



Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe

Commission des Eglises auprès des Migrants en Europe

Kommission der Kirchen für Migranten in Europa

CCME Press Release

13 October 2008

CCME and CEC concerned about thousands of detained migrants in Europe

Churches also support demands of Austrian NGOs on right of residence for migrants

The 17th Assembly of the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) and the Central Committee of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), meeting in Paralimni, Cyprus from 8-11 and 6-11 October 2008 respectively, expressed their "deep concern about the thousands of migrants unjustly detained in Europe for not having the right documents". CCME and CEC declared their "solidarity and sympathy with the prison chaplains who face these situations of detainees daily with hardly any possibilities to change conditions and offer perspectives". They called on "churches across Europe to pray for detained migrants as well as for the prison chaplains and support their work".

The CCME Assembly also voted a resolution – endorsed by the CEC Central Committee – in support of the demands of Austrian non governmental organisations and Church organisations on the occasion of the national Right of Residence Day on 10 October 2008. They demanded "that legal provisions for regularisation in Austria be based on human rights legislation", "that those who have been in Austria for five years should be allowed to stay", and finally a change in migration policy: "The stringent and tortuous the legal migration provisions of 2005 must be abolished. We ask for human and reasonable policies, which respect the rule of law and human rights, and promote integration instead of preventing it".

CCME and CEC have agreed to integrate – see press release No. 0854 at <http://www.cec-kek.org/pdf/cq0854e.pdf>

The full text of the resolution on the Austrian Right of Residence Day is attached.

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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.

The Conference of European Churches (CEC) is a fellowship of some 120 Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican and Old Catholic Churches from all countries of Europe, plus 40 associated organisations. CEC was founded in 1959. It has offices in Geneva, Brussels and Strasbourg.