



PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 16 March 2023

In a [statement](#) released on Thursday 16 March 2023, Catholic organisations call on the European Parliament to adopt a Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) marking “a true turning point in how the EU addresses the threats that corporate activities pose to our Human Family and Common Home”.

Given the on-going debate and upcoming vote on the directive in the Legal Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, the statement calls on MEPs to substantially improve the EU Commission’s proposal.

Once adopted, the Directive would impose an obligation on companies based and operating in the EU to prevent possible risks posed by their activities to human rights and the environment, both in Europe and abroad. The CSDDD would also require businesses to end and remediate those negative impacts.

Catholic organisations find that the proposed Directive is still marked by significant shortcomings that prevent the initiative from offering effective solutions to the mounting problem of corporate injustice.

“Our brothers and sisters in Europe and in the Global South will not be able to fully thrive on our beautiful planet if their livelihoods and rights are threatened by unregulated corporate activities”, states H.Em. Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich SJ, President of COMECE.

“EU lawmakers should rise to the occasion and enlarge the scope of human rights violations and environmental damage covered by the proposed law”, the Cardinal added, referring to the limited scope of rights covered in the EU Commission’s proposal.

“Communities in the Global South have been calling for corporate accountability in response to the destruction of their environment, the degradation of local ecosystems and the violation of their rights by multinational companies. Yet, the Commission’s proposal does little to offer credible avenues to justice to those affected. The non-reversal of the burden of proof, for example, makes the existing civil liability regime inaccessible for those affected”, said Josianne Gauthier, Secretary General of CIDSE.

The European Commission’s proposal also gives limited space for the consultation with affected stakeholders when companies perform their due diligence obligations.

“Those affected by corporate abuse are the ones who know best what the real impacts and risks of economic activities are; so their voice should be front and centre in the upcoming legislation” added Maria Nyman, Secretary General of Caritas Europa.

The [statement](#) has been issued by Caritas Europa, CIDSE, the Commission of Bishops’ Conferences of the European Union (COMECE), Don Bosco International, the European Laudato Si’ Alliance (ELSIA), the Jesuit European Social Centre, Justice and Peace Europe, Laudato Si’ Movement and Pax Christi International.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Alessandro Di Maio - Press Office Manager, COMECE

Email: alessandro.dimaio@comece.eu - Tel: +32 (0)2 235 05 15

Giorgio Gotra - Interim Communications Manager, CIDSE

Email: gotra@cidse.org - Tel: +32 (0)2 230 77 22

Susan Dabbous - Media Officer, Caritas Europa

Email: sdabbous@caritas.eu – Tel: +32 (0) 235 03 94

Mob: +32 (0)478 58 54 35

Sara Sechi – Executive Secretary, DBI

Email: dbi@sdb.org

Feblezi Huebi – Press Officer, JESC

Email: feblezi.huebi@jesc.eu