

**Mouvement Mondial des Travailleurs Chrétiens
World Movement of Christian Workers
Movimiento Mundial de Trabajadores Cristianos
Weltbewegung Christlicher Arbeitnehmer**



**CALL ON THE OCCASION OF THE 1st MAY
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY
2011: To give dignity to migrants**

Be they victims of an earthquake, of a natural or nuclear catastrophe as so many people are today Japan, be they young without a future as in various Arab countries, or because of unbearable political oppression for whom life has become impossible, as in the Ivory Coast and also in many other countries: there are many valid reasons to leave ones country and search for a welcome elsewhere.

It is not an easy decision for those people who take this path. It means separation from friends and family, and customs or ways of life, which remain in their country until the leave. This decision is often a choice between the insupportable and uncertainty.

Who leaves their country to look for a dignified future elsewhere, daring to risk the unpredictable, to arrive without preliminary information, which is in the hands of unknown people, who often use and exploit the pressure and ignorance of those who want to leave their country.

Who risks such a path, often overcoming dangerous borders, a journey that risks life itself, often spending weeks and months in the cold and in danger, crossing unknown regions permanently concerned about ones own life and their few possessions they bring with them. All this after a horrible catastrophe, or years of an undignified life or following an unbearable political oppression, often accompanied by torture and threats to those close to them.

Many of those who want to quit their country for one of these reasons, never arrive where they were hoping to find a better life. They die during a long and dangerous journey, or are often robbed and forced to return home. Those who arrive in the host country are not at the end of their pain. They have to wait in camps for their registration or deportation, or they remain somewhere in the country unknown to the local authorities.

In the majority of cases they are forced to accept low paid occupations, which are often physically exhausting and dangerous for ones health. They live in unhealthy and isolated accommodation, for which they have to pay high rents, they have little contact with their parents and they feel that there is a lack of interest and distrust amongst those around them. These are just some of the ways that lead to a life of discrimination against migrants and refugees in our world.

These people are neither criminals nor exploiters, as many governments would want us to believe. They are workers who struggle to survive. To them this year we give our attention and solidarity on the international workers day. They count amongst the weakest in our globalised society, a cheap labour force available in rich countries whose low price gives high profits.

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“Truly, I say to you: whenever you did this to these little ones who are my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25,40). These words of Jesus challenge our movements of the WMCW today more than ever. In this sense, they engage in many countries with trades union and social organisations, but also with migrants themselves to improve their conditions of life in the host country but also the country of origin.

To help the *“little ones”* means to struggle for a just wage, for just and dignified living and working conditions, for a political, economic and social situation in the country of origin that enables a dignified life to be lived.

But it is also about reinforcing and raises awareness in the country, which welcomes migrants and refugees, that they have a high human value. Their work should be recognised, a mutual knowledge that a life together is enriching for all.

We therefore call on all the movements of the WMCW and all those who receive this message to commit themselves **to a dignified life for migrants and refugees and against** discrimination and exploitation.

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me”. These words from the Good News should become this year for the WMCW and the member movements and all those who are open to this message the most important task, in order for migrants and refugees everywhere in the world to be treated in a just and human manner and can find a warm welcome.

The general secretariat of the WMCW

