



**H.E. Mgr. Mariano Crociata's address to the 2023 General Assembly of  
the Conference of European Churches (CEC)**

**Tallinn (Estonia), 18 June 2023**

My most cordial greetings to all participants in this general assembly of the Conference of European Churches, so meaningful in its composition and for the circumstance in which it is taking place. I especially greet the outgoing President, Rev. Christian Krieger, and offer my best wishes, united in prayer, to the incoming President.

I am grateful and honoured for the invitation to participate and speak to you all. The commitment of COMECE has been fortified in the past years by a consolidated experience of collaboration and mutual understanding with CEC. Today, I am here to express my wish to renew and continue this cooperation with ever more conviction and dedication. The presence of our Churches in the EU Member States is first and foremost a calling of history, of our common history of these last decades and of today. As Christians, we feel called to make our contribution to a Union that can truly constitute, according to the intentions of its founding fathers, a unique possibility of development for its peoples and a promise of peace for all of us and for the whole world.

Unfortunately, it is precisely the aspiration for peace that has been most challenged for almost a year and a half now with the war in Ukraine, with no

sign of an end, despite the attempts and efforts being made from various sides to ensure that the war is stopped, first and foremost by those who unjustifiably started it. Our common prayer is unceasing, but we are also deeply saddened by the awareness that the unity of the Churches should anticipate and represent the united soul of the peoples of Europe. Instead, our internal divisions end up fuelling lacerations and misunderstandings. More than ever, the awareness of our sins and the call for mercy and conversion become more urgent, as does the need for an authentic ecumenism.

Therefore, we would like to witness an ever stronger will for communion and growing efforts to find common understandings and projects to overcome conflict, and create ways of reconciliation and peace. We are sure that such aim, which constitutes the yearning of your assembly, touches the heart of God and can obtain from Him the gift that the hearts of all of us and of all those involved in dialogue with the EU is transformed, so that God's plans for peace become ours, too. In this way, your wish and commitment to '*shape the future, with God's blessing*' can become a reality.

Thank you very much!