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Dear General Secretary,

I would like to thank you for your letter and for sharing your concerns over the equal treatment of all migrants in need of protection and support for civil society and its work on the ground.

The grave nature of the war in Ukraine is of direct and immediate concern for the European Union. Our geographical position in this case confers a unique sense of responsibility, one the EU Member States have committed to living up to together. Due to the scale of arrivals, the Commission identified a clear risk that the asylum systems of EU countries would be unable to process applications within the deadlines set. Consequently, the EU quickly activated the Temporary Protection Directive¹.

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¹ [COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof](#)

The EU is committed to providing access to the EU territory for everyone fleeing the war in Ukraine, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, religion or skin colour. As per Council Implementing Decision 2022/382² introducing temporary protection for people fleeing Ukraine, those entitled, including non-Ukrainian third-country nationals and stateless persons with refugee status in Ukraine, should benefit from temporary protection in the EU, while having the right to make and lodge an application for international protection at any time. Those not entitled to temporary protection can also still apply for international protection or a legal migration status.

In the difficult task to effectively respond to this crisis, the Commission fully acknowledges the key role that civil society plays in upholding the common values and fundamental rights, upon which the EU is founded. Civil society organisations have been providing significant support and a range of services to displaced people from Ukraine, including medical care, education, childcare, psychosocial support, protection and legal services, as well as social integration activities.

In particular, let me take this opportunity to thank the many civil society organisations helping provide accommodation, including by organising offers and supporting private individuals opening their homes. Precious lessons learned from their experience were included in the 'Safe homes' guidance,³ which was endorsed by the Member States on 6 July 2022.

This crisis has also clearly shown that well thought integration policies for every third-country national are much needed, and not just for a few Member States. Churches and other civil society organisations are significant partners that bring a lot of value added to the efforts of Member States, as do the efforts of regional and local authorities in this respect. Both in the action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 and in all our initiatives in this field, we are stressing that it takes a whole of society approach to successfully integrate and include people arriving in the EU, no matter from which country.

In recognition of this, a specific condition was included in the contribution from the Emergency Assistance to the Member States to strengthen their first reception capacity for displaced persons from Ukraine under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. To obtain its final payment in full, Member States need to demonstrate that they channelled resources to civil society organisations, including non-governmental organisations, and regional and local authorities that correspond to at least 30% of the funding received. In parallel, the Commission engages civil society organisations in the implementation of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund objectives via 'Union Actions', in which they may participate in calls for proposals, and if selected, receive direct funding under a grant.

The EU's response to the situation in Ukraine shows what is possible when the EU is united: significant humanitarian support has been mobilised and substantial EU funding is available to help Member States and civil society provide immediate assistance to people fleeing.

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² [COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION \(EU\) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of introducing temporary protection](#)

³ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/safe-homes-guidance_en.

If we can achieve these results in times of crisis, we can also equip ourselves to manage migration in normal times. The response to the war in Ukraine clearly illustrates the importance of a European approach, as set out in the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Sincerely,



Ylva JOHANSSON