



UGT – CCOO Joint Statement

The Spanish Government must guarantee a humanitarian solution to the Aquarius ship

629 people, is that the big problem for the European Union?

Madrid, June 11, 2018.- The situation of the Aquarius ship with 629 people on board questions, once again, the EU commitment with its values, as well as the commitment of all member states with human rights and international standards.

The “so-called” refugee crisis revealed that, with few and honourable exceptions, the member states were not willing to accept a common and solidary policy regarding applicants for international protection. On the contrary, states such as Hungary have been allowed to adopt measures that are contrary not only to international standards, but to the founding principles of the European Union.

Instead of implementing long-term policies, addressing the causes of migration and respecting above all the migrants’ rights, whether they are refugees or not, the EU has opted for an emergency solution, for the relocation and resettlement programs, and for the shameful outsourcing of their external borders, such as the agreements with Turkey and Libya.

How is it possible that 629 people can place a European Union with more than 500 million inhabitants at a crossroads? Once again, our future is at stake: we have to decide what Europe we want, the one that abandons shipwrecked persons at sea, or the one that receives and provides humanitarian aid. All this without forgetting that four people have died this weekend trying to reach Spain.

The two major trade unions in Spain, UGT and CCOO, for humanitarian reasons, ask their Government to offer the Aquarius ship the opportunity to moor in a Spanish port, until the European authorities are able to guarantee a safe landing of the 629 people in a nearby port.

CCOO and UGT strongly consider that the European Union must demand compliance with the obligations of respecting the fundamental international standards, protecting life as well as demanding the solidarity of all member states to deal with what is happening at the EU borders from the viewpoint of the defense of human rights.

Therefore, UGT and CCOO, demand the European Union to take the necessary measures immediately so that the Aquarius ship can disembark the people in a European port and these people must be treated with all guarantees, fulfilling the international obligations to which all member states are subject to.

On the other hand, CCOO and UGT demand the newly appointed Spanish Government and particularly the Ministry of Employment, Migration and Social Security and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation to promote a common migration policy within the EU based on human rights, respect and solidarity, and the commitment of all member states.