaking a public consultation to prepare for the review of the EU budget, in which all interested parties are invited to contribute. In February *Around Europe* provided information about this and invited readers to share their ideas for a QCEA contribution to the debate. We have now submitted our response to the consultation to the Commission, and would like to thank those who contacted us on the issue.

A key point we put forward is that the budget should be a reflection of what the EU wants to do; i.e. it should reflect its priorities. It is important that the EU practises what it promotes in order to gain and retain credibility. An area of activity with a large budget allocation should also be one of the policy priorities. This is not the case at the moment, when for example the increasing aspiration of the European Union to be a global actor is not translated into any sizeable share of the budget.

We believe that the EU should allocate more money to promote peace globally. The EU is a peace project which is exportable; it has brought peace to its citizens by developing economic and social cooperation through political and entirely non-military means. This approach is one the EU can rightly be proud of and which it needs to offer to other parts of the world; to do this effectively the budget needs to be tied closely to the values which the EU stands for.

Another key point we comment on is the question of whether there should be a European tax. We believe the overarching goal of this budget reform should be to achieve transparency. It should be a budget that raises sufficient funding for the EU to achieve the political objectives and that ensures a direct relationship between the citizen and the EU. A tax levied at EU level has the potential to bring this about. If European citizens see on their tax bill the direct contribution they make to the EU budget, their interest for the European Union's activities might increase.

You can read our contribution at: http://www.quaker.org/qcea/briefings/Budget/index.htm.

If you don't have access to the internet we can supply it in print form by post or by fax.

Sara Erlandsson

European Union Military Mission in Chad – What issues does it raise?

European Troops are operating in Chad under a mandate of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) since the beginning of March 2008.

This is not the first military mission the EU has undertaken in the context of the CFSP. Of the nineteen ongoing and completed missions the EU has undertaken so far (since the inception of the European Security and Defence Policy), five have been military in nature. EU military missions are not common and are not easy to agree on.

Why Chad? Well, first of all the mission is not just a mission to Chad but it also covers the Central African Republic (CAR). Both countries have extensive land borders with Sudan. As a result, both countries are affected by the conflict in Darfur. Both countries have significant numbers of refugees from Darfur, estimated to be in the region of 230,000 in Chad and 20,000 in the Central African Republic. Both countries also have significant internal problems including substantial numbers of internally displaced people. In other words, the intervention in Chad/CAR by the EU can be seen as a response to a regional situation and a proxy response to the situation in Darfur.

What is the remit of the mission? The mission is referred to as 'a military bridging operation… with the mandate set out in UN Security Council Resolution UNSCR 1778 (2007)' . Essentially, the mission is described as humanitarian in nature and has the following objectives:

- To contribute to the protection of civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons;
- To facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel by helping to improve security in the area of operations;
- To contribute to the protection of UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment and to ensuring the security and freedom of movement of its staff and UN and associated personnel.

Who is participating in the mission? The EU does not have a military force of its own. When it undertakes missions such as these, it draws on the military personnel and other resources of the Member States and it is dependent on the Member States providing these when needed. In most Member States there has to be a decision within the national governance structures to deploy military personnel and other resources on an EU mission.

What does this mission look like? The mission has two aspects: the headquarters personnel based in Europe (in this case, in France) and the personnel in the area of intervention, in this case in Chad. The two sets of personnel are made up of different contributions from different Member States. Fourteen Member States have contributed people and other resources to the mission 'in the field' with France providing some 60 % of the troops; there are staff from another eight Member States involved with the mission at the headquarters in France. The mission headquarters are under the command of an Irish officer; the operational headquarters are under the command of a French officer. The information to hand (on the EU website) on troop numbers indicates that so far there are just short of 1800 troops involved; this is due to rise to around 3500.

What else is the EU doing? The European Commission (EC) provides significant development assistance to both Chad and the CAR under the European Development Fund (EDF); according to figures newly published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) the main European donors to Chad were the EC (through the EDF), France, and Germany; for the CAR, the main European donors in 2007 were France, the EC and Germany.

Specifically in relation to the conflict situation and to support the EU military mission, the EC is also spending up to •10 m out of the Stability Instrument to contribute to the UN police mission with the task of assisting in maintaining law and order in refugee camps and their surroundings. The EC has already contributed to the cost of a census, a vital requirement for establishing the rule of law and good governance.

So what does it all add up to? The EU is doing rather more than is known generally about a situation of serious conflict in a region on the western borders of Sudan. Is it necessary to use military resources in the context? This is, and remains, the crucial question which is less about the actual situation in the region and much more about the question: do we have a credible alternative? And of course, the answer to that

(See page 4)

(continued from page 3)

remains a firm 'no'. The Member States of the EU (rather than the EU as an entity separate from its Member States) would need to be prepared to commit serious resources, serious time and serious effort to creating such an alternative. There are models. Nonviolent Peaceforce, Peace Brigades International, the German Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst (civil peace service) are just some examples which operate on a non-state, small scale basis and achieve much. The fact that a European Civil Peace Service (demanded by the European Parliament since 1999) could put such an alternative on a significant footing is beyond question. What is missing is the political will to do this. It is missing, not because no-one believes that it can be done, but because it is not something the public are crying out for. We have work to do!

Martina Weitsch

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