

To the member bishops of COMECE

25th of February 2016

Your Eminence,
Your Excellencies,

we are writing to you as members of the Initiative of Christians for Europe (IXE), a European working group that has among its objectives to encourage reflection about the process of European unification, particularly in dialogue with national and European institutions, in relation to a recent incident involving "EuropeInfos" in the last few weeks.

As you certainly know, "EuropeInfos" is a newsletter jointly published by the Secretariat of the Commission of Bishops' Conferences of the EU (COMECE) and the Jesuit European Social Centre (JESC), but which is not the official organ of either body, nor of the Bishops' Conferences' members of COMECE. On the website of "EuropeInfos" we have read that two articles, ("What's happening in Poland?" written by Henryk Woźniakowski and "Ideology of the New Right in Hungary" written by Hans Schelkshorn) have been deleted upon request of the Polish respectively the Hungarian Bishops Conference.

We are deeply concerned by this incident.

We are convinced of the words, which the Holy Father said during his visit to Strasbourg on November 25, 2014: "I wish to reiterate the readiness of the Holy See and the Catholic Church through COMECE, to engage in a meaningful, open and transparent dialogue with the institutions of the EU." We do think that such an open and transparent dialogue with the

institutions of the EU cannot be developed without an open dialogue also within the Church. In this context, publications such as "EuropeInfos" have an important role to play, in informing Catholics throughout Europe and in fostering dialogue between them about current issues of European integration. By banning different points of view, we are only losing diversity and impoverishing ourselves.

May we ask you to put this item on the agenda of the next plenary assembly of COMECE and to resolve the matter by a clear statement.

We thank you very much for considering our concern.

Faithfully yours,

Members of the Initiative of Christians for Europe (IXE):

María del Carmen Aragonés, Spain, Teresian Association

Peter Annegarn, Belgium, President of the European forum of national laity committees

Janko Korošec, Slovenia, Socialna akademija

María Luisa Lladó Hädinger, Spain

Dr. Mary McHugh, United Kingdom, Chair of Andante, European Alliance of Catholic women's organizations

Petr Mucha, Czech Republic, Czech Christian Academy

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Dr. Neven Šimac, Croatia, President of the Centre for European Documentation and Research R. Schuman

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Dr. Stefan Vesper, Germany, Secretary-General of the Central Committee of German Catholics (ZdK)

Drs. Marie Louise van Wijk-van de Ven, Netherlands, Former Chair of Andante, European Alliance of Catholic women's organizations

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