

## **HISTORY**

EXODUS NETWORK started out as a group within the International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains (IACAC), which addressed the situation of asylum seekers in transit areas. At the beginning, the group was composed mainly of European airport chaplaincies. From 1992 onwards, it began to hold meetings outside of IACAC conferences in order to deal with this specific issue.

In 1997, during a conference held in Geneva, the group decided to join forces with other relevant actors, namely social and legal services operating in airports. It was at this moment that EXODUS was born, although the current 31-member-strong association would not be formally established until several years later.

After 1997, EXODUS held several annual sessions (with the exception of 2002 and 2006) in London (1998), Vienna (1999), Stockholm (2000), Geneva (2001), Prague (2003), London (2004) and Rome (2005).

Yet, the group's work was restricted to organizing sessions, there was very little contact between the various partners and no joint action was taken between the meetings.

In 2007, EXODUS organized a conference in Brussels. During the general assembly held at the session, EXODUS announced the creation of a non-profit association under Belgian law. Jean-Luc Martin, Jean-Pierre Dassonville and Michel Ottet were named administrators of this new association. However, as none of them were residents in Belgium, Ermeline de Bruyne was appointed as Chief Executive. The objective of the association was to build a real network to provide support for asylum seekers (for more details, consult the association's statutes at <http://www.exodus-network.org/fr/rubrique/documents/>).

In 2008, EXODUS held a conference in Paris, and another in Luxembourg in January 2011. Unfortunately, as the administrators already had many commitments, the project to construct a real support network could not be completed. Furthermore, the 2011 conference in Luxembourg failed to strengthen the initial team. A motivated provisional committee therefore took up the torch and created a new association called EXODUS Dignity, which had the same objectives.

### **EXODUS Dignity:**

**Website:** <http://exodus-dignity.org/>

**Statutes:** <http://exodus-dignity.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Statutes-of-EXODUS-DIGNITY-NETWORK.pdf>

In order to receive effective support from the international organizations that address issues relating to refugees and human rights, EXODUS Dignity established its headquarters close by in Geneva. Now that this stage has been completed, the committee has organized a major conference, in partnership with the Geneva Press Club (*Club Suisse de la Presse*), which will take place on 8-10 October 2015. A general assembly for the association will be held, during which a committee will be elected to make and implement the decisions of the general assembly, manage the association, administer its assets and take all possible measures to ensure that its goals are accomplished, in accordance with Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the association's statutes.