



SEMINAR MIGRATION AND MENTAL HEALTH

SPEECH 19.10.18

(Salle Ogivale – 17h15)

Ladies and Gentleman,
Doctor Achotegui,
Dear representatives of associations and youth from diverse horizons present today,

Good evening and welcome to the Brussels Town Hall,

I want to warmly thank the association Families of the World and the Athena Network for this initiative: the VII International Congress on the issues of migration and mental health. As Deputy-Mayor of International Solidarity, it is obviously for me a honour to introduce tonight reception.

I met Familles du Monde last year during the Women Rights Week organised by the Equal Opportunities unit of the City of Brussels.

FaMiDo had organised a formative workshop about the place of the woman in migration. This workshop was part of a conferences cycle and was precisely aimed at preparing women to actively participate to this VII International Congress.

The migration issue is always at the heart of Brussels news...

Last year, it was actually the issue treated by the International Solidarity Fortnight organised by the City on its territory.

On this occasion, the Brussels associative network was invited to sensitise citizens on the migration phenomena through more than 20 activities. Conferences, concerts, exhibitions and workshops, among others, were programmed during 15 days.

The International Solidarity Fortnight is for us a reflexion period, with meetings, citizen entertainments which allow to better understand our world and propose actions at local level. This Fortnight had the ambition to exceed the numbers and quotas, to take a step back from the news, to try to better understand migratory phenomena by placing them, on the one hand, in a more global and historical context, and, on the other hand, proposing to meet the human, the migrant, the one of yesterday but also the one of today.

The migration issue was and is still particularly relevant.

The migratory phenomena are sometimes real human dramas we cannot remain insensitive to.

They are multifactorial and complex phenomena far from the simplisms we have to face sometimes.

Behind each migrant, we have to remember that there is human being with a history, an experience, sufferings, ...

I am always enthusiast when exchange moments like this Congress are organised, because they allow us to question our certainties.

If there is one thing we all agree on: it is that this awakening must go through awareness, reflection, and information to finally move towards more concrete actions.

To achieve this, I am convinced that the youth public has the key to our future. Especially this European and Belgian youth who will present tonight their master pieces done about the issue of migration mourning, and who actively participate to this Congress, which is particularly dedicated to them.

Let us remember that this Congress is an important step where start a series of exchanges among youth of different European and non-European countries, in the context of a larger project supported by FaMiDo to last 3 years.

Thanks to this project, the public will be aware of the problem of well-being in the migration by different means: role games, conferences-debates, discussion tables, etc.

The first year, thus 2018, is dedicated to the establishment of partnerships.

In 2019, meetings and 'itinerant' seminars are planned for the participants. And in 2020, the project will be assessed with the participants and partners. A beautiful and extensive programme !

This morning, there was a working day at the European Parliament, with interesting covered topics like the fight against the European extreme-right and the Ulysses Syndrome on which the Professor Joseba Achotegui of the University of Barcelona will probably come back.

Tomorrow, it will be the opportunity to the cross the youth eye with the one of political, social, medical and academical actors on the issue of well-being of youth and families in the context of migration.

An issue far from obvious to deal with. Since migration can be very painful...

I will leave you with a special message to young people: never stop reaching out to your neighbour. Keep informing yourselves, cultivate yourselves, develop your critical thinking. Fight for a fairer and more inclusive society, without discriminations. Be the actors of change!

Thank you for your attention.

I wish you a pleasant evening and a nice end of stay in Brussels.

Mohamed Ouriaghli
Deputy-Mayor for International Solidarity