



## **An urgent plea to seek peace and pursue it**

*Statement of the 2026 Spring Plenary Assembly of COMECE in the context of the worrying situation in the Middle East region and beyond*

Gathered in Cyprus for our Spring Plenary Assembly, we, the Delegates of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union, turn to the Lord in prayer and stand in solidarity with all those suffering from devastating violence, instability and injustice in the Holy Land, Lebanon, Iran and the wider Middle East region. In particular, we remember the Christian communities, whose presence in these lands, where our faith has its roots, remains a powerful testimony of perseverance, resilience and hope. We keep in our minds and hearts in a special way Ukraine, Sudan, as also other parts of the world enduring the evil of war and violence.

We are deeply saddened by these tragedies resulting in the loss of countless human lives, widespread destruction and humanitarian crises affecting so many families. With profound concern over growing global instability and the violent conflicts afflicting our neighbourhood, as well as other parts of the world, we recall the [recent words](#) of Pope Leo XIV: *"Let those who have weapons lay them down! Let those who have the power to unleash wars choose peace! Not a peace imposed by force, but through dialogue! Not with the desire to dominate others, but to encounter them!"*

In support of the Pope's tireless appeals to world leaders to embrace the path of peace, we express our full solidarity and communion with the Holy Father, whose spiritual and moral authority is not guided by the logic of political confrontation, but by fidelity to the Gospel and by a courageous witness to the truth.

From Cyprus, a land marked by its rich cultural and religious heritage, but also by a history that continues to bear the wounds of division, we are reminded of the importance of sustained efforts towards trust-building and reconciliation. We were deeply moved by the witness of the Maronite communities in the northern part of the island, whose continued presence is important to foster dialogue and contribute to a culture of encounter.

The European Union, born as a project of peace, has a particular responsibility to act as a credible force for peace and an active promoter of stability and dialogue across the Middle East region, while contributing to maritime and energy security and nuclear non-proliferation efforts as part of a comprehensive peace process. In this spirit, we urge the EU and its Member States to continue acting in unity and with determination: intensifying their diplomatic, political and humanitarian engagement to protect human dignity, uphold international law and support inclusive peacebuilding initiatives, ensuring that the voices of all, including religious communities, are heard and their rights respected. At the same time, the Union is called to exercise solidarity with Member States affected by the regional instability and to adequately respond to the repercussions of these conflicts within European societies, notably with regard to fostering social cohesion and addressing the increased cost of living.

As followers of Christ, we are particularly encouraged in this Easter season, which celebrates the victory of life over death and hope over despair, to renew our commitment to be artisans of peace and reconciliation. May the light of the Risen Lord strengthen this shared effort so that even in the darkest moments, violence and injustice do not have the final word, but a path towards a just and lasting peace is sought and pursued.

*Signed by the bishops delegated by the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union gathered for the spring Plenary Assembly of COMECE (Nicosia, 24 April 2026).*