



## Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe

Commission des Eglises auprès des Migrants en Europe

Kommission der Kirchen für Migranten in Europa

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### CCME Press Release

## Refugee resettlement: Churches provide forum for exchange between government and civil society in Germany

An expert meeting on refugee resettlement held in Berlin on 14 May 2007 brought together some 35 participants from governmental institutions and civil society organisations in Germany. The meeting was organised by the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe with the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD).

The meeting was opened by Prelate Reimers, Plenipotentiary of the EKD to the German government and the EU, and Doris Peschke, General Secretary of CCME and focused on the prospects of Germany becoming a resettlement country. Representatives from two ministries gave an input, while two other ministries contributed to the debate. UNHCR provided background to the current debate and operations of resettlement. A representative of the UK Home Office gave an overview on the development of the UK resettlement programme, which was started in 2003.

The debate touched upon the political and humanitarian relevance of resettlement for global refugee protection, and upon more operational questions, such as the financing and implementation of resettlement programmes. The question of the prospects of a joint EU resettlement scheme was raised in view of the current German EU Council Presidency.

Diverging views were expressed about the need and potential benefit of Germany starting resettlement. Participants agreed that the debate provided a useful platform for mutual learning and exchange. Churches' representatives expressed the hope that Germany would join those EU countries providing for resettlement as one of the three durable solutions for refugee protection.

### **Note to editors:**

Refugee resettlement is the process by which refugees who have to flee their home country and find initial, but insufficient or temporary protection in another country, are resettled into a third country and find permanent protection and a durable, sustainable solution there. While around one hundred thousand refugees are annually resettled to the US, Canada and Australia, resettlement is since the 1970ies scarcely used in Europe: currently only six EU member states carry out resettlement, resettling around 3.500 refugees annually. Since 2004, the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe is actively promoting resettlement as an additional tool for refugee protection in Europe.

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The views expressed and information provided by the project and the partners involved do not necessarily reflect the point of view of the European Commission and do in no way fall under the responsibility of the European Commission.

The Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) is the ecumenical agency on migration and integration, asylum and refugees, and against racism and discrimination in Europe. Members are Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant Churches and Councils of Churches as well as church-related agencies across Europe. CCME formally cooperates with the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.