



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Statement on the HUMANITARIAN SITUATION OF MIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS ON THE POLISH-BELARUSIAN BORDER

In the context of the alarming humanitarian situation at the Polish-Belarusian border, the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) urges the EU and its Member States, as well as people of good will, to express practical solidarity with migrants and asylum seekers who are experiencing dramatic circumstances on the ground. The Bishops of the European Union grieve for the loss of lives that this tragedy has already caused, and pray for the victims and their families.

We reiterate that every human being must be treated in a humane way. Migrants and asylum seekers deserve full respect of their dignity and fundamental rights, no matter their legal status.

We all must show our concrete support to those families and individuals in need, either migrating or looking for asylum - in particular children, elderly, and other persons in a situation of vulnerability.

In this regard, COMECE echoes the words of the Polish Bishops' Conference, expressed in various occasions over the last months, calling for primarily adopting a humanitarian approach to the current crisis. COMECE is grateful to the Catholic Church in Poland and other institutions and people of good will, for their material and spiritual support to those who are in need at the aforementioned border.

We can't allow people dying at our borders. All efforts to avoid these tragedies should be made, as well as mitigating the suffering of people who left their countries due to war, violence, or lack of social and economic perspectives.

COMECE calls on the European Union and its Member States to support Poland in addressing this humanitarian challenge at its border, as well as other EU countries in the region that may face a similar scenario. Taking advantage and instrumentalising the despair of migrants and asylum seekers have severe and harming human consequences and must be prevented.

COMECE shares the concerns and solicitude of Pope Francis for the suffering people in Belarus, and calls for the prevalence of justice, encouraging the EU and the international community to promote, through dialogue, a peaceful resolution of the ongoing tensions, while respecting human dignity and international law.