



PRESS RELEASE – We need each other to find a way out

Brussels, March 23, 2016 - Following the attacks in Brussels nobody goes back to the old normal. So much disorder is upsetting, as happened previously in many other cities worldwide. But new steps are necessary. "If only 'tough' policy is promoted as an answer, we would be walking in darkness," says Didier Vanderslycke, director of the association ORBIT. "A change is needed in the model of consultation with the diverse communities in our country. We need to sit down at the table together, in order to communicate and work together based on mutual trust. Our diverse society should be a place where we feel 'at home' and where implementing love and justice are our unique house rules.

The attacks in Brussels have shaken many, among those the ORBIT staff. The events hit us all as human beings, but maybe even more because we work for an association that seeks to 'unite'. This intentional violence seeks to separate people. It hardens as well the minds and hearts. This force is trying to kill our common future. We learn more and more of the ideas and plans of the people who planned these acts. They want to hurt free and open societies. They want to achieve it and put such results as a trophy 'on their cabinet' or take it along in their coffins. It is a dire and evil plan for it has a deadly impact on many citizens as well as on themselves. We can not accept it, but only try to understand it and to turn it around.

We need each other to find a way out. As fanatical and fascist personalities try to manipulate young people and motivate them to give their lives for their unwholesome and evil cause, then it is up to us to stand stronger with the alternative of a free and democratic society. If our society conveys less inclusion and pushes more people to the edge, then it is up to us to invest more in justice and human rights. If child poverty and youth unemployment reach high levels, then it is up to us to reverse that trend. If it turns out that more weapons are deployed than diplomatic means to resolve conflicts, then we have to stand up to demand that such policy is reversed.

We carry that responsibility evidently together. All philosophical and religious groups, all walks of life, from ordinary people to persons in leadership roles, together we have the power to find a way out. In this we are allowed to expect from our politicians that they garner our strength and this shared vision to use it to design an inclusive future for all citizens. When leaders only invest in 'tough' policy, we continue to walk in darkness, with our eyes shut. It is now that we must sit around the table together, so that our diverse society is a home where love and justice are our unique house rules. Let us be radical in and for these goals.

ORBIT sends its condolences to the victims, their families and loved ones. So that compassion in these days of mourning, will bring repentance which can nourish our hope. Our social commitment will be our way to commemorate.

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About ORBIT

ORBIT is active in the world of diversity and migration. Together with people, organizations and governments, we are committed to:

- inter-religious exchange
- just migration policies
- cooperation in diversity
- effective ways to turn racism around

ORBIT works in all regions of Flanders and the Brussels Capital Region. With publications, actions and campaigns, education and debate, we encourage encounter, dialogue and decent policies in this age of diversity and migration.