

Dear people from the countryside and the city, from Dresden, Saxony, Germany, Europe, and beyond, I am very happy that you are all here today, once again united in our commitment to a good, stable society for everyone. Thank you very much!

My name is Nilsson Samuelsson. In 1998, I came from Sweden to Germany to study. Because of love and many good friends, I have stayed in Dresden to this day. Today, I am actively involved as the voluntary chairman of the Dresden Foreigners' Council (Ausländerrat Dresden e.V.), because I know from my own experience that arriving is not always easy. For nearly 35 years, the Dresden Foreigners' Council has been supporting people who come to Dresden from abroad, helping them to find their way more quickly and to feel safe and at home. This is the core of our work, with over 100 dedicated employees and 300 volunteers.

A German politician once said, "Migration is the mother of all problems." Having experienced migration myself, I thought a lot about this statement at the time. Today, I think... and I believe we all know and feel this... that's not true. It was an oversimplification back then.

Migration is—and I think we all also know this—often the result of two very different problems. In fact, social injustice and environmental destruction are the real parents of all problems. One of these problems is indeed forced migration, where people have little choice but to leave their home.

This is an important distinction because we need to recognize and address the real problems people face. Border surveillance and individual controls can certainly slow down migration and refugee movements, but these measures do not solve the problems that cause migration in the first place—such as crop failures, persecution, social misery, environmental disasters, war, and so on.

Ein bekannter Spruch besagt: "Geld regiert die Welt", nur den meisten Menschen geht es eigentlich - und wir wissen es alle - nicht um Geld. A well-known saying goes, "Money makes the world go round," but for most people – and we all know that - not everything is about money.

Instead—and I'm convinced of this—most people, beyond all the beautiful material things this world has to offer, care primarily about a good, equitable society where everyone is treated as equals—whether in the family, in friendships, with good neighbors, through mutual curiosity, cultural experiences, meaningful activities, or a healthy environment that ensures our existence.

That's what it's all about, and much of this is also enshrined in the German Constitution, such as: "No one may be disadvantaged or favored because of their gender, ancestry, race, language, homeland and origin, faith, or religious or political beliefs." (Article 3, Paragraph 3, Sentence 1 of the German constitution)

Today, we are witnessing how powerful forces from both within the country and abroad want to take away the rights that we, as a society, have fought for through the highs and lows of German and European history.

For these forces of autocratic principles and ideologies, democracy in Europe is an obstacle, and they apparently spend very large sums of money to undermine the cohesion of people in Europe, Germany, Saxony, Dresden, and all small towns and villages through campaigns on the internet and in the public sphere.

And, as we all know, advertising and propaganda work for products like sneakers or soft drinks just as they do for political parties and ideological movements: on lampposts as well as on so-called social media.

If we don't have the money to counter with expensive campaigns, we are left with the power of unity.

If we like or even love our very good life in Europe, Germany, and Saxony compared to the rest of the world, then we must not allow ourselves to be divided by autocratic forces! We must stand together for a stable society. We will not let ourselves be thrown back into an authoritarian Germany of the past. We do not want to go back! We want to move forward, together!

So, pay close attention to where you cast your vote on September 1st. Vote wisely, with both your mind and heart, for a better society.

Unity always wins! Thank you!