

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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BQ 250 – No. 14/2013

The Ambassador for Human Rights of the World Evangelical Alliance Calls for Help for Fleeing Syrian Christians

(Bonn, 27.03.2013) The Ambassador for Human Rights of the World Evangelical Alliance, Thomas Schirmacher, has challenged the media, governments, and churches to take a serious interest in the fate of the Christians being chased from their homes in Syria. He noted, "I know that many people in Syria are suffering, but Christians are seeing a repetition of the situation in Iraq, that they are largely wiped out between the opposing fronts, and once their survivors are driven out, they seldom have the opportunity to return." The mass exodus of the 2.3 million Christians from Syria is not a secondary matter. Of the previous 60,000 Christians in Homs, less than 1,000 remain. Christians are being killed and tortured while their women are being raped and their churches destroyed.

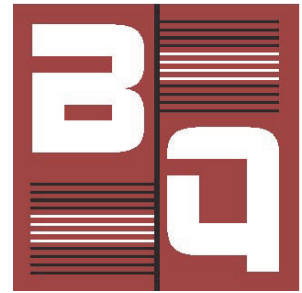


In Dialogue with the Metropolit of Lebanon Cyril Salim Bustors



Dialogue with the Grand Mufti of Lebanon Mohammed Rashid Qabban

Schirmacher explains that the rebels see Christians as supporters of Assad, while Assad's loyalists do not trust Christians. Repeatedly refugees report that "terrorists" with green or black headbands beat up Christians and destroy their property while announcing that a similar fate awaits Christians who do not soon flee to other countries. Some Christians are being used as human shields on the battlefields. Yet it is conspicuous that most Christians neither speak negatively about their Muslim neighbors nor mention the religious



A joint platform for the following Bonn organizations on the basis of the Evangelical Alliance:

Commission for Religious Freedom of the German and the Austrian Evangelical Alliance
www.ead.de/akref

Culture and Science Publ.
www.vkwonline.de

Giving Hands – International Charity
www.gebende-haende.de

Help Worldwide – International Charity
www.hilfe-weltweit.org

Institute for Emergency Counselling, Terminal Care and Grief Counselling
www.bucer.de/ist

Institute for Prolife and Family Studies
www.bucer.de/lfw

International Institute for Islamic Studies of the World Evangelical Alliance
www.islaminstitute.net

International Institute for Religious Freedom of the World Evangelical Alliance
www.iirf.eu

Martin Bucer Seminary
www.bucer.de

Pro Mundis e. V.
www.thomasschirmacher.net

Theological Commission of "Hope for Europe" (European Evangelical Alliance)
www.hfe.org

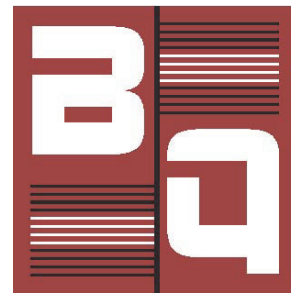
Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance
www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/tc/

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identity of the terrorists. Rather, they continue to hope that they can return to a peaceful condition in their homeland.



In Discussion with Syrian Refugees and Metropolitan Clemis Danile Kourieh

“ZDF,” which interviewed refugees, church leaders, and the Grand Mufti of Lebanon while preparing a TV documentary.

Many of the senior leaders of the Syrian churches have fled to Lebanon for safety, along with many of their church members. The Grand Mufti of Lebanon, Mohammed Rashid Qabbani, the most

important Muslim theologian in Lebanon, has articulated his interest in and desire for peaceful life together among Muslims and Christians. For many years several leaders in the ancient churches in the near and middle east have expressed their deep concerns about being driven out of the region and being forced to resettle in the west, leaving the middle east entirely Muslim. Many of them

see this situation is a result of the lack of a separation between religion and government and of the imposition of Muslim law (sharia) on a multi-religious society in which millions of Christians have lived for centuries. The calls of the leaders of the ancient Christian churches for very serious Muslim-Christian dialogue arise from their desire to avoid a destructive clash of civilizations or even a war of religions.

To get a proper overview of the situation, Schirmmacher communicated with leaders of the old eastern churches in Rome, Washington, Geneva, and Beirut. These people included Ignatius Zakka I, Patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox Church; Clemis Daniel Kourieh, Metropolitan of the Syrian Orthodox Church; Melkite-Catholic Metropolitan Cyril Salim Bustros; and Patriarch Gregory III Laham, head of the Melkite Greek-Catholic Church. Schirmmacher also interviewed refugees in multiple countries, partly while traveling with a team from the German television network



During shots in Lebanon

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Theological Commission of “Hope for Europe” (European Evangelical Alliance)

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Downloads:

- [Photo 1](#): In Dialogue with the Metropolitan of Lebanon Cyril Salim Bustros
- [Photo 2](#): In Discussion with Syrian Refugees and Metropolitan Clemis Danile Kourieh

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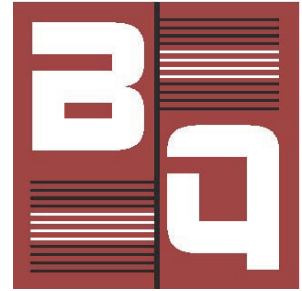
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- [Photo 3](#): Dialogie with the Grand Mufti of Lebanon Mohammed Rashid Qabbani
- [Photo 4](#): During shots in Lebanon

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