

Brussels, Monday 19 June 2017

Statement on the occasion of World Refugee Day, 20 June 2017

Europe can be a strong global leader on asylum and migration

Caritas Europa calls on EU Heads of State and Foreign Affairs Ministers to change tack on migration and seize the opportunity to gain strong global leadership on asylum and migration during the European Council on 22-23 June.

Europe has both the moral duty and the material means to welcome, protect, promote and integrate people in need, who are trying to start a new life in our countries. There are plenty of tools to open efficient safe and legal pathways to Europe, such as humanitarian visas, resettlement, community sponsorship, humanitarian corridors, and family reunification.

“Physical and policy-made fences are a failure and belong to the past. The future lays in investing in tackling the genuine root causes of what makes people flee their homes and, in the meantime, put in place humane and dignifying solutions to help those knocking at our door. The position of the Catholic Church is clear, we cannot continue looking away when people are so desperate that they are ready to put their children’s and their own life at risk to reach a better life,” said **Msgr. Luc Van Looy**, President of Caritas Europa.

In these unsettling times, where solidarity and compassion are more needed than ever, Europe can show the way by dismantling old stiff Fortress Europe and instead investing in a modern and dynamic Welcoming Europe.

This is the future!

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Caritas Europa is a network of 49 member organisations in 46 European countries and one of the 7 regions of Caritas Internationalis. Our members assist and provide services to millions of people in need. Caritas Europa aims at lifting people out of poverty by empowering them and by influencing unjust structures and unfair policies that keep people trapped in positions of disempowerment.