

Joint Statement

City Network for more tolerance and non-violence

The noticeable increase in violent crimes in Europe often generated by a lack of tolerance is of great concern to us.

At the same time we realise that extremism, xenophobia and racism are no longer solely social side issues but are partly embedded in the very heart of society.

Therefore we have to make every endeavour to ensure that nobody is humiliated, pursued, attacked, injured or killed.

To this end it is necessary to increase intercultural competence. A cosmopolitan outlook and tolerance can be imparted as values in particular to children, young people and adolescents as part of their education.

Furthermore a wide social consensus is necessary in which all social relevant groups especially churches, trade unions, charities, schools and administrations join.

Joint actions can demonstrate that citizens are tolerant, open minded and keep a watchful eye on any attempt to undermine the principle rules of our democratic community.

Apart from German cities also many European cities are affected by violence and extremism. This insight calls for concerted actions, joint projects and division of labour in project development.

The state capital Düsseldorf and the Stiftung Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention (foundation German forum for crime prevention) have set themselves the goal to initiate a city network for more tolerance and non-violence.

The objectives of the city network are to learn from prevention programs of others and benefit from their experience, use resources economically, analyse common projects, find solutions and implement them quickly and successfully.

It is against this background that the cities of Chemnitz, Dublin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hanover, Cologne, Ludwigshafen, Lübeck, Magdeburg, Moenbeck-

Saint-Jean, Newcastle, Rostock, Rotterdam, and Stuttgart attending this kick-off event in Düsseldorf want to participate in the setting up of such a network for more tolerance and non-violence in which other cities are free to join.

In this network joint projects shall be developed, the results of the prevention work of the cities recorded and made available through common communication channels. For this purpose and as a first step an E-mail gateway will be installed at the Stiftung Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention (foundation German forum for crime prevention) and future co-operation co-ordinated. This will make it possible to steer and implement new target-oriented projects in individual cities both in the planning and realisation phase.

First of all each city will document a prevention scheme for more tolerance and non-violence especially targeted at kids and young people that has already proven successful and might also be of interest to other cities from its respective point of view. These documentations will be submitted to the Stiftung Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention and made available to the other cities. Subsequently – subject to the decision taken by each city – individual projects will be implemented; a respective exchange of experience will take place on the occasion of the next meeting in about six months' time. Furthermore, the participating cities will mutually inform themselves about noticeable trends in crime and hot spots (early warning system).

Also general crime prevention necessitates closer co-operation of cities. Only closer co-operation will enable us to identify negative social trends in good time and to develop counter-measures together and at an early stage. Security and assurance of a high quality of life are of special importance for Europe as a location for industry and investment.

The overriding goal is to curb crime by means of preventive measures, reduce crime-induced damage and increase the feeling of security on the part of the general public.

Düsseldorf, 12 September 2001