



## PRESS RELEASE

### *Europe must open its eyes and act now*

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**At the beginning of the third week of April 2015, 400 migrants drowned in the Mediterranean Sea while attempting to flee poverty, war and insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. By the end of the same week, hundreds more are now feared drowned with reports surfacing of 700 men, women and children being lost as their boat capsized.**

On the eve of an extraordinary European Council meeting to address the unacceptable humanitarian disasters taking place repeatedly in the Mediterranean, Heather Roy, Secretary General of Eurodiaconia, urges EU Member States *"to stop closing their eyes to the loss of life at their common borders. The EU must provide organised legal ways of immigration, secured immigration routes, shared responsibility of treatment of asylum procedures among all EU member states and further support to social NGOs assisting and integrating EU migrants."* Read the letter sent today to EU Heads of State [here](#).

Davide Rosso, member of the supervisory board of Eurodiaconia and representative of the Italian organisation Diaconia Valdese which notably runs social activities to welcome and support migrants, argues: *"It is time that Europe changes its approach. We must recognise together as Europeans the value of all human lives and act at a European level to promote justice for all. We must act together as Europeans who welcome those in need. Europe has to organise specific humanitarian channels for asylum seekers so they can travel safely. This responsibility must be shared among EU countries because it is the only way to work in an efficient way. For this to happen, there needs to be political willingness!"*

Without ambitious and concrete action, the Mediterranean is doomed to remain the "cemetery of Europe" and Europe's key values of hospitality and assistance to the most vulnerable are doomed to drown with them.

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