

Welcome address
Vice Rector of Frederick University, Prof. George Demosthenous

Lecture by Prof. William Ayers
Frederick University, 21/03/2011

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

On behalf of Frederick University, I welcome you to this event. Firstly let me extend a warm welcome to our distinguished guest, Prof William Ayers, who will share with us his valuable experience and knowledge on Human Rights and Social Justice with special focus on the Role of Education in the Democratic Project.

The title of Prof. Ayers' lecture can be characterised as at least imaginative.

It predisposes us for statements that will hopefully reflect the goals and aspirations of the world and in particular of the people who are oppressed and suppressed all around the world (minorities, women, and children). Oppressed people live in unjust and undemocratic conditions, physically, mentally, socially, psychologically that keep them trapped into the aspirations of the oppressors and the leaders. Often oppressed people are the victims of the few who use power and hegemony over the many.

To a lesser or greater extent, it is commonly accepted that the strategy and tactics of USA presidents in the past decades, before the "age of Obama" that promises so much, led to the rise of anti-American sentiments and, dare I say, hate towards the US.

Such conditions and actions need to make people all around the world thoughtful and sceptical and sad, and to consider the many consequences and implications the living in an unjust and undemocratic world creates.

Therefore, we need to ponder: What do we really need to do to be just and democratic? What is the role of education in all these? Is education our only tool to achieve democracy? Maybe we need to rethink what is valuable, ideal and how it can be achieved. Maybe educating the person and stretching his/her many abilities and making him/her able to live in the society rightfully and authentically and respectfully of the self and others is the key.

We here at Frederick, a University promoting free exchange of ideas, are honoured to welcome the esteemed Professor William Ayers and ready to be communicants of his thoughts on Human Rights, Democracy, Justice and Education.

Thank you