

Dresden, October 11, 2018

## **Open letter against xenophobia**

To the citizens of Dresden

On 19.09.2018 a racially motivated assault on a foreign doctoral student of a Dresden research institute in a tram of DVB occurred. In the face of the fact that this was not the first case of xenophobic violence in Dresden, we have an urgent need to comment on it. We strongly condemn this and all other xenophobic abuses. Xenophobia damages and shames our society and cannot be justified by anything.

As spokespersons of doctoral candidates of six Dresden research institutes, we represent 550 Ph.D. students from more than 60 countries, who are scientifically active in Dresden. Our institutes stand for globally recognized top research. Here, doctoral students from all over the world make important contributions to basic and applied research in Dresden as a science location. In a wide range of areas, from biophysics to medical technology to materials research, our findings lay the foundation for new developments and, hence, for the continued prosperity through innovation in our country. Saxony in particular, benefits greatly from the scientists who bring their skills to the Free State and thus raise Saxony's research to an international level.

Science has always been a cross-border discipline. It is true that excellent research can only be successful with the world's brightest minds. In our institutes, international groups have been working successfully together on new developments for a long time. The mutual exchange of knowledge and the resulting insights are essential for research, which only then obtains its innovative power. This cooperation shows how successful integration can and should be lived: Foreign doctoral candidates live for several years in Germany during their doctorate and, in many cases, build up a long-term future beyond the doctoral phase in our country. They make an essential contribution to the long-term, economic perspective of our country and our common prosperity. In addition, they actively participate in the social and cultural life of our country and thus become part of our diverse society.

We condemn the incident just mentioned as well as any other form of xenophobia. Such acts lack any justification and must have no place in our society. We doctoral candidates stand together and expressly oppose any form of exclusion, violence and oppression towards other people based on their origin or culture. We stand for an open society, in which mutual respect is lived and we wish for this in our environment. For this reason, we are in solidarity with all the victims of xenophobia-motivated violence.

The doctoral students of the

- German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases
- Helmholtz Center Dresden-Rossendorf
- Leibniz Institute for Solid State and Materials Research
- Max Planck Institute for Chemical Physics of Solids
- Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics
- Max Planck Institute for the Physics of Complex Systems.