



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

World Service

member of **actalliance**

lutheranworld.org



“Together in Hope”

Declaration of Intent between Caritas Internationalis and The Lutheran World Federation – World Service

1. Preamble

Caritas Internationalis, created in 1951, is the social and justice arm of the Catholic Church. It is at the same time a confederation of 165 national organisations present in 200 countries and territories and a central entity of the Holy See. Serve, accompany and defend the poor: its mission is to promote a civilization of love, based on the social and other teachings of the Church and is developed around five central strategic orientations that are: Caritas at the heart of the Church; save lives and rebuild communities; promote sustainable integral human development; build global solidarity; make the Caritas Confederation more effective.

In its first orientation, an objective is to contribute to and promote a culture of partnership and ecumenical and interreligious cooperation.

The LWF has engaged with diakonia and service since its founding in 1947. World Service, the diaconal arm of the LWF, focuses especially on the needs of refugees and internally displaced people in humanitarian assistance, development aid and advocacy. The LWF is committed to working with other Christian World communions and faith-based organisations (FBOs) for broader reach and wider impact, aiming to empower and enable local populations through rights-based approaches.

Caritas Internationalis and the LWF World Service have worked together on several occasions during the past decades in many countries and regions addressing the root causes of poverty and humanitarian crises. Caritas member organisations have also cooperated with the LWF World Service.

On the occasion of the commemoration of the 500 years of the Reformation, the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church have taken further steps towards reconciliation and moved forward in the field of joint service to express and strengthen their commitment to the quest for unity. This is expressed in the Lutheran-Catholic study document “From Conflict to Communion”, in which the 5th ecumenical imperative calls for joint diaconal action. It says:

“Catholics and Lutherans should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world”. § 243 reads: “Ecumenical engagement for the unity of the Church does not serve only the Church but also the world so that the world may believe”.

The international community is also calling especially upon FBOs to engage actively in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals agenda, working towards the eradication of extreme poverty in a generation. In the Catholic world, there are various spaces of collective engagement (among which the Forum of Catholic Organisations) and in the broader Christian world, there is ACT Alliance, of which the LWF is a member and with which Caritas Internationalis has been linked for many years.

We believe that faith communities and the organisations with which they engage are uniquely placed to fight extreme poverty in all its dimensions. Not only because these communities are present around the world, but also because when trained, organised and accompanied, they are the best responders to disasters, the best promoters of integral sustainable human development, and the best advocates for their lives. What animates us is our faith and, in a secularized world, this makes a huge difference: courage, commitment, perseverance, taking risks, the belief that God is with us to confront evil and rebuild lives.

As two global Christian organisations working for human dignity and social justice, we decide to join hands. To bring hope. To witness and act together, without being exclusive. And to invite our members to engage with their counterparts and friends locally.

2. Purpose

The overall purpose of this Declaration of Intent is to consolidate and develop a mutually inspiring relationship beneficial to the people we serve, accompany and defend, based on shared values and vision regarding how our organisations can work together in the world today.

Caritas Internationalis and the LWF World Service will seek to expand and deepen their relationships and joint work at all levels. We will:

- look for opportunities
- commit to cooperate where appropriate
- engage in regular strategic discussions
- share learnings, challenges and opportunities
- ensure that members, staff and volunteers understand the Declaration of Intent and look to work together in harmony and collaboration

3. Areas for cooperation

The LWF World Service and Caritas Internationalis will work together in the following fields at global level:

- Refugees, internally displaced people and migrants
- Peace building and reconciliation
- Humanitarian preparedness and response
- Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals
- Interfaith action and programming

4. Concrete application mechanisms

Caritas Internationalis and the LWF World Service will:

- Engage in regular strategic discussions on issues agreed upon, with specific experts on board
- Engage in common programs whenever possible
- Invite our membership to cooperate and engage in joint programming at national/diocesan/local levels, in consultation with respective member organizations in donor countries when applicable, in those fields referred to above and more as identified locally, including capacity building, interfaith action, reinforcing local civil society.
- Meet annually to appreciate the work done and plan ahead.
- Communicate what we have achieved

Signed on the occasion of the Joint Ecumenical Commemoration of the Reformation,
In Lund, Sweden,
On 31 October 2016

For Caritas Internationalis

For LWF World Service

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