



PRESS RELEASE

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"Migrants' rights are European fundamental rights"

Conference reviews achievements, challenges, perspectives of Year of European Churches Responding to Migration

Representatives of churches from across Europe will meet in **Vienna 17th and 18th December 2010** to review achievements, challenges and future perspectives of the **Year of European Churches responding to migration 2010**. The conference, which on **18th December** commemorates **International Migrants Day**, will analyse contemporary achievements and challenges in the area of migrants' rights in Europe. At the same time it will highlight activities of churches from across Europe during the Year of European Churches responding to migration.

On 17th December the meeting will be opened by the **President of the Conference of European Churches, H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel of France**, and the **Moderator of the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, Rev. Arlington Trotman**, with reflections on how "migration is at the heart of the Churches' agenda in Europe".

On the same day the **Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights Morten Kjaerum** will present his assessment of migrants' rights as European fundamental rights. His input will be complemented by a presentation on the access of long-term resident migrants to permanent residence status – a central campaigning issue of the churches' migration year.

Participants from locations as diverse as Norway, Latvia, Romania or Italy will present how their respective churches have addressed the issue of migration and advocated for migrants' rights over the last 12 months.

On 18th December the meeting will discuss a set of recommendations for future work of European churches on the issue of migration. "With this conference we are not only underlining that migration is a key issue for churches in Europe, but also highlighting that migrants' rights cannot be separated from European fundamental rights", CCME General Secretary Doris Peschke commented.

Note to editors: The year of *European Churches responding to migration 2010* shall make visible the churches' commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible, which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and ethnic minority groups.

The event can be followed by live streaming on www.migration2010.eu on Friday 17 December 2010 from 15.00 – 19.00 h.

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Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe – Commission des Églises auprès des Migrants en Europe – Kommission der Kirchen für Migranten in Europa