

Statement on the occasion of Human Rights Day, 10 December

## **70 years on:**

### **Time for the EU to ratify the European Convention on Human Rights**

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, 10 December, Caritas Europa calls on the EU institutions to ratify the European Convention on Human Rights and calls on European leaders and policymakers to remember and adhere to fundamental commitments made 70 years ago, by the members of the Council of Europe at its adoption.

The European Convention on Human Rights was the first instrument to clarify and bind in law the human rights of all peoples under its territory, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Convention confirms the members' "profound belief in those fundamental freedoms which are the foundation of justice and peace in the world". Whilst it was an impressive achievement of European states, a covenant between governments and their peoples, we are still far from its full implementation.

This year, 2020, marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, has been trying times in Europe for the full respect of human rights, particularly for people in vulnerable situations, such as migrants and people in need of asylum, and the growing number of children and their families living in or at risk of poverty.

The Europe of today is at its most technologically advanced, with new digital platforms, cyber technology and artificial intelligence, but it is also extremely socially and ecologically deprived.

"In the face of such a complex scenario and, for many people living in Europe, enduring a desperate social crisis, a binding and faithful commitment to its founding value of respect for human rights should be of the utmost importance and would restore faith in a 'Social Europe'," said Caritas Europa Secretary General, Maria Nyman.

Caritas Europa believes that human rights and human dignity should be the foundation of society and of all Council of Europe and Member State policies, both internal and external. The European Convention on Human Rights, now more than ever, should be ratified by the EU Institutions and fully implemented by all Council of Europe members. It is crucial that progress towards full implementation is monitored to ensure that all parties are upholding, protecting and promoting the rights within so that Europe's values can be upheld. Whilst the current [European Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) already strengthens the protection of fundamental rights within the EU, the ratification of the convention will be essential for creating a coherent and clear framework for human rights protection throughout Europe.

For more information:

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