

25 February 2014

## **Caritas Europa Statement on the Situation in Ukraine**

The network of Caritas organisations across Europe is appalled by the violence and bloodshed, which have taken place in Ukraine's capital city of Kyiv and several other cities. We express our most sincere condolences to the people of Ukraine for the tragic loss of human life.

The current unrest in Ukraine is deeply rooted in a persistent lack of rule of law, corruption, disrespect of basic human rights, along with growing socio-economic inequalities. Such a combination of injustice and inequality led to demonstrations where violence was used against peaceful protestors.

The violence and unrest must end now. Caritas Europa urges all Ukrainian leaders to take responsibility for the safety of the people and to genuinely respect their human dignity. It is time to listen to the voice of the people and find a peaceful exit to the crisis. It is time to bring justice and social cohesion to the country.

Caritas, with its staff and volunteers, stands alongside the people suffering throughout this conflict. Caritas organisations in Europe jointly support the relief actions of Caritas in Ukraine that has been active since the very beginning of the unrest. Currently, Caritas in Ukraine is putting in place mechanisms to assist the victims and their families. Caritas Europa urges the authorities to ensure that all injured have safe access to medical and psychological assistance and social support.

Whatever the final solution to the crisis will be, it must ensure that the root causes that spawned the crisis are tackled and that those responsible for the use of violence are held accountable for their actions.

Caritas will continue to help the people and champion the voice of the poorest and the excluded who desire justice.

Erny Gillen  
President of Caritas Europa