



Newsletter

Issue 18

April, 2007

4, Rue de Pascale
1040 Brussels, Belgium

“ARRIVEDERCI A ROMA!”

Editorial by Marius Wanders, *Secretary General*

On Sunday 3 June 2007, close to 400 delegates from up to 162 member organisations in 7 regions in the world will assemble in Rome for the opening Mass and the formal opening session of the 18th General Assembly of Caritas Internationalis (CI). The General Assembly will be held in the Synod Hall of the Vatican and the Opening Mass in St. Peter's Basilica. The theme of this General Assembly will be “Witnesses of Charity, Builders of Peace”. The event will last until Saturday 9 June 2007.

During this General Assembly, important decisions for the life and work of the Confederation will be taken. First of all, the delegates of the member organisations will elect the CI President and Treasurer for the mandate 2007-2011, and ratify the election by the incoming Executive Committee of the new Secretary General for that mandate. Secondly, the delegates will deliberate on a framework of new strategic directions and goals for the period 2007-2011, forming the basis of a detailed Confederation work plan that will be established after the General Assembly. This framework will aim to apply the resources of the Confederation as effectively as possible. Thirdly, thematic study sessions will be held on a number of themes for joint reflection and direction setting. The program of the General Assembly also foresees a Papal Audience, the details of which are still under discussion with the Papal household.

Member organisations of CI will be represented by delegations of two persons, representing the leadership of the organisation. Inclusion of women in this formal delegation is strongly encouraged. Due to the capacity constraints of the Synod Hall, only a limited number of places are available for “third delegates”. The Regional Coordinators are responsible for awarding these limited “third delegate” places to women delegates from member organisations of their regions. In case your organisation plans to register a “third delegate”, please contact [Marius Wanders](#) so that the allocation of these extra “third delegate” places can be done fairly and equitably.

Preceding the General Assembly of CI, the Caritas Europa Regional Conference 2007 will be held on Friday 1 June 2007 from 11:00 until 18:00 in the meeting rooms of the “Augustinianum”. This Regional Conference will have a predominantly statutory character, but there will also be a session in preparation for the General Assembly of CI.

We look forward to seeing many of you for these gatherings. Arrivederci a Roma!

FIRST CARITAS EUROPA MEETING ON ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

By Annalisa Mazzella, *Advocacy and Communication Officer*

Caritas Europa is organising its First Meeting on Online Communications. This will be held in Brussels on 26-27 April 2007.

It will bring together Online Communication Managers, Web Editors and other interested persons from the Caritas Europa network.

This initiative goes back to the Caritas Europa Communication Forum 2004 which was held in Tallinn (Estonia) on 25-26 November of that year.

The Forum included a workshop on Online Communications which formulated the recommendation to follow up with a specific gathering

for people working in this area.

The meeting on 26-27 April 2007 will



include sessions on exchanging experiences, fostering collaboration, and planning common projects. Among others, participants will discuss how to exchange pictures, stories, and news more effectively.

Also, this will be an opportunity for Alain Rodriguez Garcia, Web Editor at Caritas Europa, to meet his counterparts in member organisations.

The draft agenda for this event is available on the [Caritas Europa web-site](#).

Also, for more information, you can write to: amazella@caritas-europa.org

IN THIS ISSUE:

“Arrivederci a Roma”, CI General Assembly and CE Regional Conference	1
First Caritas Europa Meeting on Online Communications	1
Caritas Europa contributes to ECHO's consultation process on Humanitarian Aid Policy	2
Update on IEC Meetings	2

Focus on Member Organisations	3
Focus on Institutions and Advocacy Work	4
Focus on Events and Projects	5

CARITAS EUROPA CONTRIBUTES TO ECHO'S CONSULTATION PROCESS ON HUMANITARIAN AID POLICY

Pressinfos Caritas Europa. – By the end of the German EU presidency in June 2007, the European Commission expects the European Council to adopt a Communication establishing the future strategic directions of EU Humanitarian Aid. In preparation of this Communication, the European Commission (DG ECHO) initiated in December 2006 a policy debate on key elements of an European policy framework on Humanitarian Aid.

Caritas Europa was very pleased with the initiative, as it settles the ground for an agreement between European governments and civil society on important framework conditions in this area.

The secretariat in Brussels took up a leading role in gathering and consolidating the views from different member organisations in order to come up with a common contribution by Caritas Europa. The following organisations have provided written input and/or signed on: Caritas Austria; Belgium (International); Denmark; England & Wales (CAFOD); France (Secours Catholique); Germany (DCV); Ireland (Trocaire); Italy; Luxembourg;

and the Netherlands. The contribution by Caritas Europa was subsequently fed back to VOICE, the main facilitator and coordinator in charge of providing a structured and time-bound input of the NGOs positions into the ECHO-led consultation process.

The document covers 12 areas of special relevance for Humanitarian Aid: Upholding the principles of Humanitarian Aid; Advocating the respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL); Good humanitarian donorship policy; Emergency response policy; Scope of Humanitarian Aid in relation to crisis management and European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP); Scope of Humanitarian Aid in relation to disaster reduction and transitional contexts; Policy coherence – sector policies; Partnership and professionalism; Direct and indirect aid delivery; Contributing to the strengthening of the International Humanitarian Aid System; Coordination and complementarity at EU level; Coordination with other EU actors involved in humanitarian relief.

Answering the question, *Should the EU establish a consolidated and coherent policy framework governing the relationship between humanitarian and military actors*, Caritas Europa refers to the recently published Policy Document of Caritas Internationalis, entitled “Relations with the Military”, Rome, April 2006.

Caritas acknowledges the fact that the military is an important actor in many of the world's crisis and performing various roles: as soldiers to an international conflict, warring parties in an internal conflict, peace keepers, or providers of relief when drawing upon their competitive advantages in terms of transport and logistics.

Therefore, “the issue before Caritas is not whether it should relate to the military at all, but rather to establish what the appropriate relationship should be and where the boundaries should lie”. However, Caritas considers the role of the military in providing relief as an exception to the rule rather than the norm we should be aiming at.

The integral version of the contribution by Caritas Europa is available on the [Caritas Europa website](#).

UPDATE ON IEC MEETINGS - By Aude Hadley, *International Development and Peace Officer* - ahadley@caritas-europa.org

IEC Latin America and the Caribbean – Last meeting took place on 19 and 20 February 2007, in Brussels. The session included exchanges about the activities of the Latin American Region (their participation in the World Social Forum in Nairobi, as well as in the Congress of Caritas Latin America in Haiti of mid-March), and a focus on the very interesting gender project implemented by the Latin American Region. The IEC group decided to accompany this gender project closely and to deepen its own reflection on gender issues and practices, learning from the work done by the Latin Americans. The group shared updated information on some countries of high interest, such as Colombia, Haiti, and Brazil; and also took time to exchange on strategies and priorities of each member organisation for the work with Latin America in 2007.

IEC MONA – Last meeting took place on 22 and 23 March 2007 in Brussels and included two thematic sessions. The first one was on migration, looking at the work being done with migrants in the MONA region, and also exchanging on migration and development. Another thematic session focused on HIV/AIDS in the MONA Region, and was accompanied by CI Special Advisor on HIV/AIDS, Rev. Robert J. Vitillo. The group also continued the reflection on Caritas advocacy work towards the EU regarding Israel and Palestine and devoted time to exchange on the situation of various Caritas organisations in the Middle East and North Africa, in particular in Syria, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Somalia and Mauritania.

IEC Africa – Last meeting was on 28 and 29 March 2007 in Brussels. Taking into account the wish of African partners to see a revitalisation of the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) debate, the meeting devoted half-day to a very interesting exchange on LRRD, where we looked at different case studies and worked in groups on this important issue. Exchanges were also related to emergency situations (Ethiopia and Eritrea, Mozambique, Sahel), and the situation in strategic countries such as Guinea, Uganda and Sierra Leone. Time was also taken to look at the migration and development debate, and to share information about emergency principles and strategy within the Confederation.

IEC Asia - Next meeting will be held on 19 and 20 April 2007 in Brussels. The first day will focus on issues regarding partnership with the Asia region. This part will include an exchange with guests from Korea, aiming at better understanding the situation there and looking at how the Europeans can support the efforts done in this country. Also, it will look at the accompaniment of Caritas Asia, as well as at the situation in the Tsunami-affected areas and the support to specific countries (e.g. Vietnam, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Pakistan). On the second day, the group will continue the reflection on practices of LRRD, as a follow-up to the training day that took place in November last year. Participants will explore the issue of right-based approaches to development and analyse what this means in the Asian context.

Focus on Member Organisations: CARITAS UKRAINE – A VERY MUCH EXPERIENCED YOUNG ORGANISATION

Caritas Ukraine; its brief history and priorities - By Natalia Kovaliv, International Charitable Foundation, Caritas Ukraine

The economic and social conditions in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union had a huge and immediate negative effect on Ukraine. In the early 1990's, people experienced food shortages and economical precarity, with meagre incomes and the lost of their life savings due to hyper-inflation.

In 1993, Catholic Relief Services (USA), Caritas Germany and Caritas Vienna, joined Caritas Austria and Secours Catholique-Caritas France in encouraging the leadership of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to establish an official charitable organisation that would be able to coordinate the distribution of humanitarian aid, and act as the local partner for foreign charitable organisations operating in Ukraine.

In 1994, Caritas Ukraine was created during the first general meeting of the diocesan centers held in Lviv. Over the years, Caritas Ukraine increased its capacity and focused its attention on three priority areas: health care, outreach to young children, and social programmes related to migration.

In the area of health care, Caritas Ukraine along with its partners has established a comprehensive home-care programme to assist the elderly, and persons with special needs. This programme includes medical, social, and pastoral care. Currently, 14 home-care centres have been established throughout Ukraine.

Caritas Ukraine also operates the Metropolitan Andrew Sheptytsky Hospital in Lviv, which provides medical and social care to the poor regardless of their ethnic background or religious affiliation. Since 2005, three of the Caritas Ukraine home-care centers have been specialised in assisting HIV/AIDS infected.

The second priority area of Caritas Ukraine is directed toward abandoned children and children who are victims of domestic violence. Caritas Ukraine operates an orphanage, and has also established street children projects that provide hot and nourishing meals; medical services; social and psychological assistance from specially equipped mobile stations; and social assistance centres located where homeless and abandoned children are known to gather.

Social challenges resulting from migration are the third priority of Caritas Ukraine. Due to the vulnerable and desperate state

of migrants, many of them are easy preys to exploitation and trafficking. Caritas Ukraine has put in place rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for survivors of human trafficking. A network of consultative centers of Caritas Ukraine has been established to provide assistance to people who have suffered from trafficking, help them integrate into society, carry out awareness raising activities, and inform those who have decided to find work abroad about the dangers they could face, and how to avoid them.

In 2002, Caritas Ukraine established a shelter for trafficked women. The shelter provides temporary accommodation and professional help from a psychologist and a social worker. Medical and legal assistance are additionally arranged in cooperation with other partner organisations in the region.

In addition, Caritas Ukraine hosts the coordination of COATNET – an international ecumenical network of Christian Organisations Against Trafficking in Human Beings. This project which is under the legal authority of Caritas Europa, aims at facilitating the transfer of know-how and best practices in the field of counter-trafficking.

CARITAS UKRAINE HOSTS INTERNATIONAL HIV & AIDS CONFERENCE

Entitled “Stigma or Solidarity – New Challenges for the Church’s Responses to HIV/AIDS in Europe” and hosted by **Caritas Ukraine** in Kyiv, on 24-26 April 2007, this Caritas Europa international conference will aim at underlining the urgent need to eradicate the general stigmatisation suffered by people living with HIV/AIDS. The conference will pay special attention to the alarming situation witnessed by Caritas in Eastern and Central Europe, as well as in Central Asia.

Caritas Europa has identified a necessity to address the social dimension of HIV/AIDS in a structured, well coordinated and trans-national approach. Moreover, the conference will reflect on possible ways to develop advocacy work in this area.

The event will include a keynote speech by Dr. Emelia Timpo, Associate Director of UN AIDS. The programme of the conference is available on the [Caritas Europa website](#).

The conference is co-sponsored by



CARITAS LUXEMBOURG DISSEMINATES REPORT “EU’S FOOTPRINT IN THE SOUTH”

Caritas Luxembourg organised a presentation of the joint CIDSE-Caritas Europa report on the impact of European Community aid in the South. The event took place on 23 March 2007, two days after the official launch of the report at the European Parliament in Brussels (see page 4).

In the presence of Luxembourg’s Ministry for Humanitarian Aid and Cooperation Jean-Louis Schiltz, CIDSE Secretary General Christiane Overkamp illustrated the main findings of the report. Also, the gathered audience listened to the experience of Paul Samangassou, incoming Secretary General of Caritas Africa who contributed to the publication.

For more details, please read the article: [“L’aide au développement de l’UE fait-elle unedifférence pour les pauvres?”](#)

Focus on Institutions and Advocacy Work

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AID NEEDS CHANGES TO REALLY HELP THE POOR

Pressinfos Caritas Europa. – Caritas Europa has joined forces with CIDSE to compile a report on the impact of the current European Community (EC) development aid on the lives of the poor in the South.

Entitled “The EU’s Footprint in the South: Does European Community Development Cooperation Make a Difference for the Poor?”, the report was launched on 21 March 2007 at the European Parliament in Brussels, with the sponsoring of MEP Alain Hutchinson.

Caritas Europa, represented by its President Cristina Loghin, and CIDSE illustrated the report’s key findings and recommendations in the presence of representatives of the European Parliament, European Commission and Member States.

The EC is one of the world’s most important development aid donors, spending 7 billion euro every year in more than 150 countries and territories. CIDSE and Caritas Europa have chosen to look at how the largest EU donor, the European Commission, measures up.

The report draws upon research in six countries: Bangladesh, Zambia, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.

The analysis shows a mixed picture. In Cameroon, over two-thirds of EC funding is used for the construction of large international roads. But poor people living in rural areas need smaller roads that connect them with urban areas, if they are to benefit from economic development and access to health services.

Yet, there are positive examples as well. So, the European Commission has made efforts in Ethiopia to ensure that its aid improves food security for the greater population. In this country, there is also a constructive dialogue with civil society organisations on the priorities for EC aid.

The report does not just describe the situation, but also makes concrete and feasible recommendations about how EC aid could make more of a difference for the poor.

According to CIDSE and Caritas Europa, the Commission should:

- Base its aid on developing countries’ priori-

ties for poverty reduction;

- Better plan for, monitor, and evaluate the real impact of its aid on poverty reduction; and

- Improve the participation of Parliaments, civil society and local communities in its aid to reinforce democratic accountability.



The integral version of the publication can be downloaded from the [Caritas Europa website](#).

CARITAS EUROPA ADVOCACY WORK

Meeting with the Portuguese Permanent Representation to the EU

A delegation of Caritas Europa met Portugal’s Ambassador Álvaro Mendonça e Moura, and his advisors team at the Portuguese Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels on 29 March 2007.

The aim of the meeting was to present the organisation’s main advocacy positions to Portugal, as the country will hold the forthcoming EU Presidency from July 2007.

Caritas Europa was represented by Secretary General Marius Wanders, Social Policy Officer Adriana Oppromolla, Migration Officer Peter Verhaeghe, Humanitarian Officer Harald Happel, and EU Development and Co-financing Officer Denise Auclair.

“There was a genuine interest on the part of the Portuguese representatives in our arguments”, said Marius Wanders, after the meeting. He added: “The positions presented by our delegation reflect the current concerns of Caritas Europa and its member organisations, and highlight the common core of our different policy areas aiming at the promotion of human development, social justice and sustainable social systems in Europe and throughout the world”.

Caritas Europa welcomed several approaches presented by the Portuguese representatives. Among others, it is worthwhile to mention the Portuguese EU Presidency’s intention to organise a conference enhancing the debate on the concept of “circular migration”, and its work to assure that humanitarian issues can be given a greater forum within the agenda of the Council Working Party on Development Cooperation.

For Caritas Europa, this was the occasion to create the basis for a fruitful collaboration with the forthcoming Portuguese EU Presidency, as well as to implement and strengthen the concept of the so-called Caritas Europa “Troika” meetings. “Troika” meetings are the framework through which Caritas Europa presents its main advocacy concerns to successive forthcoming EU Presidencies.

For more information on the meeting’s outcomes, please see the Caritas Europa press release: “[Caritas Europa Presents its Advocacy Priorities for the Forthcoming Portuguese EU Presidency](#)” (29 March 2007).

Focus on events and projects

CARITAS EUROPA'S CONCEPT GETS RENEWED SUPPORT FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Pressinfos Caritas Europa. – The European Commission has renewed its support for the Caritas Organisations Network to Challenge the Exclusion and Poverty Trap (CONCEPT) to run for a second year.

Originally, CONCEPT aimed at building an international network of experts who could contribute to the National Action Plans (NAPs) on social inclusion. In its new phase, CONCEPT (II) will focus on the implementation of EU Member States' National Strategic Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion (NSRs/spsi).

In light of this new framework, the overarching objectives of the programme are: To contribute to the implementation of the Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion through ensuring the implementation of the NSRs/spsi at a national and local level; To promote a culture of dialogue with civil society and to raise public awareness on Social Inclusion; To increase

cooperation with the European Commission.

In order to achieve this objective, a series of activities have been planned such as: Establishing a report on the quality, coherence and potential effectiveness of the NSRs/spsi 2006-2008 (see column on the right); Monitoring the implementation process of the NSRs/spsi; Following, raising awareness on, advising regional and local authorities, as well as facilitating the transposition of the NSRs/spsi into policies, measures and programs/projects at a regional and/or local level; Generating specific policy recommendations with regard to a number of thematic areas that have a direct relation to the social inclusion strategies of the EU; Devising a final report with the first conclusions on the work done at a national level as well as recommendations on how to continue the implementation.

Those activities will be based on four specific thematic issues that are already at the heart of the daily work of many Caritas Europa member organisations: Integration, social inclusion and participation in public life of migrants; Health and health related social services; A learning and working Europe; Child poverty.

Caritas Europa assesses Europe's National Social Inclusion Strategies

Caritas Europa has officially delivered to the European Commission its report on the evaluation of the EU Member States' National Strategic Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion (NSRs/spsi).

This report is a major output of CONCEPT, thanks to which Caritas Europa member organisations (MOs) have been able to contribute to the NAPs on social inclusion.

Overall, the document highlights an improved participation of civil society and MOs in the process leading to the NSRs. However, according to Caritas a few sensitive areas have not been adequately addressed.

So, for example, the Irish National Strategic Report does not mention the high level of "working poor" living in the country. In Slovenia, there were among NGOs debates about comprehensive policies towards the mentally ill. However, these ideas do not appear in the NAP.

MANAGEMENT FORUM AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP - By Annamaria Vrzackova, Internal Network Staff Officer – avrzackova@caritas-europa.org

Organised once a year, the Management Forum (MF) aims at developing cooperation and exchanges among member organisations (MOs) on global management issues.

This year, the MF was combined with an Organisational Development workshop. The two events took place in Brussels on 5-7 March and were attended by 18 participants representing more than 15 member organisations. The MF was facilitated by Christoph Petrik-Schweifer, Secretary General of Caritas Austria, while the workshop was facilitated by Dana Hradcova, Michal Karpisek and Petr Vrzacek, Caritas Europa consultants for the Strategic Organisational Development Process (SODA).

The objective of the MF was to encourage a discussion on "Recommended Management and Administrative

Guidelines" (minimum standards) within the Caritas Europa network, and to begin a process of joint reflection on this issue.

Three thematic workshops, based on specific case studies, were offered: human resources, financial administrative policies and internal quality management.

The Organisational Development workshop had two objectives. On one hand, it aimed at presenting the organisational development process in Caritas Europa, together with the SODA achievements in different MOs such as: Caritas Bulgaria, Caritas Russia/West Siberia.

On the other, it looked at other organisational development models based on case studies of Caritas Austria, Caritas Switzerland and CRS Europe/Middle East.

After the workshop, participants had the opportunity to have bilateral discussions on the organisational development process with the SODA consultants and the Internal Network Policy Officer, Ketit Tskitshvili.

COATNET ANNUAL REPORT 2006

COATNET - Christian Organisations Against Trafficking in Human Beings is now featured in a new communication tool containing the main highlights from its original Annual Report 2006.

The 2 pages document produced by the Advocacy and Communication department of Caritas Europa, explains in a concise way the mission of COATNET, its assistance and prevention work, as well as the different advocacy actions undertaken during the year.

Finally, it illustrates the worldwide dimension of this network which includes users from 28 countries in Europe, Africa, North America, Oceania, Asia and the Middle East.



Available on the [Caritas Europa website](http://www.caritas-europa.org).