



JOINT DECLARATION

The Union of Superiors General (USG/UISG) and Caritas declare their commitment to work together and call on their members around the world to consolidate their collaboration in countering trafficking in human beings.

Introduction

Trafficking in human beings is seen as one of the worst affronts to human dignity and violations of human rights. The Unions of Superiors General (USG/UISG, representing more than a million religious men and women worldwide) and Caritas Internationalis (CI, with 162 Member Organizations active in over 200 countries and territories) have each, in their strategic plans, demonstrated their determination to oppose this 21st century form of global slavery. Both organisations see this as an opportune moment to declare their **commitment to work together** in this endeavour. It is also appropriate and timely to make a formal call on religious institutes of men and of women worldwide and on Caritas Internationalis and its member organizations to consolidate their collaboration in countering the trafficking of human beings.

An alliance between religious congregations and church based organisations will strengthen advocacy work in favour of trafficked persons and will broaden the range of resources for people engaged at the practical level in ministry to them. The alliance would work for the benefit of the victims of trafficking by enhancing the transnational channels of prevention and assistance accessible to them.

Complementary roles in a common commitment

Caritas Internationalis and the USG/UISG bring specific competences and resources to this alliance.

Caritas

Caritas Internationalis has identified four major areas for action against trafficking which are suited to its modes of action; prevention, assistance, advocacy and networking. It declares its commitment to work in these areas in its publication, "**The Caritas Internationalis Commitment on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**", and initiated the ecumenical **COATNET** network (Christian Organisations Against Trafficking) which has taken a global dimension.

USG/UISG

In the spirit of the Congress on Consecrated Life (2004), the JPIC Commission, working group against trafficking in women and children, acts on "*the care we have for one another that leads us to engage with the pain and suffering of our world with all its peoples and all of creation*". The USG/UISG is committed to bring to this partnership its special skills in education of the public through publications and public meetings, sharing its experience through the formation of field workers, and through pastoral care and rehabilitation of the victims.

We trust that this agreement between Caritas Internationalis and the USG/UISG will result in effective, mutually supportive action against the trafficking in human persons.

Rome, November 2007,

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President, USG

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