



**To Live Solidarity
and Partnership
in Europe and
in the World**



Rue de Pascale, 4 - 1040 Brussels - Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 280 02 80 - Fax: +32 (0)2 230 16 58

E-mail: info@caritas-europa.org - Website: <http://www.caritas-europa.org>



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Foreword

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The concept of a Europe that brings together its nation states is historically a very old one. It is an idea of political and military leaders who desire new territories. It is an idea of merchants who wish to extend to new markets or to create a single currency. It is an idea of intellectuals, of pacifists or of religious who want to develop culture, spirituality or peace.

In this dynamic, Caritas Europe - which achieved its own enlargement after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 - has today members in 44 countries. Shared values are the cement of this European region of Caritas Internationalis, a global confederation of 162 Catholic organisations of development, emergency assistance and social service.

Values which are spiritual and religious: there is nothing more sacred on earth than man and woman, images and likenesses of God. Values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. Social values of partnership, dialogue and exchange with and between people who live in situations of poverty and exclusion - in order to participate in their development, to conceive together with them solutions and programmes, to advocate together for the respect of their rights or for the creation of new rights.

At the level of each European country, as well as the continent and world as a whole, Caritas Europe is thus committed to combat poverty, to fight for inclusion and for social and economic systems which integrate people in a better and more profound way, and to promote social justice.

The final message of the Synod of European Bishops of 1999 urges us to move in this direction: "Mutual recognition, forms of cooperation and exchanges of all sorts are being developed in such a way that little by little, a culture, indeed a European consciousness, is being created. This we hope will encourage, especially among the young, a sense of fraternity and the will to share (...) while acknowledging the signs of hope seen by the attention given to the rights and to



the quality of life, we sincerely hope that, in creative fidelity to the humanist and Christian traditions of our continent, there will be a guarantee of the primacy of ethical and spiritual values¹⁾".

Based on these values, the second strategic plan 2005 - 2010 of Caritas Europa follows that of 1998, "Shaping Europe's Future". It was recognised as necessary, by the Regional Conferences of 2002 and 2003, to go beyond a simple revision of the 1998 document in order to take into account the evolution of both the external and internal contexts, on the one hand political, economic and social changes, on the other the progress achieved in internal co-operation and within the global network of Caritas Internationalis, that is through the establishment of organisational structures and a professional Secretariat.

This plan, "To live Solidarity and Partnership in Europe and in the World" was unanimously approved by the Regional Conference of May 2004, held in Dubrovnik in Croatia, together with an implementation plan and a budgetary plan.

Common action is based on content and means. The members of Caritas Europa also affirmed their willingness to work together as a network according to new forms of cooperation, which are more participative and allow exchange and sharing. In a spirit of creativity and productivity, this network will develop internal and external alliances in order to implement our common strategy.

Denis Viénot
President of Caritas Europa

1) Cited in Ecclesia in Europa, Pope John Paul II Apostolic Exhortation following the 1999 European Synod of European Bishops.



Chapter 1.

Identity and Inspiration

1. What is Caritas Europa ?

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Created in 1971, Caritas Europa is one of the seven regions of Caritas Internationalis, the worldwide confederation of 162 Catholic relief, development and social service organisations working to build a better world, especially for the poor and oppressed, in over 200 countries and territories.

Caritas Europa is the umbrella organisation of the European network of 48 Caritas member organisations, working in 44 European countries. Caritas Europa focuses its activities on policy issues related to poverty and social inequality, migration and asylum within all countries of Europe, and issues of emergency humanitarian assistance, international development and peace throughout the world.

With regard to all these issues, the organisation develops policies for political advocacy and lobbying at European level as well as at national level.

The organisation is strongly involved in supporting the activities of its member organisations and those in the wider Caritas Internationalis confederation.

2. The Christian inspiration of Caritas

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Caritas is a major expression of the presence of the Catholic Church at the heart of society and of human history. Indeed, the Church is called upon to accompany and to share the joys and the hopes, but also the sorrows, the suffering and the struggles of men and women of all ages and in all places.

Christians share, with all men and women of good will, one and the same hope: the hope of a world of peace, of justice, of solidarity and of freedom. That hope also carries with it responsibility in the face of suffering in the world and the consequences of conflicts or natural disasters. The contrast between such

situations and the hope of a reconciled world, symbolised for Christians in the Kingdom of God, challenges us to assume that responsibility. And that responsibility knows no borders: people who suffer at a great distance from us are equally our brothers and sisters and we must place ourselves alongside them.

Caritas wants to be present amongst those who, faced with human indignity or emergency, take up the struggle for greater humanity: Caritas strives to add its material support, its human support and its knowledge to their commitment to securing or restoring their dignity and their rights. In these difficult situations, Caritas strives to ensure that – as far as possible – those who are the victims can become the actors who determine their own path towards dignity and freedom.

In welcoming the diversity of societies and cultures as a human richness and in seeking to overcome all forms of discrimination, Caritas wants to collaborate with all those institutions which pursue the same goals.

In that spirit, Caritas Europa offers support and provides a degree of coordination to the different national Caritas organisations in Europe, whilst working closely within the wider Caritas Internationalis confederation of which Caritas Europa is an integral part.

Within the Catholic Church itself, at every opportunity, Caritas wishes to raise awareness of and promote the commitment to the preferential option for the poor, which is manifest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and which the Church itself has frequently proclaimed. This option for the poor demands of Caritas both proper concern for people and situations and also a response from the heart, profoundly moved by what is witnessed or by the appeal that comes from others, which is also understood as a sign of God's calling. There is indeed an option: the option to view situations from the perspective of people living in poverty, of the vulnerable, marginalised and oppressed. And from that perspective to challenge those processes which cause such situations, so that the necessary changes may be implemented and full account taken of the dignity of each and every person.

Through its action, as a Church institution, Caritas also wants to enable the Church itself and Christian communities to take their full responsibility for solidarity in society and to effectively offer a sign that we belong to a single human family – sons and daughters of God, from which no-one is excluded.

3. Key points of reference for Caritas Europa

Alongside the Social Teachings of the Church, which guides all our endeavours, Caritas Europa and its member organisations regard international law on human rights and fundamental freedoms as cardinal principles in their work with and for the poor. In particular, Caritas Europa aims to contribute to realising these Conventions' aims of preventing and ending violations of, inter alia, the rights to physical and mental integrity, the freedom of conscience and the freedom from discrimination:

- The Caritas Internationalis Strategic Plan 2003-2007: Globalising Solidarity.
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights²⁾, adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948.
- The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms³⁾, adopted by the Council of Europe in Rome on 04 November 1950.
- The European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union⁴⁾.
- The United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees⁵⁾, done at Geneva on 28 July 1951, supplemented by the New York Protocol of 31 January 1967.
- The United Nations Millennium Development Goals⁶⁾. In the Millennium Jubilee Year, the global community, assembled at a UN Special Session, drew up a charter to promulgate the Millennium Development Goals as a manifesto for the new millennium, which can be seen as a contemporary secular articulation of the global common good.

2) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948 (<http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu6/1/univdec1.htm>).

3) European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, as amended by Protocol no.11 (<http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/WhatYouWant.asp?NT=005>). This convention has been signed and ratified by the governments of 44 European nations.

4) Draft Treaty establishing a constitution for Europe, document CONV 850/03 of 18 July 2003. Part II integrates into this draft treaty the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union (pages 47-60). (<http://european-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=EN>).

5) United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (<http://www.unhcr.org>; Quick Search for '1951 Convention'). All United Nations Member States are party to the Convention and the Protocol. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees is the key legal document in defining refugees, their rights and the legal obligations of states. The 1967 Protocol removed geographical and temporal restrictions from the Convention.

6) UN Millennium Development Goals (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>). The Goals constitute an ambitious agenda to significantly improve the human condition by 2015. The Goals set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women. The core commitment undertaken by the global community through these Goals is to halve by the year 2015 the number of people in the world living in absolute poverty, on less than one dollar a day.



Chapter 2.

Mission, Vision, Guiding Values and Principles

1. Mission

Caritas Europa, in a profound commitment to fight poverty and social exclusion and to promote human development, social justice and sustainable social systems in Europe and throughout the world, brings together the human, technical and financial resources of its member organisations. This work of Caritas Europa lies at the heart of the Church's witness to the Gospel.

2. Vision

Caritas Europa has a vision of Europe as a place where the civilisation of love and the civilisation of solidarity are being built, and where:

- The Catholic community is linking up with other faith communities and people of good will to build respectful partnerships with the poor and vulnerable, at local, national, European and global levels, and thereby actively involving themselves in the development of a vibrant civil society that confronts and fights poverty, inequality and injustice and promotes sustainable human development;
- Effective support and protection of vulnerable migrants in Europe is established and guaranteed in the dignified treatment of all migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and in the prevention of human trafficking and forced displacement;
- The joint efforts of international institutions, European governments, Churches and civil society organisations ensure efficient policies for emergency relief, addressing the survival and recovery needs of those affected by natural disasters, conflicts or oppression;
- Global poverty, inequality and injustice are continually diminished and development, peace and human rights are constantly promoted with the active involvement of the poor and marginalised around the world.

In transforming this vision into reality, Caritas Europa sees itself as a strengthening network that is actively and increasingly involved in:

- The implementation, on a regional European level, of the Caritas Internationalis strategic and work plans in order to achieve the globalisation of solidarity.
- The improvement of the overall effectiveness of the European network, based on the shared expectations of the member organisations and owned by them. This is expressed through effective working structures, quality management and the design and implementation of clear, transparent and sustainable financial mechanisms.
- The provision of support for the sustainability of its individual member organisations
- Successful advocacy, effective internal and external communications and strengthened networking within the Church and with relevant partners.

3. Guiding Values and Principles

Caritas Europa is aligned with the same guiding values and principles of conduct of Caritas Internationalis and that are laid down in its strategic plan. Caritas Europa strives for genuine participation and empowerment of the people with whom and for whom it works.

In concrete terms, this means Caritas Europa adheres to the following basic values and principles:

A. Gospel

As part of the social commitment of the Church, Caritas Europa draws its inspiration and *raison d'être* from the Gospel of Jesus Christ, from the living tradition of the Church's social teachings, and from the experiences of and with the poor and socially excluded.

B. Human dignity and human rights

Caritas Europa insists that the human person is held at the heart of all social and economic policy making⁷⁾. The basic principle of the inviolable dignity of every person means that human dignity and human rights are inextricable. An essential dimension of the prophetic witness of Caritas Europa is constantly to emphasise this relationship and to demand adherence to human rights legislation, Charters and protocols.

C. Solidarity and subsidiarity

In committing itself to freedom and justice for all, Caritas Europa anchors itself in the preferential option for the poor. In so doing, it is led by the basic principle of solidarity, which puts the common good before self-interest, and which supports and fosters community building.

7) It is not always possible to eliminate suffering and need. Caritas Europa believes it is also an expression of Christian love for others to attend to those people who have no choice but to endure their suffering.

Caritas Europa is equally committed to the principle of subsidiarity, in line with Catholic Social Teachings⁸⁾. Subsidiarity, in turn, demands and leads to grassroots empowerment, popular participation, decentralised decision-making and equal partnership relations.

D. Partnership as an expression of the preferential option for the poor

Partnership within the Caritas confederation is an alliance of solidarity between members of local Churches that recognises all women and men as part of one interdependent global community and which demonstrates a commitment to social justice and an overriding preferential option for the poor⁹⁾.

Caritas Europa considers the poor and the socially disadvantaged as its most essential partners. In view of their evolving needs in a rapidly changing world, Caritas Europa encourages them to take on responsibility and enables them to be agents of change with regard to their own situation.

E. Peace and reconciliation

European Caritas organisations are working with social groups in the midst of conflicts and are involved with those present in war zones.

A culture of peace is the basis of the Caritas commitment in education, advocacy, in conflict resolution – especially promoting non-violence – and in related political issues.

F. Ecological sustainability

As a basic ethical principle and a commitment to future generations, Caritas Europa not only works to eradicate poverty and social exclusion today, but strongly

commits itself to sustainable development and to the creation of a sustainable world order, which includes the preservation of a sound ecological order.

G. Cultural diversity

Caritas Europa appreciates cultural and religious pluralism and views the cultural diversity of Europe as a strength and as an opportunity to meet other cultures and religions with respect and openness. Caritas Europa is committed to the dialogue of common action among religions and cultures.

H. Equality of women and men

Caritas Europa promotes the equal participation of women and men at all levels of society and in its own organisational structures, so that women are proactively involved in the design, decision making and implementation with regard to policies, strategic plans and work plans at every level.

I. Mutual ownership and cooperation within the network

The member organisations are the true actors of the common activities of the network. Caritas Europa respects each member's autonomy and, at the same time, it actively promotes co-operation among its members and co-ordination at European and global levels.

Caritas Europa endeavours to promote a culture of open dialogue, partnership, mutual respect and support within the network, and to support and strengthen the structures and sustainability of individual member organisations within the network.

J. Involvement of Volunteers

Volunteers are a valuable and indispensable asset within the network of Caritas Europa. Grassroots volunteers are at the core of the Caritas concept and Caritas work. Volunteer involvement is recognised and respected as an engine of change in the organisation and is supported at all levels.

8) There are key references to subsidiarity in Catholic Social Teaching. One of these references is in *Quadragesimo Anno*, 79. (Pope Pius XI, 1931): "Just as it is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to a group what private enterprise and industry can accomplish, so too it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order, for a larger and higher association to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower societies. This is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, unshaken and unchangeable. Of its very nature the true aim of all society should be to help members of the social body, but never to destroy or absorb them".

9) Source: "Caritas Partnership: A Caritas Internationalis Handbook for Reflection and Action", Part Three, Chapter 14: "Guiding Values and Principles", paragraph 3. <http://www.caritas.org/upload/p/partnership.qxd1.pdf>



Chapter 3. Analysis of the external environment

The purpose of this section of the Caritas Europa strategic plan is to highlight the principal challenges and opportunities present in the external environment - both at global level and at European-wide level - in which the network implements its vision and mission and establishes priorities for its work. This contextual analysis is not intended to be a product of disinterested academic research. Rather - faithful to its commitment to the Church's preferential option for the poor; grounded in the belief that development is the new word for peace; and firmly anchored in the basic principles of justice and solidarity which places the common good above self-interest - Caritas Europa attempts to analyse the current world order through the prism of the poor, the marginalised and the oppressed.

Part I. Globalisation and poverty

Globalisation, whilst by no means new, has been accelerated by the introduction of new technologies, and continues to shape a new global community. The globalisation of capital, markets, goods and services, information and - to a much lesser and more restricted degree - of the movement of people have inevitably led to both new challenges and opportunities.

1. Increasing Poverty in the World

It is widely recognised that the globalisation process - without sound governance and management - is producing both winners and losers. Inequity - both within and between countries - continues to increase in developed and developing countries alike. In 1960, the income ratio of the poorest 20% to the richest 20% of the world's population was 1: 30. Today it is 1: 74.

It was this recognition of the widening gap between rich and poor which prompted 189 countries to adopt, in the year 2000, under the auspices of the United Nations, the Millennium Development Goals, with specific targets set for the year 2015¹⁰.

The statistics¹¹ offer a frightening picture:

- In the developing world an estimated 1.2 billion people - one in five of the world's population - survive on less than \$1 dollar a day (0.82€). 800 million are undernourished and 153 million children under five are underweight. In sub-Saharan Africa, half the population lives in poverty.
- An estimated 114 million children - one in every five children in the world - of primary age are not enrolled in school. 63 million of them are girls.
- Nearly 11 million children under the age of five - well over 1,200 per hour - die each year from easily preventable and treatable diseases.
- Some 500,000 women - 99% of them in the developing world - die in pregnancy and childbirth each year. In sub-Saharan Africa, the risk of maternal death is 1 in 16, compared to 1 in 2,800 in developed countries.
- HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa and fourth cause of death globally. Other regions, including South Asia, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Caribbean are showing rapid increases in incidence. 1 million people die each year from malaria and 1.6 million from tuberculosis.
- Some 2.4 billion people lack access to proper sanitation and some 1.2 billion do not have access to safe water supplies.

10) Simply put, the eight Millennium Development Goals are as follows: 1. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2. To achieve universal primary education; 3. Promote gender equality and empower women; 4. To reduce child mortality; 5. To improve maternal health; 6. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; 7. To ensure environmental sustainability and 8. To develop a global partnership for development.

11) The statistics which follow are taken from Progress towards the Millennium Development: 1990 - 2003, unofficial working paper of 23 March 2004 produced by the United Nations Statistics Division. Website: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_coverfinal.htm

2. Partnerships for Development - the globalisation of solidarity

There has undoubtedly been some progress towards these Goals in much of the world - the example of China, which has succeeded in lifting some 150 million people out of income poverty, is a particularly notable one. Headway has been made in creating some greater economic stability through economic reforms, good governance and the recognition of the need for social justice and people's participation. Whilst globalisation has benefited some regions, others (notably large parts of sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and many countries in the Middle East and Latin America) have been further marginalised. And, within countries, even those that have benefited overall, deep pockets of poverty remain. This is true of large growing economies such as China, Brazil and Mexico. Overall, it would be fair to say - as indeed does the United Nations Development Programme - that the world is falling short, particularly in the area of addressing structural constraints to development.

It should be stressed at this point that Caritas Europa, which fully supports the Millennium Goals, shares the growing international consensus that poverty is not, however, simply a matter of income or meeting the most basic of human needs. Rather, poverty is a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted phenomenon which includes a matrix of intangibles such as vulnerability, risk, inequality, marginalisation, discrimination, social exclusion, feelings of powerlessness and despair, the circumscribing of options and choices. Placing the human person at the centre of development demands pro-active programmes for social inclusion, respect for differences (be they religious, cultural, ethnic, ideological or gender-based), the recognition of the inalienable dignity of each human person, the promotion of community building.

To meet the formidable challenges posed by the Millennium Goals demands a globalised response that goes far beyond the rhetoric of interdependence. Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez of Honduras, addressing the Caritas Internationalis General Assembly in 2003, called for the globalisation of solidarity, stressing that "economic globalisation without the globalisation of solidarity is suicide for the poor and thus for the majority of humanity". He went on to say: "In our era as never before, we all share the same destiny. The world economic recession that accompanied and, in some places, preceded the terrorist attack on September 11th in New York, the AIDS pandemic or the more recent SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory

Syndrome) epidemic, the civil wars in the poorest countries of the world that call for a response from the most powerful, the effects of climatic phenomena like El Niño, the outcome of ecological disasters in different areas of the world all affect us and indicate to us that we have to join forces as brothers in order to face the difficulties together¹²⁾. And the globalised dialogue - a prerequisite for globalised solidarity - should not be a dialogue of the deaf or a dialogue that brings about the submission of the weakest.

It is within this perspective that the eighth Millennium Goal - developing a global partnership for development - is of critical importance¹³⁾. Whilst governments, the private sector and civil society of each nation State must each play their proper role, the international community as a whole must play its part in underpinning national efforts and ensuring that the current democratic deficit at international level is fully met. The developed countries of the world must translate their pledges made in the Millennium Goals into reality. These include:

- Establishing a more just, transparent, non-discriminatory trading system;
- Addressing the special needs of Least Developed Countries and of small island and landlocked nations;
- Dealing in a comprehensive manner with the crippling debt burden (and which goes way beyond the existing HIPC -Heavily Indebted Poor Countries-initiative);
- A massive increase in official development assistance (ODA) to countries committed to poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its Human Development Report 2003, Millennium Development Goals: A Compact Among Nations to End Human Poverty¹⁴⁾ examines the progress - or otherwise - to date towards meeting Millennium Goal Targets. The report stresses "It is hard to think of a more propitious time to mobilise support for such a global partnership. In 2003 the world has seen even more violent conflict, accompanied by heightened international

12) See also: "The Globalisation of Solidarity", keynote address by Oscar André Cardinal Rodríguez M. of Tegucigalpa (Honduras) to the Caritas Internationalis 17th General Assembly, July 2003. <http://www.caritas.org/Upload/G/Globalis-ING.qxd1.pdf>

13) It is no accident that the new 2004 UNDP Annual Report is entitled 2015: Mobilising Global Partnerships. Web site: www.undp.org

14) UNDP Human Development Report 2003, Millennium Development Goals: A Compact Among Nations to End Human Poverty, published by Oxford University Press. Web site: www.undp.org, overview p. 1.

tension and fear of terrorism. Some might argue that the war on poverty must take a backseat until the war on terrorism has been won. But they would be wrong. The need to eradicate poverty does not compete with the need to make the world more secure. On the contrary, eradicating poverty should contribute to a safer world - the vision of the Millennium Declaration".

The report concludes: "It is no exaggeration to say that the overall success or failure of the new global partnership that the world is trying to build will hinge on achieving the eighth Goal: the one that sets out the commitments of rich countries to help poor ones who are undertaking (in) good faith economic, political and social reforms".

3. Translating promises into reality

Promises and pledges have been made by the rich countries - in the Millennium Goals, at the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development (March 2002), the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (September 2002), at the fourth WTO Ministerial Meeting in Doha (November 2001). Yet this rhetoric still needs to be translated into reality if progress is to be made on the 1990s 'decade of despair' for the poorest countries of the world.

A. Trade

This is the area where change is most needed which would be of greatest benefit to poor countries. Yet the fifth WTO (World Trade Organization) Ministerial Meeting in Cancún (September 2003) ended in disarray, largely over the question of agricultural subsidies in the richer countries, and no decision has yet been taken on the next Ministerial Meeting. Yet this issue is a critical factor for developing countries. Many of the poorest countries remain dependent on the export of primary products whose prices have continued to fall. The removal of subsidies in poorer countries as a result of structural adjustment programmes, the vagaries of the market have resulted in countries trying to increase their global competitiveness by lowering production costs and increasing productivity. However, the massive subsidies paid to agricultural producers in rich countries means that competitiveness remains an elusive goal.

Domestic agricultural subsidies in OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries in 2002 amounted to US \$318 billion¹⁵. This can usefully be compared to the OECD countries' development assistance which, in the same year, totalled US \$57 billion.

Average OECD tariffs on manufactured goods from developing countries remain discriminatory and are more than quadruple the tariffs imposed on manufactured goods from other OECD countries. This militates against economic diversification and often closes the trade trap for the poorest countries.

The overall percentage of duty free imports from developing countries to OECD countries (excluding arms and oil) has risen somewhat from 56.8% in 1996 to 66% in 2002. Yet, for the Least Developed Countries, this trend was reversed from 81.1% in 1996 to 69.1% in 2002.

In 2003/2004, there was a flurry of conferences and seminars between the European Union (EU) and the 79 countries of the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific)¹⁶ as negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) under the Cotonou Agreement are formally launched. The Cotonou Agreement, which introduces reciprocity in trading arrangements, replaced decades of non-reciprocal preferential trading policies and co-operation under the Yaoundé and Lomé Conventions. Whilst the whole concept of reciprocity between unequal partners is fraught with dangers for the ACP countries, these discussions are forging ahead in the absence of clearly defined WTO rules as the Doha round remains stalled.

B. Development Assistance

In 1990 aid from the 22 members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD amounted to 0.33% of Gross National Income. By 2002, this percentage had fallen to 0.23%. In Monterrey, the rich countries pledged US \$16 billion a year in additional aid by 2006. This would bring the percentage of Gross National Product to 0.26%. The UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)¹⁷ estimates that, even if this pledge were to materialise, it would fall far short of the

15) Statistics cited in this section are taken from Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals 1990-1993, unofficial working paper of March 23 2004, United Nations Statistics Division.

(web site: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_coverfinal.htm) and from the UNDP 2003 Human Development Report op.cit.

16) 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (which contains the majority of LDCs), 16 countries in the Caribbean and 15 in the Pacific region.

17) UNDP Human Development Report 2003 op.cit.

estimated need. The UNDP conservatively estimates the need at US \$100 billion a year. This would entail a doubling of current development assistance and would amount to around 0.5% of Gross National Product - which is still far short of the longstanding and oft-repeated pledge to reach aid levels of 0.7% of GNP.

This overall picture does not bring into relief the plight of the poorest countries. In the decade of the 1990s, aid to sub-Saharan Africa fell by almost 33% on a per capita basis. Whilst in the period up to the end of the 1980s, aid tended to be governed by the strategic considerations of Cold War foreign policy, development assistance today tends increasingly to reflect immigration, conflict and security concerns. Thus, in 2002 (i.e. pre Iraq war), the top ten recipients of official (development) assistance from the United States were: Egypt, Russia, Israel, Pakistan, Serbia and Montenegro, Colombia, Ukraine, Jordan, Peru and Afghanistan. The European Commission's top ten aid recipients for the same year were: Poland, Romania, Hungary, Czech Republic, former Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro, Turkey, Tunisia, Morocco and South Africa¹⁸.

C. Emergency and Humanitarian Assistance

The heady optimism of the immediate post Cold War era was quickly dissipated as the much vaunted 'peace dividend' failed to materialise. Wars, internal conflict and civil strife continue to plague the world - in parts of Europe, in Africa and in Latin America. And, of course, in the Middle East/Asia. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the escalating conflict in Israel and Palestine have exacted - and continue to exact - a heavy toll in human suffering. In 2003, for example, there were over 20 million refugees and displaced persons falling under the mandate of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees¹⁹. The vast majority of them in the poorer countries of the world, particularly in Asia where there are over 9 million such people. Even when particular crises are over, recovery assistance is much needed for vulnerable groups in countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda, Somalia, Angola, Burundi and Tanzania, the western Balkan States, the Caucasus.

In this context, it is necessary to take into account the changing environment of humanitarian work; in particular the need to guarantee the safety of humanitarian

18) Information from the OECD website: www.oecd.org

19) UNHCR website: www.unhcr.ch

workers and the dangers that exist when humanitarian work takes place in a context of military action and civil strife.

In addition, the goal of food security remains as elusive as ever as natural disasters – such as flooding in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, earthquakes in Iran and Morocco – continue despite increased efforts towards disaster preparedness, for example in South Asia and Andean countries.

The European Commission (apart from bilateral emergency assistance provided by individual EU Member States) is a major provider of emergency and humanitarian aid, through its office ECHO (European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department), established in 1994. In 2003, ECHO allocated 600,349 million€²⁰⁾ to emergency programmes throughout the world. 38% was allocated to Africa, 20% to Asia, 24% to the Middle East/North Africa (a dramatic increase over the 12% in 2002), 1% to the Western Balkans (from a high of 20% in 2000), 6% to the Newly Independent States, 3% to Latin America and 8% to global organisations such as the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and the International Red Cross. Indeed, 54% of the ECHO total is channelled through NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), including Caritas Europa member organisations. Indeed, the Caritas Internationalis confederation is one of the world's leading providers and deliverers of humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance. Its long-standing and continuing commitment is to help the victims of disasters – whether man-made or natural – regardless of race or creed.

Part II. Peace, justice and reconciliation in Europe and the world

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Europe has a long history of internecine warfare. European conflicts were at the root of two major world wars, in which millions of people died and, in the course of these conflicts, the worst atrocities against humanity were committed. Indeed, it was the Second World War that spurred the creation of the EU. In the post World War II era, Europe was the frontline of the Cold War, as a result of which entire populations were cut off from their roots and from contacts with their

20) March 2004 figures provided by ECHO. Website: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/statistics>

relatives and friends. And although western Europe takes some pride in decades of stability and peace, violent conflicts have continued to erupt in the Balkan area and are still being fought out in the Caucasus region.

It should be stressed that peace is not simply the absence of war or dependent on an uneasy balance of power or the threat of mutual destruction. On the contrary, peace building is a positive, pro-active concept that seeks to tackle the root causes of glaring economic and social injustice, promote development as the new name for peace and work actively for the common good of all humanity.

Peace building refers to the long-term project of building peaceful, stable communities and societies. Peace building and development are therefore very closely linked. Both have the same goal, which is to help rebuild or repair societies that are hurting, physically, economically, and socially²¹⁾.

In discussions about peace and reconciliation, the question of justice is frequently raised. There is concern that, because peace often involves compromise, those who have the fewest resources and least political power will have to compromise the most. However, the vision of peace is tied to a vision of social justice. For peace to be sustainable and lasting, issues of injustice must be addressed.

As part of a global network, committed to work for peace, justice and reconciliation, Caritas Europa must focus increasing attention on conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace-building and reconciliation, within our own continent and beyond.

In this context, the adoption of a Constitutional Treaty of the EU becomes an important focal point since it will define to what extent – and through which institutional arrangements and mechanisms – the EU will in the future adopt joint policies, such as a common foreign and security policy, and to what extent the policies on development, humanitarian aid and migration will be subordinated to such a common foreign and security policy.

21) See also "Peacebuilding: A Caritas Training Manual", Chapter 1.3, page 4. http://www.caritas.org/Upload/P/Peacebuilding_English.pdf

Part III. Religion and inter-religious dialogue

Throughout history in Europe, religion has played an important role in shaping the development of society. Among other things, it has contributed to the establishment of social services and of an educational system. In recent times, the Christian Churches played an important role in the peaceful revolution in East Germany and in the unification process at large in Europe after 1989. This cannot be attributed to the endeavours of just one church. For centuries, various Christian churches have co-existed in Europe, though not always peacefully.

Due to the challenges of our age, including migration, this multi-Christian landscape has changed again significantly. Through migration, the experiences of belonging to a particular religious culture are brought to others. Religious plurality is a fact in Europe as well as in many other parts of the world. But also now, the different religious views may lead to misunderstandings or give way to hostile behaviour or negative portrayal in the media. As a reaction religious fundamentalism is growing on all sides.

Yet in the context of increasing injustices in the world, the religions with their core values of sharing, tolerance and respect for all persons and for creation can be an important factor to co-operate in building and strengthening social cohesion, to prepare the way for peace and to promote the development of a just society.

Ecumenism is a dynamic that is being implemented in Caritas activities.

In the spirit of Assisi, a true dialogue is taking place with other religions that are present in Europe, such as Judaism and Islam. This dialogue provides an atmosphere of freedom and openness in order to listen to one another and to discover possibilities for collaboration. Such an approach challenges negative stereotyping and advances the case for the enforcement of rights and the improvement of policies and services. More particularly, inter-religious dialogue supports a more effective response to the needs of migrants in the countries of Europe.

Part IV. The European Context

1. The European Union

The role of the EU in the global political arena is changing. The EU, through the introduction of the EURO, is the largest economic bloc in the world. It is also the world's largest trading bloc and, until recently when the United States dramatically increased its aid, was the world's largest provider of development assistance. Its economic clout is, at present, not matched by a corresponding political influence. If Europe succeeds in unifying at a political level, the continent has the potential to bring greater equilibrium in the global division of power.

The most important development with regard to the EU is the enlargement process. Since May 2004 the EU has been enlarged to 25 Member State, including ten new Members (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia). A further wave of accession is expected from 2007 onwards and will include Romania, Bulgaria and possibly Croatia, while negotiations are ongoing about the candidature of Turkey.

The enlargement process will have a profound impact on the economic, political and social structures of the countries that are already members of the EU, of those that will be new members, of those that wish to remain outside the EU and of those that will find themselves on the borders of the enlarged EU.

As of May 2004, the population of the EU will increase by 20% - adding some 74.8 million citizens to the current EU population of 378.7 million²²⁾. The combined GDP of the new Member States represents (at 403.9 billion €) 5% of the EU 15 total (8,827 billion €). The aggregate share of employment in agriculture - 13.3% - is triple the EU 15 average (4.3%). 79% of Foreign Direct Investment in the New Member States came from the EU in the year 2000 - but this only amounts to 6% of the EU 15 Foreign Direct Investment.

There are profound changes in the demographic structure of the European population. An increasingly ageing population, rising unemployment and lack of job security place mounting demands on social structures, systems and services - such as pensions, healthcare, home-care, unemployment benefits and adequate housing.

22) Data from EUROSTAT, Key Structural Data for the Acceding Countries, December 2003.
Website: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/Public/datshop/print-product>

At the same time, countries are facing retrenchment of the provisions of the welfare state.

There are thus increasingly fewer economically active people who have to finance progressively more social services for those who are not active on the labour market or who are excluded from it. To date, Europe appears unable adequately to reform the social structures, systems and services that are designed to meet these needs. According to the European Commission in December 2003, more than 55 million people - including one child in five - remain at risk of poverty in the current 15 EU Member States.

A further challenge is the access to and the quality of such social services. Lone parent families and large families with children are especially vulnerable. Not only do they have fewer options to escape the poverty trap but they are often restricted in their access to the social services that are available. Finally, the quality of the social services that can be accessed by the most vulnerable groups is suffering from a lack of adequate resources.

Another important development in the EU context is the Lisbon Strategy. Adopted by the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000, this ten-year strategy is designed to create a Europe "to become the most competitive and dynamic, knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth and more and better jobs and greater social cohesion". This strategy covers a wide range of policy issues, including key questions of education, training and life-long learning; employment, health, pensions, a social policy agenda and social inclusion policies. However, as with the Millennium Development Goals the success or otherwise of this key strategy hinges on the political will (and thence the necessary financial means) of Europe's political leaders to implement it.

2. The new neighbours to the East and Southeast of the EU

Through the EU enlargement process, the EU borders will shift to the East and Southeast and thus a number of countries will enter into a new relationship with the EU. Despite a greater proximity to the EU, the people of these countries risk being more cut off from their new EU neighbours as a result of stricter border controls.

This could have a significant negative effect on the border trade between the New Border Countries and the new EU Member States and which at present forms an important source of income for both regions. Seasonal workers will experience difficulty in continuing their practice of finding work abroad. New policies are needed to facilitate the continuation of a flourishing border trade and to keep opportunities for seasonal migration open. Greater isolation, coupled with increased poverty and continued failure to undertake structural reform, may well result in an increase in the appalling phenomenon of human trafficking and smuggling.

In these countries to the East and the Southeast of the EU, the real unemployment rate is extremely high as a result of rapid economic restructuring after the collapse of communist regimes. The large-scale closure of businesses and outmoded industries has produced widespread unemployment. The agricultural sector - principally subsistence farming - has been hard hit by the globalisation process. There are thus large numbers of people with wage arrears and unpaid forced leave, who try to find solutions in the shadow or grey economy.

This shadow sector is increasingly large and those who work in it have no job security and no access to social benefits. This large sector has a significant negative impact on the social system since it narrows the nation's tax base. Apart from this shadow sector "solution", there is little prospect, in the short term, to ease unemployment and poverty. The migration of workers to neighbouring old or new EU Member States offers an apparent solution for a many families. Interlinked unemployment and poverty shapes their decision to build a new life elsewhere.

Similarly linked to poverty is the explosive spread of HIV/AIDS and related illnesses - such as tuberculosis and hepatitis - in Eastern Europe. Whilst southern Africa remains the epicentre of the AIDS pandemic, the incidence of HIV/AIDS in eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union is growing exponentially. Precise figures are hard to come by since governments tend to underplay the issue. In addition, authorities still tend to view HIV/AIDS purely as a public health issue rather than seeing it in its wider perspective as an illness which affects all aspects and strata of society.

3. Migration and the Free Movement of People to and within Europe

The prospect of increasing migration as a result of the EU enlargement is frequently seen as a threat, particularly in the richer countries of the EU. This misconception, fuelled by an uninformed media, is exploited by unscrupulous politicians who - in time-honoured fashion - use the presence and prospect of migrants as a scapegoat for all of Europe's social ills. The danger of a "fortress Europe" persists and with it the creation of a new iron curtain between those within the EU and those on the continent who are outside this configuration.

Caritas Europa carried out its own study of this issue which was published in 2003: *EU Enlargement: Towards An Equitable Europe*²³⁾. This study found that, whilst migration is likely to increase with enlargement, all the indications are that this increase will be a modest one and will be short term, falling in direct correlation to the increasing economic benefits which enlargement will bring. Far from posing a threat, migration from New Member States and New Border Countries is needed to meet the EU's labour and skills shortages. The most critical element to beneficial migration is to put in place migration policies that maximise the benefits and minimise any potential disruption - either in the host countries or in the countries of origin. Sound policies, backed up by appropriate legislation, will avert both a flood of unskilled workers into the EU at one end of the spectrum and a disastrous brain drain of highly qualified workers away from the poorer countries of Europe at the other.

Special care and attention is needed for those who migrate to Europe or within Europe as refugees or in order to seek asylum. Key political challenges are safeguarding the access to quality asylum procedures in order to offer due protection to those in need of it, and tackling the root causes of forced migration.

Crucial to a successful migration strategy is to ensure a welcoming environment to facilitate the integration of migrants into the host society; respect for social, cultural, political and religious differences; and, above all, formulating humane policies which respect the dignity of each and every individual. Such policies are necessary to avoid tensions and xenophobia. Particularly important is to avoid the danger of an increase in the illegal trafficking of people. Certainly penalties need to be imposed on those profiteering from this modern slave trade

23) Caritas Europa, rue de Pascale, 1040 Brussels. Website: www.caritas-europa.org

and who capitalise on human misery and despair. However, in order to deal with the root of the problem, positive measures - such as creating legal paths to employment, helping those who find themselves in an irregular situation, issuing long term visas to facilitate existing cross-border trade - is the overriding priority.

Part V. Conclusions

The picture of human poverty, exclusion, misery and suffering remains a bleak one. Increasingly globalisation is taking place at the pace and direction of the rich countries to the detriment of the poor. And, ironically, the engine of globalisation - new technology - risks widening the chasm between the haves and the have-nots.

Yet, whilst there is no room for complacency, there are also real signs of hope. Whilst in many countries of the world, there is deepening disillusion with the political process, the desire for democracy and justice is becoming ever stronger. And this process has been aided by the new technology which has enabled co-ordinated global responses to particular situations.

The global protests against the war in Iraq - on a scale unrivalled in decades - is a prime example. Civil society is using the new technology to co-ordinate responses in an unprecedented way and is able to organise such fora as the World Social Forum and the European Social Forum. Ordinary consumers are increasingly conscious about the food and other goods that they buy and are using their purchasing power in favour of fairly traded products.

Whilst politicians and the media focus all their attention on international terrorism and national security, many are voicing concerns that this preoccupation is taking precedence over civil rights. And increasing numbers of people, particularly young people, are politically aware and concerned about the plight of the planet and there is growing recognition that real security for the world lies in tackling the twin evils of poverty and injustice.

The growing awareness, recognition and renewed democratic consciousness among people of good will of all faiths, especially among the younger generations, provide unparalleled opportunities for Caritas in Europe to encourage and mobilise the forces of good will, in order to foster the goal expressed by the title of this strategic plan: To live solidarity and partnership in Europe and in the world.



Chapter 4.

Analysis of the internal environment

This chapter is largely based on the results of the analysis of the strengths, qualities, weaknesses and internal challenges that was conducted in the process of reviewing the first strategic plan and in preparing this strategic plan.

1. Strengths as a result of the identity of Caritas Europa

Caritas Europa is part of the Caritas Internationalis Confederation, a network that spans the globe. Caritas member organisations are present and active in every country in Europe, with well developed, locally based structures that are working with the poor at grass roots level. In this respect the network of Caritas Europa is one of the major European networks of social welfare organisations. Representing the European region of Caritas Internationalis is the principal strength of Caritas Europa.

In the member organisations, large numbers of volunteers are working side by side with professional staff to contribute to the work with and for the poor and the excluded. This vast pool of human resources constitutes a considerable wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience that is potentially available to the network.

Because of its identity as a network of faith-based organisations, Caritas Europa and its member organisations generally enjoy valuable recognition, a good reputation and substantial respect as serious and reliable partners within civil society and as major actors in the provision of social welfare services, assistance to immigrants, humanitarian relief and recovery aid wherever major emergencies occur, and the provision of development cooperation in the South.

The commonality of vision and mission of the member organisations provides a unique opportunity for shared analysis and concomitant coherence in action. This strength is especially relevant for the lobbying and advocacy mission that Caritas Europa seeks to fulfil.

Through the instrument of Caritas Europa, the member organisations work together on a European agenda and on European issues. This fosters increasing partnership and close cooperation between the members of the network on the major challenges facing Europe.

Through their action in these fields and through cooperation with other faith-based organisations, Caritas Europa and its member organisations contribute to inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue, especially through joint action.

2. Strengths with regard to the specific structures of Caritas Europa

Caritas Europa has clearly defined governing structures, with the Regional Conference determining the overall direction of the European network and with the democratically elected Executive Board exercising the executive leadership.

In implementing the first strategic plan *Shaping Europe's Future* (Kaunas, 1998), Caritas Europa has created working structures (Commissions, Working Groups, Task Forces etc) in order to further the Caritas Europa mission, vision, goals and objectives. Each of these structures works under clear Terms of Reference that identify the mandate of the structure, its composition, the frequency of its meetings and the objectives of the structure.

The members of these working structures represent the specific expertise and experience of the member organisations in the different fields of action and thus provide access by Caritas Europa to the wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience in the network

The Executive Board elects the members of the working structures based on proposals by the member organisations, whilst also taking into account a proper representation of the diversity of the overall membership.

In the case of forum groups, such as the Intra-European Coordination groups (IEC), the Migration Forum, and the Emergency Forum, the Executive Board elects the leadership of these structures, with participation in forum meetings open to all.

Parallel to the above working structures, Caritas Europa has also put in place the necessary professional structures, offices and staff, in order to adequately support the work of the member organisations and that of the working structures. The Secretariat, with offices in Brussels and Prague, is the lynch pin of the Caritas Europa network and between it and Caritas Internationalis and its other regions, other organisations with whom Caritas Europa works, and the outside world at large. The staffing level of the Secretariat is relatively small, considering the overall size of the European network. Each member of staff has a clear job description.

In order to be present, visible and audible in all relevant European institutions, Caritas Europa has appointed and mandated permanent delegates at the Council of Europe (CoE) in Strasbourg and at the Office for Democracy and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Warsaw. The Caritas Europa Secretariat in Brussels is charged with representing Caritas Europa at the level of the EU institutions (Council, Parliament and Commission)

As a result of the synergy between the governing structures, the working structures and the professional structures, there has been a considerable improvement in the professionalism of the organisation and in the quality and transparency of its work.

3. Strengths as a result of networking by Caritas Europa

Caritas Europa maintains close contacts with a number of Church institutions at the European level, such as the *Consilium Conferentiarum Episcoporum Europae* (CCEE), the Commission of the Bishops Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) and the Justice and Peace Commissions.

In addition to these links with the institutions of the Catholic Church in Europe, Caritas Europa continues to pursue alliances, cooperation and partnership with other organisations and institutions wherever and whenever this is considered appropriate and beneficial for the mission of Caritas Europa.

Important examples are :

- In the field of international cooperation and development, a strategic partnership has been forged and is continuously intensified with CIDSE (International Cooperation for Development & Solidarity), which, inter alia, is manifested in a joint project on monitoring and influencing EU development policies, EU co-financing mechanisms and the role of the private sector in development, using the facilities of an officer who represents and works for both networks. In addition, there is a continuous exchange of information and increasing consultation and coordination between the relevant structures of CIDSE and Caritas Europa. Equally, in the field of international cooperation and development, Caritas Europa is a member of CONCORD (Confederation of Relief and Development NGOs) and is active in many of the working groups and thematic groups of this Confederation that maintains a structured dialogue with the EU institutions on issues related to humanitarian relief and development.
- In the field of fighting poverty and social exclusion in Europe and the provision of quality and accessible social services, Caritas Europa actively participates in the work of the Platform of European Social NGOs (Social Platform) and is strengthening its cooperation with the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN). With regard to social inclusion, a growing ecumenical cooperation exists with Eurodiaconia. There is also close cooperation with the COMECE in this area.
- In the field of advocacy on migration issues, Caritas Europa is a leading partner in an ecumenical alliance of Christian organisations that also includes the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME), the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), the Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS), the Quakers' Council of European Affairs (QCEA) and COMECE. Additionally, there is a strong cooperation between Caritas Europa and organisations such as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE).

4. Positive achievements under the first strategic plan

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Among the positive achievements under the first strategic plan, the following are noteworthy :

- Caritas Europa has produced, published and distributed a number of major policy and advocacy documents and reports, most notably (in chronological order) :
 - ◆ The 2001 report on the Caritas Europa mission to Iraq "A People Sanctioned"
 - ◆ The 2002 Poverty Report "Poverty in Europe"
 - ◆ The 2002 Discussion Paper "Military forces supporting humanitarian operations: defining the most appropriate relationship for member agencies of Caritas Internationalis".
 - ◆ The 2003 joint CIDSE/Caritas Europa/Pax Christi position paper "From Cairo to Lisbon: The EU and Africa Working Together for a New Partnership"
 - ◆ The 2003 EU Enlargement Report "Towards an Equitable Europe"
 - ◆ The 2004 Poverty Report "Poverty Has Faces in Europe: The Need for Family Oriented Policies"
 - ◆ The 2004 Position Paper on the Integration of Migrants and Refugees "Integration. A Process Involving All" and the accompanying advocacy document.
- Caritas Europa has established a strong reputation as a competent and serious political actor and advocate in all the major fields of its activities, but most notably in the area of migration, asylum and refugees and in the area of social inclusion and access to quality social services.
- In close cooperation with its member organisations and with its ecumenical and other partners, Caritas Europa has taken a leading role in the issue of anti-trafficking, with emphasis on the fight against trafficking in women. Particularly notable in this regard is the formal adoption within Caritas Europa of the COATNET (Christian Organisations Against Trafficking in women NETWORK) project.

- Caritas Europa member organisations make a considerable contribution to the Caritas Internationalis response to major emergencies around the world. There is a growing level of coordination and cooperation between European member organisations in this field, expressed in a Caritas Europa Emergency Manual. There are strong links and close consultation with major institutional donors, first and foremost with ECHO (European Commission Humanitarian Office) and there are currently 12 Caritas Europa member organisations that have recently signed a Framework Partnership Agreement with ECHO.
- As of 2002, Caritas Europa has successfully introduced – as part of its Capacity Building Framework – the Strategic Organisational Development Approach (SODA), a process and methodology to assist Caritas Europa member organisations in assessing the evolution of their organisational development and in fostering long term strategic planning.
- Through its capacity building function, Caritas Europa offers to its member organisations a broad selection of training and courses, responding to the needs expressed from within the membership.
- The European Solidarity Fund continues to be a multilateral, solidarity based, financial mechanism that provides structural funding support to member organisations in need of such support.
- There is a considerable improvement in the professionalism of the communications function in Caritas Europa, manifested by a communications strategy, a professional website, a clearly defined house style and design of external publications, well established press contacts and a steady flow of press releases.

5. Challenges with regard to the network, structures and financing

Notwithstanding the qualities, strengths and achievements highlighted in the previous subchapters, there still is room for improvement with regard to the internal structures of Caritas Europa. The following internal challenges need to be addressed in the framework of this strategic plan.

- The diversity of the members of the network not only constitutes one of its greatest strengths, but also poses challenges. Some member organisations have a predominantly domestic focus whilst others have a predominantly international focus. Also the cultural differences between the member organisations and the differences in their overall capacities need to be taken into account. Finally, the linguistic diversity of the network poses a serious challenge to the cohesion of the actions undertaken by Caritas Europa. It remains a constant challenge to ensure that no member in the network feels marginalised because of any of these organisational, cultural or linguistic diversities.
- The working structures do not sufficiently reflect the geographical, cultural and linguistic diversity of our European network. Again, it remains a challenge to ensure that all member organisations are offered maximum opportunities to participate actively in the work of Caritas Europa through involvement in the working structures.
- Against this background, in some areas of work, there is still a lack of coordination and cooperation within the network and, in some areas, there may even be competition between individual member organisations. It is an important challenge for Caritas Europa to foster the sense of solidarity and partnership among its member organisations and to raise awareness throughout the network about the realities of specific member organisations and their activities.
- member organisations face the challenge of demonstrating more clearly their ownership of, and their participation in, the work of Caritas Europa by providing timely and adequate input, feedback, resources and financing that the network requires in order to function properly.
- At the same time, there is the financial challenge that budgetary constraints are affecting Caritas Europa member organisations due to a decrease in private funding and/or due to restrictions placed on the use of publicly acquired funding.

Special attention therefore needs to be paid to the establishment of sustainable financial structures and mechanisms to finance the network function of Caritas Europa. The current system of designing and funding budgets for Caritas Europa need to be reassessed and redesigned.

- The schedule of meetings of Caritas Europa's working structures consumes time, energy and money and it is an important challenge to justify the use of these valuable resources by the concrete output and impact that is generated.
- The link between structural development and capacity building mechanisms and the structural finance support mechanisms is not sufficiently clearly defined and must be addressed. There is also a need to develop and improve policies, mechanisms and procedures to provide, through the intervention of Caritas Europa, solidarity assistance and support to individual member organisations that are facing specific difficulties.
- There is an absence of adequate evaluation processes of the Caritas Europa work, such as mid term review of strategic and work plans, with an evaluation of output and impact, based on objectively verifiable indicators.
- Increasingly, Caritas Europa member organisations also have to comply with contemporary requirements of quality assurance and management of their organisations. Caritas Europa must provide a structured and integrated approach and services throughout the network in this respect.
- The cooperation with other regions of Caritas Internationalis needs to be improved. The Caritas Europa structures that have been set up to deal with issues relating to the other CI regions, such as the IEC structures, should ensure more active involvement and participation from within these regions. Caritas Europa should also take more initiatives to develop trans-regional cooperation projects and programmes in the different areas of its activities.

6. Challenges with regard to Communications

Communications within the network are not lacking in quantity and volume, but they are (still) lacking in efficiency and effectiveness. Caritas Europa has developed, in 2000-2001, a Communications Strategy, but this strategy needs to be reviewed and – where necessary – updated in order to reflect the current reality.

In the framework of this review of the communications strategy, due regard should be given to fostering and promoting the use of modern communications technology as a tool to improve the communications and the exchange of information in the network. In this context, the development of a professional extranet should be considered. In the cost-benefit analysis of establishing such a system due account should be given to the time and cost saving potential of such an instrument.

There is, as yet, insufficient 'horizontal' linking of action, sharing of information and dialogue with regard to the different issues that are dealt with by various Caritas Europa working structures. The Caritas Europa communications function should study this 'horizontal' linkage and develop responses to this need.

Effective communications are the cornerstone of the functioning of a network such as Caritas Europa. It is one of the functions of Caritas Europa to raise awareness amongst all its members of important developments, both inside and outside the network, and to seek their input and participation in responding to these developments. This requires a well-defined code of conduct with regard to communications, with clear guidelines on how and when to communicate and how and when to respond to these communications.

Some members from non-EU countries observe that the communications of Caritas Europa tend to be too much EU-focused, in terms of both language/terminology used and from a thematic point of view. This issue needs to be at the forefront the communications considerations within Caritas Europa.

7. Challenges with regard to advocacy

In spite of the growing reputation that Caritas Europa enjoys as a recognised and respected advocate in the fields of social issues, migration, humanitarian aid, international justice and development and the role of civil society in Europe, it does not sufficiently tap into the wealth of knowledge and experience that is available at grass roots level. Yet it is this vast knowledge and experience that constitutes the specificity and added value of Caritas Europa. One of the major challenges for Caritas Europa is therefore to ensure that the action at the grass roots level of the member organisations feeds into its political reflection and that this reflection, in turn, feeds into the activities carried out in the field.

There are considerable differences in the advocacy capacity, experience and expertise of the Caritas Europa member organisations. Some member organisations are as yet not oriented towards lobbying and advocacy. Yet successful advocacy requires coherent policies, strategies and – most of all – coordinated action at regional, national and European levels. There is thus an important challenge for Caritas Europa to enhance the capacities of its member organisations with regard to advocacy in order to enable and strengthen coherent and coordinated action.

A specific challenge lies in the division of tasks and responsibilities between Caritas Internationalis and Caritas Europa. There needs to be close consultation between the regional and the international bodies to avoid duplication and ensure coherence, coordination and efficiency.

Caritas Europa uses the services of permanent delegates at major European institutions outside Brussels, but needs to ensure that there is a continuous involvement and participation of these delegates in the design and implementation of the advocacy agenda and strategy of Caritas Europa in all major areas of work.

8. Challenges with regard to the professional structures

The staff formation of Caritas Europa currently consists of 14 persons. The distribution of their location is 9 in Brussels/Belgium, 2 in Prague/Czech Republic, 1 in Kiev/Ukraine, 1 in Lublin/Poland and 1 at the CIDSE office. The team consists of 10 women and 4 men. Caritas Europa directly employs 6 staff members, while 7 staff members are on short or long-term secondment by member organisations and 1 staff member is employed by CIDSE. The 14-person team is made up of people of 8 different nationalities.

This diversity in nationality, contract type, location and secondment status of the staff members of Caritas Europa poses many management challenges. One of the most immediate of these challenges is the need to develop a clear human resources policy, which should be transparent and comprehensive, covering all aspects of working for Caritas Europa, including the ones described below.

The Secretariat of Caritas Europa faces some specific challenges. Staff development policy needs to provide a balance between people who are directly employed by Caritas Europa and people who have been seconded to Caritas Europa from the member organisations. Among the staff members, there are those who have contracts for an indefinite period of time and those who have contracts for a limited period of time (ranging from 1 year to 4 years).

It is a challenge to identify suitable and qualified staff members to join Caritas Europa on basis of a secondment by the member organisations. Yet such secondments are potentially very valuable to both the member organisation in question and to Caritas Europa.

Although most functions of the Secretariat are carried out in Brussels, part of the Secretariat is decentralised, for instance the Capacity Building Office that is hosted by Czech Caritas in Prague. But in a recent trend, other functions of the Caritas Europa Secretariat also take place more and more in decentralised locations. As an example, the coordinating officer of the COATNET project is hosted by Caritas Ukraine and works from Kiev. Similarly, Caritas Poland hosts an assistant to the Migration Officer, who works for Caritas Europa from her base in Lublin. The joint officer of CIDSE and Caritas Europa on EU development policies and co-financing works from the CIDSE Secretariat.

Chapter 5.

The Strategic Framework

On the one hand, such a decentralised way of working offers considerable benefits. More member organisations have – at least potentially – the opportunity to 'second' a member of their staff to Caritas Europa, without all the ensuing complexities of this person having to move to Brussels, obtain residence and work permits, find temporary accommodation, cope with differences in salary and cost of living levels, dealing with cultural and linguistic differences etc. Another potential benefit is the cost factor: well trained and experienced staff working from their home base, may offer a considerable increase in capacity without the concomitant increase in expenses.

On the other hand, there are limitations and disadvantages to such a decentralised way of working – not least the specific management and supervision challenges for the responsible persons in the Secretariat in Brussels. Good teamwork also benefits greatly from continuous and spontaneous dialogue and exchange between team members and this is increasingly difficult if too large a portion of the total team is spread out over Europe.

1. Overview of the structure of the strategic framework

The Caritas Europa strategic plan for 2005-2010 is based on a strategic framework.

- This framework first of all defines the main priorities. These priorities describe the issues and areas of concern that will be of central priority in the work of Caritas Europa during the new strategic period.
- Under each of these priorities a number of goals for the period 2005 – 2010 have been established. They describe the overall results that Caritas Europa wishes to accomplish during the strategic period 2005-2010 within these priority areas.

In designing the goals and objectives for each priority, due consideration has been given to the core network functions that Caritas Europa can provide to its membership. It is in these core network functions that Caritas Europa could and should add value to the work of its member organisations. These core network functions support the realisation of goals and objectives of this strategic plan, often cutting across the priorities. Together, they form a separate priority.

Through this strategic framework set-up, Caritas Europa aims to provide the answers to the following basic questions raised by the analysis of the external and internal environments :

- What are the priority issues and areas of concern that Caritas Europa will focus on in the period 2005-2010?
- What are the goals that Caritas Europa wishes to accomplish with regard to these priorities in the period 2005-2010?

In this respect, it should be noted that the priorities and the goals are considered to be constant factors governing the work plans of Caritas Europa and its structures during the period covered by this strategic plan.

In the terminology of this strategic plan, the term "Caritas Europa" should be interpreted to include :

- The Caritas Europa member organisations inasmuch as they operate jointly and under a shared mandate across the borders of their own organisation, in furthering common policies, activities and interests on a European and global level
- The Caritas Europa governing structures (Regional Conference and Executive Board)
- The Caritas Europa working structures (Commissions, Working Groups, Task Forces and other working structures, made up of experts representing the member organisations)
- The Caritas Europa Secretariat (A general Secretariat in Brussels, with satellite offices and functions elsewhere, serving the members by facilitating communication and coordination and contributing to the realisation of the strategic plan)

The totality of Caritas Europa, as described above, therefore forms the instrument owned and used by European Caritas organisations in their joint realisation of this strategic plan.

2. From strategic framework to implementation

Priorities and goals for the period 2005-2010 have been set through a participatory process, involving the member organisations, the current working structures, the governing structures and the professional structures and bringing the specific expertise and experience of each of these groups to bear.

These priorities and goals have been defined on the basis of an analysis of the external and internal environments, paying particular attention to perceived challenges. They will feed directly into the annual work plans and budget proposals of Caritas Europa and its working and professional structures in the period 2005-2010.

Chapter 6. Priorities and Goals for the strategic period 2005-2010

1.



Priority I :

Social Inclusion and Social Cohesion

Caritas Europa encourages a spirit of partnership with and accompaniment of people experiencing poverty or exclusion through listening to them, discussing their concerns and jointly designing and delivering adequate responses.

Based on this partnership, Caritas Europa works towards poverty eradication and social exclusion through the development and implementation of a comprehensive social policy framework and through fostering the principles of participatory democracy and civil dialogue.

Caritas Europa promotes the quality and the sustainability of social and health protection, at the level of protection systems as well as at the level of service provision.

Goals 2005-2010:

- Goal 1: To develop and implement a comprehensive and coherent social policy framework that is structured around social policy themes that address the needs and rights of people experiencing poverty and/or exclusion and that is agreed upon within the network.
- Goal 2: To promote a dialogue and exchange with and between people experiencing poverty and exclusion in order to reflect with them, to learn together, to identify relevant concerns and to jointly design and deliver adequate responses to their situations; to foster and encourage a sense of community building; to bring people's needs to the fore and to guarantee their rights.
- Goal 3: To lobby and advocate at national and at European levels on issues of the sustainability of social and health protection systems in European countries.
- Goal 4: To promote the provision of accessible, affordable, suitable and quality social services throughout Europe, recognizing and respecting the plurality of the providers.
- Goal 5: To work towards social justice by defending the access of all people to protection and to services.
- Goal 6: To ensure that the Caritas network in Europe promotes sustainable development and contributes to economic and social inclusion and cohesion.
- Goal 7: To monitor the EU Agenda with regard to social inclusion and social cohesion and to influence EU policies and financial instruments.
- Goal 8: To be a relevant and recognised actor and contributor in the development of participatory democracy and to achieve the profile of a major player in the dialogue with civil society.

2.



Priority II:

Migration, asylum, anti-trafficking and integration

Caritas Europa promotes a welcoming and inclusive environment for migrants, works towards a fair, dignified and humane treatment of immigrants, undocumented migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Europe and around the world.

Caritas Europa promotes effective protection for people in need and combats trafficking in human beings and forced displacement of people, taking full account of the situation in both the countries of origin and the countries of destination.

Goals 2005-2010:

- Goal 1: To ensure that Caritas Europa member organisations achieve a professional and comprehensive approach in their migration work.
- Goal 2: To encourage member organisations to provide services to migrants covering all their needs and defending their rights.
- Goal 3: To increase cooperation between member organisations working on migration, paying particular attention to the migration work by member organisations in European countries outside the EU.
- Goal 4: To monitor and influence European migration and asylum policy, particularly that of the EU, and to take into consideration its impact on policy developments of third countries.
- Goal 5: To build and expand effective partnerships and alliances with other actors in the specific fields of migration and anti-trafficking.
- Goal 6: To contribute to achieving a cohesive strategy on Forced Migration and Anti-trafficking within the Caritas Internationalis Confederation.

3.



Priority III : Major emergencies around the world

Caritas Europa responds rapidly, visibly, professionally and effectively to major emergencies worldwide, addressing both the immediate survival and the recovery needs of those affected, as part of a sustainable, value driven and quality Caritas Internationalis response strategy.

As part of that global strategy, Caritas Europa contributes to disaster prevention and to disaster preparedness.

Goals 2005-2010:

- Goal 1: To improve the quality of the Caritas Europa response to emergencies through learning.
- Goal 2: To improve the performance of Caritas Europa and the cooperation of member organisations in responding to major emergencies.
- Goal 3: To build on and strengthen the Caritas Europa contribution to the Caritas Internationalis emergency strategy.
- Goal 4: To improve the global emergency response capacity.
- Goal 5: To strengthen communication and visibility during the response to major emergencies.
- Goal 6: To create coherent policies and relevant advocacy positions with regard to humanitarian emergency response and to disaster prevention and disaster preparedness.

4.



Priority IV : International Development and Peace

Caritas Europa contributes towards the eradication of poverty; promotes sustainable development, peace building, and human rights; and challenges the structures of injustice and inequality throughout the world.

Goals 2005-2010:

- Goal 1: To develop and enhance partnerships between Europe and other regions of the world; and strengthen the coordination between member organisations with regard to partnership.
- Goal 2: To campaign in Europe for a more just world.
- Goal 3: To foster commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a major charter for humanity, reflecting the fundamental option for the poor of Caritas Europa.
- Goal 4: To act within the networks of European civil society that promote development and peace and challenge the divide between rich and poor countries around the world and seek to strengthen the link between Caritas Europa and Caritas Internationalis and with other international agencies.
- Goal 5: To increase Caritas Europa profile vis-à-vis the EU in its work on international development, justice and peace.
- Goal 6: To promote and create awareness on issues of peace and reconciliation.

5. Priority V : Support to Member Organisations and internal networking

Responding to the needs and requests of its member organisations, Caritas Europa develops a coherent approach towards increasing the sense of ownership and the joint commitment within the network.

Included in this approach are development and strengthening of all its organisations and all its structures, promotion of good governance and quality management principles, building of capacity within member organisations and other structures, administering a solidarity funding mechanism and fostering the intra-European coordination of projects and programmes.

Goals 2005-2010:

- Goal 1: To increase the level of ownership and commitment by the member organisations of the Caritas Europa objectives.
- Goal 2: To promote and put into practice good governance, quality management and transparency, both at the level of the Caritas Europa network and at the level of individual member organisations.
- Goal 3: To promote and support, where necessary, an active member organisation in every country of the European region of Caritas Internationalis.
- Goal 4: To study and implement fundraising from potential donors in public sectors on the international level in order to be able to organise and sustain common activities.
- Goal 5: To strengthen member organisations so that they are more able to fulfil their role within their own country and to become increasingly effective member organisations of Caritas Europa and Caritas Internationalis.
- Goal 6: To enhance the sharing of information and best practice and to improve the quality of programmes through learning processes.

6. Priority VI : Advocacy, Communications, External networking, Theological Reflection and Action

Caritas Europa provides a number of general services to the membership that support and cut across the previously described main priority areas. They are the core network functions through which Caritas Europa adds value to the work of its members.

1. Advocacy

Caritas Europa facilitates effective and appropriate advocacy on the issues at the core of the strategic plan, striving to shape public policies in the areas of Caritas Europa competence.

Caritas Europa bases its advocacy work firmly on the practical Caritas experience of the member organisations and feeds back, through the capillary network, these advocacy positions to the level of the practical Caritas work with the poor.

Goals 2005-2010:

- Goal 1: To create and implement an advocacy strategy.
- Goal 2: To build advocacy capacity and expertise.

2. Communications

Caritas Europa facilitates communications, meetings and exchange of information, best practices and internal policies within the Caritas Europa network.

Caritas Europa facilitates communications and exchange with external audiences with special emphasis on decision-making bodies and the media in order to bear witness of the Caritas work with the poor and to give emphasis to Caritas positions.

