THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF COMECE

Appeal to EU Member States authorities and to the Church in Europe: «welcome and relocate refugees in concrete solidarity»

The recent travel of the Holy Father to the lands of Cyprus and Greece has witnessed once again the precarious situation and, at times, the desperation of our refugee brothers and sisters in some countries of Europe, waiting for us to hear their voices asking for our help and attention. The Church in Europe cannot be indifferent to such a call, and must respond with a renewed commitment, with a prophetic voice and with concrete examples of solidarity towards these refugees, children of God, people with faces, biographies, and families, who need us now more than ever.

On behalf of COMECE, I would like to join in the appeal of the Holy Father Pope Francis calling on the authorities of EU states to generously allow refugees who are stuck in the territories of first reception, as is the case in Cyprus and Greece, to be relocated in other EU country and to receive there the protection and promotion that they and their families need. I also appeal to the Church in Europe, to our parishes, communities and faithful, to become true witnesses to Christ in this time of the Nativity of Our Lord, and to welcome in a spirit of service those who have arrived at our lands seeking protection as refugees, and to make a common effort that leads to concrete projects to accommodate them, in collaboration with public authorities.

I ask the Child Jesus, whose birth we will soon celebrate, to enlighten us so that we can recognize him in every refugee that knocks at our door and to give us the necessary strength to overcome the indifference of our societies to those who suffer and are in need.

H.Em. Jean-Claude Cardinal Hollerich SJ
Archbishop of Luxembourg
President of COMECE