

The Catalan Chapter of Mayors for Peace demands an immediate humanitarian response to the crisis in the Turkey-EU border

The Catalan Chapter of Mayors for Peace calls urgently on all parties concerned in the Turkey-EU border crisis to put an end to violence in the zone due to the present increased movements of several thousand people there – including refugees and asylum-seekers – and to refrain from any measures that might increase the suffering of vulnerable people. Authorities must ensure that asylum procedures are in full conformity with the law and fully cooperate to this end.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has stated in a statement that «Neither the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees nor EU refugee law provides any legal basis for the suspension of the reception of asylum applications».

In view of the above, the Chapter demands resources, capacity and solidarity from the European Union and the international community as well as an urgent action plan to contribute to tackle this situation and the humanitarian disaster unfolding in the northwest Syria, causing more than 950,000 displaced people in Idlib.

Syria is the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time. Since the beginning of the civil war 9 years ago, hundreds of thousands of Syrians have been killed or are missing and millions have escaped across borders, fleeing the bombs and bullets that have devastated their homes. According to UNHCR, at least 6.6 million Syrians are internally displaced, while another 5.6 million have fled abroad.

In present-day armed conflicts, civilians have become the objects of attack or the hostages of armed groups that use the civilian population and resort to terror and fear to achieve their aims. War is the manifestation of the worst forms of violence, and it has found its own place in urban environments. Cities play a key role in promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies, the right place to implement true democracy and build a culture of peaceful coexistence.

We stand together for peace, human rights and an end to violence in all its many forms.

(This statement of support and solidarity was agreed by members of the Catalan Chapter of Mayors for Peace)