



ASIA/SYRIA - Pax Christi International: Europe must not close its doors to Syrian refugees

Damascus (Agenzia Fides) - Pax Christi International urgently appeals to the government in Damascus and forces involved in the Syrian conflict so that the Country's borders are opened in order to allow humanitarian relief to reach the besieged population in areas ravaged by armed conflict.

In a statement sent to Fides Agency, Pax Christi International welcomes the statement of the "Geneva 2" Peace Conference which will be convened on 22 January, and believes that a negotiated political solution to the conflict is essential and urges the government of Syria and a broadly representative delegation from the Syrian opposition to move swiftly and with good will into that process. In view of Geneva 2, Pax Christi International calls on the urgent need for a ceasefire to ensure humanitarian access to the besieged areas before the negotiations begin.

In the statement, the organization expressed concern over reports of some European Union countries placing barriers to entry or forcibly returning asylum-seekers including people who have fled the conflict in Syria. Pax Christi International calls on all national and international authorities to ensure the Syrians who are fleeing the status of refugees. By placing barriers of any kind to them - warns Pax Christi - forces refugees to undertake dangerous crossings and places them at the mercy of smugglers. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 27/11/2013)