

## **European Lawyers in Lesvos receives Pax Christi International Peace Award**

**The award ceremony was held in Brussels on 26 June 2019**

Berlin (DAV). **Over the past three years, 144 lawyers from 17 countries have volunteered to help more than 9,000 people seeking protection in the Greek Moria Camp with free legal advice. In respect of these efforts the project "European Lawyers in Lesvos" received the Pax Christi International Peace Award.**

European Lawyers in Lesvos (ELIL) is an independent charity offering independent pro bono legal advice to asylum seekers in the Moria Camp on the Greek island of Lesvos. ELIL was launched in June 2016 by the Council of European Bar Associations (CCBE) and the German Bar Association (DAV), which together represent more than one million lawyers. The two organisations are now the shareholders of ELIL.

Pax Christi International honours ELIL's work with the Peace Award 2019 - for the many hours of volunteer legal help in the most adverse circumstances and for helping many people by providing independent legal advice to better assess their situation and realistically evaluate their chances of success.

*"Independent legal advice is a necessary component of humanitarian first aid in crisis situations - ELIL is the lighthouse project in this respect, which rightly receives international recognition through the Pax Christi International Peace Award", emphasises **DAV President Edith Kindermann.***

**The Chairman of the Supervisory Board of ELIL, former President of the CJEU Prof. Dr. Vassilios Skouris** adds: *"This award, at this point in time, is a morale booster that will make us all continue our work in this important peace and justice non-profit organization. ELIL was inspired by belief in the fundamental importance of upholding the rule of law, protecting human rights and ensuring meaningful access to legal assistance".*

ELIL stands for equal and unrestricted access to justice and independent legal advice according to the professional and ethical standards of the legal profession. Together with a small team of employed European asylum lawyers, the volunteers help to prepare the asylum hearing or family reunification procedure. Over 37,000

hours of voluntary commitment have been dedicated by the European lawyers to provide the refugees - arriving mainly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan - with professional legal advice.

The Pax Christi International Peace Award ceremony took place on 26 June 2019 in Brussels in the presence of CCBE President José de Freitas and DAV Vice-President Dr. Claudia Seibel.

*Established in 1988, the Pax Christi International Peace Award is funded by the Cardinal Bernardus Alfrink Peace Fund and honours contemporary individuals and organisations who make a stand for peace, justice and nonviolence in different parts of the world.*