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Panel: “Refugees. War and Peace. Securitization. New challenges for Europe.”

I come from Centre for Peace Studies, Zagreb, Croatia – country that due to the war in Yugoslavia had many people fleeing to other countries, 23 years ago. Due to the war and destruction in the 90's, there was a mass emigration from Yugoslavia which led EU to establish protection mechanism for refugees that had to leave their homes. That was **temporary protection** – mechanism that gave people immediate protection in the country they have arrived, protecting their human rights and giving them a basic set of rights during the time they are staying in the country, and until the situation in their country of origin is stable for them to return.

Today this mechanism hasn't been activated by the EU leaders, even though we are witnessing a massive emigration due to the war. Centre for Peace Studies was advocating for this option, with extended possibility to get asylum after temporary protection would expire – because with asylum they get higher set of rights and possibility to continue their lives.

Today, Croatia has joined EU member states that are closing their borders and it has detained refugees because they wished to go further to the countries where they have family and friends. New Croatian government has changed the laws that are now giving to the army the right that police had on the borders. Also, the new state budget for 2016. increased funds for border control and cut funds for integration policies.

Croatian citizens and public has shown high solidarity toward refugees – and today there are new initiatives that are supporting refugees and tackling the issue on many levels.

The solution for humanitarian crisis is safe passage organised by all EU member states, and instant protection. With the current political decisions refugees don't have other options but to use the service of smugglers. Current policies encourage smugglers in their work and do not stop them, and also put refugees in unsafe position: death, trafficking, provoking trauma. We have to ask ourselves what are we doing to the future refugee generations, children that are at the moment living in fields on the no man's land?

Today policies are creating atmosphere of fear. Who are we afraid of? Mothers and fathers who are caring their children in hands?

Discrimination, fascist narrative and ignorance must stop.

Fortress Europe must fall.

We need responsible and active policy.

We need media that informs public correctly.

I agree with Mr. Melegh, that we need a Peace Plan.

I suggest 4 points of action:

1. Humanitarian response, safe passage and refugee protection
2. Integration policies and possibilities that include refugees and domestic population
3. Development projects that will support civil society in the countries of war
4. Lead the policy of open borders for the people, not only for profit – migration will not stop