

**62nd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants**

22 June 2026

Joint oral statement delivered by Caritas Internationalis

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Mr. President,

Caritas Internationalis and the co-signing organisations welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur, focusing on human rights risks associated with the externalisation of migration governance.

As FBOs accompanying migrants and displaced persons around the world, we witness daily the human consequences of policies that prioritise deterrence over protection, human rights, dignity and durable solutions.

We are deeply concerned by the externalisation of borders, which weakens accountability and access to protection. These developments are increasingly reflected, among others, in a range of EU migration and asylum policies, which prioritise coercion, forced return, detention and external processing arrangements. Similar concerns emerge when analysing bilateral agreements designed to deter and criminalise migration.

We are concerned that these policies and new measures will increase migrants' vulnerability and stigmatisation, normalising detention, including for children and families, and seriously limiting access to rights and effective remedies.

We are especially alarmed by proposals for so-called "return hubs" in third countries. Such arrangements risk outsourcing States' responsibilities under international human rights and refugee law and creating *de facto* deportation centres beyond effective human rights oversight and accountability.

Evidence from our work on the ground shows that detention causes serious harm to physical and mental well-being. It should never become the default response to migration and must never be applied to families and children.

We are also concerned that increased investigative measures may promote fear, racial profiling and exclusion, discouraging migrants from accessing essential services and support. Accepting these policies and measures extends beyond migration: it is an assault on due process and the rule of law.

As Pope Leo XIV recently reminded us, "*human dignity has no passport and does not lose its value when crossing a border.*" Human dignity must remain at the centre of migration governance. We urge States to reject a "return at all costs" approach and instead promote migration policies rooted in respect for human rights, solidarity and shared responsibility.

Thank you.