

Dr Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels, Belgium

Brussels, 19 July 2024

Dear President von der Leyen,

On behalf of the [VOICE network](#), the largest network of European humanitarian organisations, representing 90 NGOs from 19 European countries implementing humanitarian responses in [128 countries worldwide](#), I would like to congratulate you on your election for a second term as President of the European Commission.

As you know, 2024 is a year of change, marked by elections worldwide, including in nine European countries, and for the newly elected European Parliament. The EU is confronted with a new geopolitical context and a worldwide humanitarian situation that demands swift and decisive action. Escalating conflicts, blatant violations of international norms, and the climate crisis are among the pressing causes that lead to the dramatic increase in the number of people in need with an expected [308.5 million people](#) requiring assistance in 2024, facing acute food insecurity, violence, and displacement.

The EU is an essential diplomatic actor, and EU citizens overwhelmingly support the EU's funding of humanitarian aid. The EU's [Eurobarometer](#) for 2023 found that 91% of respondents felt it was important or very important (45%) for the EU to finance humanitarian programmes. "71% say humanitarian aid is more efficient if coordinated and provided by the EU."

We welcome that the EU continues to play a pivotal role as one of the leading humanitarian donors, contributing over [32% of global humanitarian funding in 2023](#). The EU's commitment to principled humanitarian action, confirmed in the [European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid](#) and the [Communication on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles](#), is a cornerstone to effective humanitarian response worldwide. Considering the challenges ahead, we hope that you will continue to strengthen these commitments and use all relevant political tools to create the environment urgently needed to address them.

The EU's excellent record on humanitarian action is also due to its strong and rich partnership with civil society and in particular humanitarian NGOs – whether local, national, or international. Civil society organisations have incomparable expertise in navigating complex situations, working effectively with and through communities in conflict-affected and fragile contexts, and ensuring access to aid to the hardest-to-reach communities. Civil society organisations are also leading innovative thinking and ensuring the system regularly learns and adapts to remain fit for purpose.

Commissioner Lenarčič has been a strategic ally over the past five years and has greatly contributed to reinforcing this partnership, for the advantage of both the EU and affected communities. Therefore, we call upon you to select a College of Commissioner that will continue valuing partnering with NGOs in addressing the growing level of humanitarian needs. Additionally, having one Commissioner for Crisis Management has been pivotal in ensuring the focus and effectiveness of EU's humanitarian commitments and we recommend you maintain it in the next mandate.

As you know, there is no humanitarian solution to humanitarian crises, and we need to work collectively, within a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach, to address the root causes of the crises we face. Aligned with the [EU's commitments to the nexus](#), it will be absolutely essential to ensure strong and meaningful coordination between the Commissioners, especially on Crisis Management and International Partnerships, to guarantee a multisectoral approach to crises and a focus on fragile contexts.

Congratulations again on your re-election.

We are looking forward to working with you and your teams and would welcome a meeting to elaborate further on the proposals outlined and to discuss our contribution to the European Commission's 2024 - 2029 mandate.

We stand ready to work with you to strengthen the EU as the global leader in humanitarian action,

Yours sincerely,



Pauline Chetcuti
VOICE President