



## **Declaration on the occasion of the 99<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 16 January 2013**

Starting out from the priorities as defined by the last General Assembly of the WMCW, this year we want to make a brief reflection on the concrete situation lived today by migrants in Spain a country where the official statistics indicate that the 25% of the working population is without work. This rate has 52% amongst young workers. This situation has provoked the emigration of 100,000 people this year alone. In addition about 10,000 young workers from the country leave for the centre of Europe, Latin America etc.

This critical situation critique is in the process of spreading. New social dramas are now reaching migrants as well as those who come from the country: evictions due to none payment of mortgages, loss of social rights, general impoverishment. This situation is creating new waves of migration.

In numerous cases, entire families are returning to their country of origin (notably people of Latin American origin). The suffering experienced by adults given the failure of their life project, is amplified because their children who refuse to leave a country where they were born and where they grew up.

Other categories of migrants (especially those from the countries of Eastern Europe) move to other European countries (Belgium, Switzerland, France, Germany etc.) looking for a job. These movements are facilitated by the European laws on the free movement of workers in the Union. There is also internal migration in the country. But, these shifts can cause tension in some countries where the unemployment rate is high and where the migrants appear as competitors for local workers.

But, a large number of migrants in Spain, do not want to return to their country of origin, notably those coming from Africa: Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Senegal. They know that they no longer have a future in Spain. Without work, many have stopped sending money to their families. They are living in very difficult conditions, but they don't tell their families the truth. To these countries, new migrants arrive; not knowing the situation or being in a situation so desperate that Europe, despite its economic difficulties still appears as a haven of prosperity.

The MMTC is located alongside the migrants recognizing that to move freely is a human right. We believe that everyone should be able to live with dignity regardless of his or her origins, the colour of the skin, culture, language or religion. As the Movement of Christian workers, the MMTC actions are inspired by the word of God (\*\*) and the social teachings of the Church (\*\*)

(\*) Jesus identifies himself with the migrant and to all those who are deprived of goods and rights to live as human beings humans: "I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you have me give to drink, I was a stranger, and you welcomed me...". » This text poses



a demanding universal ethic for believers and non-believers: to treat in a similar to all of us who are needy, searching the great horizon of the fraternity, and not only as a matter of virtue, but also as a fundamental requirement of justice.

(\*\*) The Encyclical «Sollicitudo rei socialis» by John Paul II en 1987: "Solidarity helps us to see the 'other' - person, people or nation-not as an instrument which is exploited as cheap labour to be abandoned when it is no longer serves a useful purpose, but as our "as our fellow human being "that must be included in equally with us to the banquet of life to which all men are also invited by God."

**The Secretariat with the ACO Spain  
Paris 21<sup>st</sup> December 2012**

