

[An open letter to our NVR community](#) [The refugee issue in Europe and developments that followed it](#)

After my email to some leading NVR professional, Idan suggested that I will write a short "Announcement" concerning my interest in the refugee issue and the different developments that followed it. Because I feel very touched by this issue and because I think that we have to deal with it, I'd like to do that with the option to continue our constitution work in Antwerp where we wrote and signed in a very solidary way:

"We commit to the principles of NVR (non-violent resistance) in our life and work. In the spirit of Ghandi, Martin Luther King and others we support each other in the promotion and the dissemination of the NVR attitude in ourselves, in families, schools, communities, organizations and in the political sphere. We raise our voice and take a stand for a responsible leadership in an open and transparent manner." (Charter of the international non-violent-resistant-founders group)

It's really not up to me to produce an Announcement, I do feel it should be written together with NVR activists when we'll meet in Malmo. My wish here is to summarize some questions and I will start with some facts:

According to information from the United Nations about 60 million people are on flee worldwide. Dramatic is the number of new refugees and an improvement is not expected for now. People are fleeing because of dictatorship, terrorism, persecution, civil war, poverty and social misery in their countries. Thousands of people are losing their lives during the flee, needless to say how many children are among them...

During 2015 more than one million people tried to enter the European community along the Mediterranean Sea. 848.000 came to Greece, 153.000 refugees arrived in Italy. About 3.735 people breathe their last breath during that flee... Almost half of the people came from Syria, 20 percent from Afghanistan and eight percent fled from Iraq.

1.294.000 refugees and migrants asked for shelter in Europe, 476.000 in Germany. This number is still higher in reality and the amount of people asking for shelter is now a big challenge for the European community and for Germany as well.

The consequences of this development from the German point of view.

1. There was and is an impressive amount of helpfulness and engagement in population and uncounted volunteers who still work for a pragmatic and human supply of refuge in a humanitarian way.
2. There was the famous sentence of our chancellor - "we can make that" which impressed me even when it brought her at her limits. And there are political discourses which are not any more integrative or oriented in solutions but in their effect demonizing and divisive.
3. There is a dramatic increase of xenophobic riots and an urgent question: How can that happen nowadays?
4. At the last elections (Baden Württemberg, Rheinland Pfalz, Sachsen Anhalt) we had an enormous increase of national and right-wing votes which provided an remarkable place

for the AFD ("Alternative for Germany") in three houses of parliament. The forecasts for the coming elections indicate a continuation of this development.

After presenting those facts there remain some big questions which we should discuss from my point of view:

1. What do we think about the new developments in Germany and Europe concerning the refugee issue? And which feelings do we have about it (my first feeling is anxiety, the second is anger and sadness).
2. Do we have a common voice concerning these developments?
3. What could mean our decision „We raise our voice and take a stand for a responsible leadership in an open and transparent manner" in this context?
4. Is our political engagement required or can we just trust in the states, their governments and their official institutions?
5. And if our NVR-energy is required: What can and what should we do with it?

Yours,

Tobias.