

## **European Charter of Fresach**

### **1. New Alliance to Overcome Poverty and Lack of Opportunity**

The European continent is a place of yearning for many people of our globe. Peace, tolerance and prosperity are equated with Europe and give many people outside of this continent hope for a life that often differs drastically from that in their own country. Therefore, the prosperous and cosmopolitan states of Europe are sought after as havens.

Only when Europeans travel to other continents they perceive the differences. They often do not recognize the discrepancy between their criticism of the conditions in Europe and the attractiveness of our continent for others. Europe must therefore remain a place of longing for its own people, and it must continue to develop positively. There are also many tensions within Europe to overcome.

But: The attractiveness of Europe gained over many centuries is due i.a. on exploitation and unfair trade. This egoism - combined with local forces of corruption - has led to poverty and lack of opportunity in neighboring continents. Only a new alliance with democratic and progressive forces in poorer countries can offer the youth of these countries the opportunity to live a decent life. And only such a life creates an effective alternative to flight and emigration to Europe.

### **2. Open borders for Peace and Freedom**

In parallel with such a new policy of partnership with the poorer countries of the world, Europe must keep the doors open to give those who flee from persecution a new home. Effective control of the European external border is not in contradiction to a humane asylum policy system.

Europe as a home must always redefine itself and offer opportunities to those willing to work on this development of their home country. Change and tolerance in the sense of recognition of other ways of life and faith were always compatible with the European identity and home. It was religious wars and intolerance that led to the destruction of the European continent.

But even people who only want to or can stay in Europe temporarily must be treated with fairness and hospitality. Conversely, a hospitable and open Europe can demand that European law is obeyed and that European rules of coexistence are respected.

### **3. Social Justice and Solidarity**

Europe's identity must include social justice and solidarity. It must not play the own country ("inland") against "foreigners". Persecuted people need help and support regardless of their origin or religion. And European help is when it uses both public and private resources. It is not about alms, but about securing a legal entitlement. Caritative help is a necessary complement to general support.

#### **4. Responsibility for Cultural Diversity**

But Europe is also a continent of culture. Although we can be proud of many cultural achievements, there is no need for cultural imperialism or arrogance. It is not just a question of receiving and integrating non-European cultures, but seriously thinking about how we should deal with museum collections of dubious origins and unexplained acquisition. This requires an open dialogue with the countries of origin and a common exhibition policy across the continents.

#### **5. Climate Protection concerns Everyone**

Europe is rightly proud of its nature, even if it is subject to change. Last but not least, it is tourism and the increasing depletion of forest, green and arable land, which contributes to the maintenance of life in the regions threatened by emigration, but can also cause the destruction of valuable landscapes. Sustainability must therefore become the principle of all changes, especially in tourism, agriculture and industry.

Europe has to play the global card. Not only because global warming affects our continent directly, but also indirectly through massive environmental damage in our neighborhood in Africa and the Middle East. The harmful effects of global warming can only be limited by global action.

#### **6. Europe of the many Possibilities**

Europe is not a closed continent, it has not been this in the last two thousand years. For a long time it was a continent of aggression and colonization outwardly, but also of internal wars and mutual oppression. For the first time in history, political forces today are about to give all Europeans a chance to live a peaceful home and contribute to fairer international relations. Home (Heimat) and internationality should not be mutually exclusive, nor should tolerance and the recognition and enforcement of common rules of living together do so.

Today's livelihoods in Europe are the result of centuries of internal conflicts, but also of striving to overcome scientific and geographical boundaries. It has always been the outward view that has brought Europe forward – even though European longing for research into "uncivilized" nature and "savage" has often led to oppression, slavery and wars.

Today's Europe needs to find a sustainable balance of conservation and change. Respect for diversity and creativity to develop something new should enable Europe to succeed in peaceful competition with other powers and continents. Home is not created by new walls, but by the knowledge of our own strength and the exchange of new ideas and proven strategies.

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