

Statement ahead of May 9, Europe Day and 70th anniversary of the Schuman declaration

We call for EU to show solidarity with next budget agreement

On the occasion of Europe Day, May 9th, Caritas Europa calls on EU leaders to agree well before the end of 2020 on an adequate 2021-2027 budget. Solidarity is now more urgent than ever to keep fighting poverty in Europe and worldwide, particularly given the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We urge EU Member States to unite and put common interests ahead of national ones to come to an agreement soon on the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the next 7-year EU budget. Millions of people living in the EU, and in neighbouring and developing countries benefit from EU funding, and all of that is at risk if no agreement is reached in due time.

'This is the hour of truth for the European Union, a time to show its citizens the value and power of this Union', said Caritas Europa Secretary General, **Maria Nyman**.

Caritas Europa asks in particular to strengthen the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and to ensure adequate funding for the Child Guarantee, in order for them both to be effective in fighting poverty and social exclusion.

The declaration presented by the French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, 70 years ago on May 9, may now be more pertinent than ever: *"Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity."*

Today, European countries are facing global challenges affecting their populations without distinction, evident in the light of the Covid-19 health and economic crises. These clearly show that European cooperation is essential and that no country can address such challenges on its own. Now, just as 70 years ago, European solidarity is crucial.