



“FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND UNIVERSAL JUSTICE”

EMMAUS EUROPE DECLARATION

We, Emmaus groups and communities in Europe, attending the Regional Assembly in San Sebastián from 27 – 31 October 2019,

Declare our outrage about the events during this unprecedented period in which the values and achievements of our common European home are being eroded;

Given our daily experience with our groups and communities, which welcome and integrate, in Europe and around the world, thousands of people affected by poverty and distress, and aware of their unjust consequences;

Our founding principles and commitment rest on our conviction that Human Rights are universal and that human dignity on our country borders and difference are of paramount importance;

We are firmly convinced that the same dignity, the same opportunities, freedom of movement and hope for a better future need to be recognised for each and every individual.

WE CONDEMN, therefore:

- The suffering and death of thousands of people who, forced to leave their own countries, are exploited, tortured, murdered or die trying to cross deserts and seas;
- The gradual and unjust criminalisation of the poor, marginalised and people living in hardship, abandoned by institutions and overlooked by a large section of European public opinion;
- The bureaucratic restrictions that hamper integration and lock so many people in illegal situations;

- The progressive and unfair criminalisation of people who take action and fight, with all their strength, to stand up for fundamental rights, to affirm the primacy and the value of human life, to ensure that international law and the dignity of all are upheld, starting with those who suffer most and the neediest;
- The lack of political will on the part of European institutions and states to counter the lies that are spread about migrants and that hide the real causes of emigration from impoverished countries, at war or victims of dictatorial political regimes.
- Using lies to promote social rejection and the closing of borders;
- The systematic violation of article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes the right of all persons to freedom of movement. Human Rights are inherent to all human beings and are, therefore, individual rights. As such, these rights are even protected by the constitutional courts. They are, however, violated on a daily basis;
- The refusal to build a sustainable, shared, efficient and respectful reception system.

AND WE CALL ON European institutions and national governments:

- To develop policies to fight inequalities, financial speculation and all economic activities leading to exploitation, poverty, dependence, hunger and poverty in the world;
- To recognise these factors as primary causes of migration and absurd wars instrumentalised among the poor of Europe and of the entire world;
- To implement an egalitarian policy of cooperation with emerging and developing countries based on the recognition of a historic debt requiring restitution and solidarity;
- To immediately suspend the sale of arms, particularly to dictatorial regimes and countries in conflict, which cause death and suffering and force thousands of people to emigrate;
- To amend the Dublin Regulation so that the reception of migrants is distributed immediately across European countries, and that their reception is evenly spread, shared and achievable;
- To end the privatisation of public property and the management of European entry visas, an unfair and restrictive system for those wishing to enter through the legal administrative channels;
- To implement, strengthen and coordinate direct and immediate humanitarian routes for people fleeing war and hunger;

- To reactivate, in Europe, the land and sea rescue system, in accordance with international assistance guidelines, in support of and in collaboration with all civil society organisations, churches and non-governmental organizations working to help and to welcome migrants;
- To immediately cease collaborating with the Libyan coastguards, condemned by the United Nations for collaborating with people traffickers and for the inhuman conditions in the detention centres in which acts of rape, violence and torture have been reported;
- To immediately review all agreements with bordering countries that prevent freedom of movement and do not respect Human Rights.
- To close detention centres and to transform the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) into a cooperation and rescue agency for the defence of Human Rights, including the right to freedom of movement.

AS FOR US, EMMAUS GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES, IN UNITY WITH ALL ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS STANDING UP FOR A FAIRER AND MORE SOLIDARITY-BASED GLOBAL SOCIETY, WE WILL CONTINUE TO:

- Welcome all persons unconditionally, in our communities and local-level contexts, demonstrating and making visible the fact that living together and having respect for diversity are possible and fulfilling for everyone;
- Support and encourage the fight against the causes of poverty and suffering;
- Commit, as a movement and within the networks that we join with other European and international organisations, to reaffirm the primacy of fundamental rights and the dignity of each person and each people, starting with the most fragile, in Europe and worldwide.

In Donostia, 29 October 2019