



## DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (FRESACH, 2016)

Migration flux caused by climate changes is not a new development, there always has been an intricate connection. It is the global dimension what is new. Information can be distributed at high speed nowadays - which creates a new meaning of the term **neighborhood**.

Southern countries which have been formed and often deformed by Europeans stay in the margin. But people are not staying in the South, they are wandering North. They want to escape poverty, hunger and war. Climate change is a trigger - more and more.

**It is not migration which is the actual problem.** In fact, migration helps to shape a common world. Mutually exchanging products and services is an enrichment for every country. So is exchanging cultural horizons. This kind of exchange is an immediate consequence of migration and has been creating diversity in our countries and cities. This diversity contributes to understanding among nations and to peace. No one however should be forced to leave their homeland. Whether refugees/immigrants can be successfully integrated in their destination countries depends on their numbers.

There are many people in Europe who wish for more and new walls, boundaries and borders. It is certainly important to control and to monitor the borders of the European Union. **Any community needs borders.** Any community has the right to allow or deny access to them. This has to happen in a humane way and according to international law. Walls, boundaries and borders are never a solution to problems which force people to leave their homeland. The task on hand is to analyze and to minimize the multiplex and causes.

**Europe has to take responsibility.** Not only the colonial countries have taken profit out of exploitation and colonialism - every European country did. They have taken profit from trading cheap natural resources and at the same time from destroying the environment - all this has actually never stopped. Our agricultural and trade policies contribute to an economical and social imbalance.

The way wealthy people waste resources contributes to emissions which cause or intensify climate change. Environmental pollution in developing or emerging countries is mainly caused by the demand of consumers in wealthy countries - that's how pressure of price and costs are caused. Therefore, we should not point the finger at the "others", but be aware of our responsibility as Europeans.

A walls-up policy might give a temporary illusion of safety. The more Europe is going to ignore the causes of climate change and forced migration and won't address them, the more threats our descendants are going to face. To avoid distress and firing order at their borders, European countries have to contribute to a world with more sustainability and justice.

**Peace and wealth are based on sharing.** We can effectively help to make the Southern countries a place worth living. A homeland which is not threatened by the destruction of natural resources is the best strategy against forced migration and related conflicts.