

## Statement: The Humanitarian Crisis in Afghanistan

Brussels 27 August 2021

This statement is shared on behalf of EU-CORD members, several of whom have long engaged in humanitarian and development work in Afghanistan. EU-CORD is itself a faith-based network of 26 European relief and development agencies working in over 85 countries.

We are deeply concerned with the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and the loss of lives since the Taliban offensive commenced. Further, we are gravely alarmed about the number of serious reported violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses in communities affected by the ongoing armed conflict across the country.

We are conscious that those most affected by the violence will be vulnerable groups such as women, girls, religious and ethnic minorities, older persons, and human rights advocates.

Therefore, **we call upon you to:**

1. Request all groups exercising effective control in Afghanistan to **respect international humanitarian and international human rights law**. This position would entail prohibiting attacks against civilians, desisting from summary and extrajudicial executions, an unequivocal prohibition of torture and sexual and gender-based violence and enslavement.
2. Encourage member states to adopt a generous approach to enforcing the Common European Asylum System, **especially regarding the grounds for granting international protection to asylum seekers**. Such an approach would also consider Afghans who have worked with national and international NGOs, religious and ethnic minorities, journalists, artists, and other groups of people who may be in danger from the Taliban. Furthermore, recognising that the latest security situation in Afghanistan has led to a drastic decrease in evacuations, we urge you to encourage EU member states to not desist from processing asylum applications, irrespective of how the applicants enter Europe.
3. Finally, we urge the EU to **increase funding for humanitarian assistance** to Afghanistan and facilitate the holistic provision of humanitarian aid. Such aid will require all parties to allow **immediate, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access for all humanitarian actors, including across conflict lines**. Such an approach will ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches all those in need.

The EU bears a moral duty to provide urgent humanitarian help to Afghanistan and resettle the most vulnerable members of Afghanistan society. We respectfully request that you increase efforts to foster stability, human rights, security, democracy, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law in all matters relating to how the EU responds to the crisis in Afghanistan.