

**VICTIM SUPPORT EUROPE STATEMENT: EUROPEAN DAY FOR VICTIMS OF TERRORISM:****REMEMBER, SUPPORT, ACT**

Today, 11 March marks the 11<sup>th</sup> European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism. On this day, Victim Support Europe expresses its deepest sympathy and solidarity for all victims of terrorism.

Already in 2015, there have been numerous terrorist attacks in Europe and around the globe. These criminals target innocent people indiscriminately. Their crimes cause terrible damage to the lives of those they attack and to their families.

Whilst terrorist acts in Europe, thankfully, do not occur every day, the threat of further violence is real and ever present. Victim Support Europe therefore welcomes the actions of national governments and of EU and international actors to put in place measures to better protect individuals and to prevent further terrorist crimes.

However, the needs of victims must not be ignored.

**Victim Support Europe calls** on all national, EU and International actors to ensure victims of terrorism are effectively supported and assisted. In these times, it is all too easy to focus efforts on pursuing criminals whilst forgetting the needs of the victims themselves. Not just on this day of remembrance but every day, you must remember their needs and you must act to meet those needs.

**Victim Support Europe calls** on governments to ensure that effective planning and sufficient resources are in place to respond to the support needs of victims in the event of a terrorist act.

**Victim Support Europe calls** on governments to ensure there is an effective infrastructure of support not just in the immediate aftermath of an attack but also in the long term. That infrastructure must attend to victims' general and specific needs. It must support them psychologically and practically and during any criminal proceedings.

Action to help victims of terrorism is not just in the hands of governments. Terrorist acts are by their nature highly public and victims are more exposed to public scrutiny than for most other crimes. Moreover, in these days of social media and mobile video recordings, reports on crimes are no longer just made by the media. This exposure can cause even greater suffering for victims. Every person has a responsibility to be mindful of victims and to avoid causing further harm.

**Victim Support Europe calls** on organisations reporting on terrorist crimes to ensure their reporters understand how to cover these terrible acts sensitively – and ensure they in fact report with sensitivity.

**Victim Support Europe also calls** on individuals to show care and sensitivity when posting and sharing information on these criminal acts. Every person must be conscious of how their actions can further hurt victims and their families.

Victim Support Europe remembers all those who have fallen victim to terrorism on this European day of remembrance for victims of terrorism. On this day, we also call on individuals and governments alike to make sure that every day that follows is a day of action in support of those victims.