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VATICAN STRESSES “TRAGIC PLIGHT” OF REFUGEES

JRS EUROPE WELCOMES VATICAN'S CALL FOR COLLABORATION AND
CO-RESPONSIBILITY AMONGST GLOBAL COMMUNITY

“Around the globe, we observe that the tragic plight of forcibly uprooted people continues to weigh on the conscience of the human family. To a great degree, the international community seems to lack the will or ability to effectively address the suffering and vulnerability of such persons.”

Speaking to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva on Tuesday (Sept 29), HE Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See, condemned the deterioration of adherence of the principle of *non-refoulement* by European states and appealed for international collaboration and co-responsibility in order to deal with asylum requests fairly.

These comments come at a time when Italy continues push migrants back to Libya without a fair claim for asylum, and when the Dublin II regulation continues to put extraordinary pressure on asylum systems that are fundamentally flawed.

A demand was also made by the Archbishop that greater sensitivity be shown towards the needs of refugee families who deserve every opportunity to remain united and to unhindered enjoyment of family bonds and relationships.

“We cannot help but call attention to the increasing number of refugee and internally displaced children caught up in precarious situations — being lost or separated from relatives; enduring physical beatings, or even dying by suffocation when concealed in compartments or containers of trucks, trains, or boats; falling into the hands of human traffickers; being placed into detention, without recourse to other reasonable and compassionate alternatives.”

The Archbishop concluded his address by saying that a more comprehensive study of the relationship between forced migration and development is an avenue towards opportunities that will afford integral human development.

“We welcome such intervention at the highest level of the UNHCR. It stresses the important role that the Church continues to play, putting the needs and dignity of the person to the forefront in this ongoing dialogue”, said the Director of JRS Europe, Michael Schöpf SJ.

“JRS Europe continues to engage in the policy areas outlined by the Archbishop (externalisation, detention, destitution, migration and development), undertaking both national projects and pan-European research projects in order to bring field expertise to the European debate in Brussels”, continued Schöpf.

For more information on this topic contact:

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