

6 December 2024

## **Raising the alarm on violence against protesters in Georgia**

**Caritas Europa is deeply worried about the escalating violence in Georgia, where peaceful demonstrators have been met with excessive force in recent weeks.**

As a network that promotes human dignity, justice and peace, Caritas Europa is alarmed by the violent repression of citizens who are exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

In response to the Georgian government's suspension of the EU accession process until 2028, many Georgians have taken to the streets to express their desire for their country to join the EU, which they believe is integral to the nation's future. These peaceful demonstrations have been met with increasingly harsh and brutal violence from law enforcement, leading to serious injuries, unlawful detentions and growing repression against political opposition.

“ Caritas Europa condemns the use of violence against peaceful demonstrators. The people of Georgia have a right to voice their political opinions without fear of violence or retribution. The dignity of every individual must be respected. We call on EU leaders to speak up against this violence and for those involved to respect human rights and democracy.

**Msgr. Michael Landau, President of Caritas Europa**

Caritas Georgia, a Caritas Europa member, has been active in the country since 1994. Its focus is on the promotion of human development and social justice through health care projects, the provision of social services and psychological assistance, working with children and youth living in vulnerable situations, and emergency response.

Caritas Europa calls on EU policymakers and leaders to take a firm stance against the excessive use of force in Georgia. The EU has a critical role to play in promoting stability and peace in the region. We urge all actors to respect human dignity and promote dialogue as a means of resolving political differences. Violence is never the answer, and the rights of the Georgian people must be safeguarded.

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### **About Caritas Europa**

Caritas Europa is a network of 49 member organisations in 46 European countries and one of the 7 regions of Caritas Internationalis. Our members assist and provide services to millions of people in need.

Caritas Europa aims at lifting people out of poverty by empowering them and by influencing unjust structures and unfair policies that keep people trapped in positions of disempowerment.