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## **Germany: debate in parliament on assisted suicide. Mgr. Neher (Caritas), “terminally ill need support that seriously addresses their fears”**

A two-hour orientation debate is scheduled in the Bundestag today on the constitutional evolution of assisted suicide in Germany. The president of Caritas Germany, Mgr. Peter Neher, calls for action to achieve good policies supporting hospices and palliative care in the debate on the new regulation of “assisted suicide”. “The terminally ill need a support that seriously addresses their fears, their needs and those of their relatives. They must be given as much support as possible to die with dignity. That is why we work tirelessly for good hospices and good palliative care, be it in hospices, in nursing homes or at home. The purpose of good care and end-of-life support should be to alleviate the physical and psychological pain that many people fear. Yet allowing people to die in dignity is a task for society as a whole”. A year ago, the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe lifted a ban on professional assisted suicide, emphasising the fundamental right to self-determination. As is customary in the debates agreed in the Bundestag, there is no specific subject as a topic of discussion. Ahead of the debate, even the German Association for Hospice and Palliative Care insisted on the need to pay greater attention to suicide prevention. The president, Winfried Hardinghaus, said there should be no obligation to tolerate or perform assisted suicide in care facilities, in the treatment of patients, in hospice and palliative care, as well as in other facilities with vulnerable groups.

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