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CALL Network urges Churches in Europe to support European solidarity more actively

11-13 May 2011, Bucharest

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At its assembly in Bucharest on 11-13 May 2011, CALL – (Church Action on Labour and Life, the European Christian Employment and Economy Network) urged the churches in Europe to support more actively common European policies that promote an economy which leads to abundance of life for all citizens of Europe.

Europe is in a difficult situation in which the future of a European common purpose is at stake. We ask our churches actively to seek for a Europe which demonstrates solidarity and counters nationalistic and socially divisive tendencies in all European countries as churches promote a Christian perspective in the debates on economic, social and ecological policies in Europe.

During the CALL Network's second Assembly in Bucharest on 11-13 May, members discussed the increasing and more widespread problems of precarious work; the need for an economically, socially and ecologically sustainable economy; work/life balance, including Sunday protection; and the role of religion in the workplace in Europe. They also expressed a specific concern about growing tendencies in EU Member States to break the principle of solidarity within the European Union, for example by a differentiated approach to financial assistance for Member States. They believe that Europe will only overcome the ongoing economic crisis if it looks for joint solutions, sharing the burdens in accordance with a vision for closer cooperation among the peoples of Europe leading towards greater empowerment for individuals and an expansion of social economies.

On 1 May 2011 the European Union took another important step towards the free movement of workers as access to the job market for all EU nationals is opened up in Germany and Austria. The CALL Network welcomes this move forwards towards the implementation of freedom of movement of workers in all EU Member States. It asks to develop a system of minimum wages to ultimately address the phenomenon of the working poor and ensure a living wage for all.

The CALL Network supports a better sharing of responsibilities, particularly within EU Member States, in relation to the refugees in the Mediterranean. Many churches in Europe have expressed their solidarity with the people fighting for freedom and democracy in the Arab countries. CALL members expect their churches equally to engage in the protection of refugees from bondage and civil war on the other shore of the Mediterranean. They call on the churches in Europe to demand that the gov-

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ernments in their respective countries put into practice their commitments to Euro-Mediterranean partnership in the Barcelona process.

When the European unification process started after the Second World War, many churches in Europe were at the forefront of the process of reconciliation and solidarity between different nations, people and cultures. In the same way, they supported the overcoming of the division between Eastern and Western Europe after the end of the Cold War. Today members of the CALL Network wish to see their churches once again standing up as pioneers of solidarity and unity in Europe.

Bucharest, May 2011

CALL- Church Action on Labour and Life (CALL) is a Christian Employment and Economic Network linked with the Church & Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches. It provides a platform to exchange views and experiences on employment and related economic issues. It seeks to bridge gaps between European societies, promote a Christian perspective in the European debates and build the capacity of European churches to act on these issues.

The CALL Assembly took place from 11-13 May in Bucharest with participants from Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

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