

# Bonner Querschnitte

## Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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## BQ 461 – No. 66/2016

### Schirmmacher sees positive Results from the Pope's Visit to Azerbaijan

(Bonn, 28.12.2016) The Deputy General Secretary of the World Evangelical Alliance, Thomas Schirmmacher, has given a positive review of the Pope's visit in Azerbaijan. With his visit, the Pope encouraged the small number of Christians there and has made clear that he not only travels where he is guaranteed the approval of the masses. Dialog with other churches and religions represented in the country of Azerbaijan is anything but easy – as was previously the case in Georgia, where Pope



Pope Francis recognizes Schirmmacher upon entering,  
© BQ/Warnecke

Francis had been the day before. It is estimated that there are 7.000 Protestants and 400 Catholics in Azerbaijan.

After Albania, Azerbaijan was the second country with a Muslim majority in which the Pope thanked the government and the highest Islamic leaders, as Schirmmacher has likewise done, for acting against Islamic extremism and enabling the Christian minority to live in relative freedom.

In a worship service held by the Pope in the sole Catholic Church in

Baku, the so-called pro-cathedral Apostolic Prefecture of Baku, Schirmmacher was the sole ecumenical guest. The welcome given Schirmmacher by the Pope, as well as the entire worship service, was broadcast on state television and on Vatican television.

Prior thereto, Schirmmacher had conducted a discussion with the head of the Catholic Church in Aserbaidshchan, Fr. Jozef Cerkov, who had invited him to the worship service. Several weeks prior thereto, Schirmmacher had visited Azerbaijan and had met with members of the government, heads of various religions, and church leaders there.

#### Downloads and Links:

- Television recording: 5:15–5:31:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMAddDqVm-U>
- [Photo 1](#) and [Photo 2](#): Pope Francis sees Schirmmacher upon entering,  
© L'Osservatore Romano (Photo 07061\_02102016 and 07070\_02102016)

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

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Culture and Science Publ.  
[www.vkwoonline.com](http://www.vkwoonline.com)

Giving Hands – International Charity  
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[www.worldevangelicals.org/tc/](http://www.worldevangelicals.org/tc/)

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- [Photo 3](#): Pope Francis recognizes Schirmmacher upon entering, © BQ/Warnecke
- [Photo 4](#) and [Photo 5](#): The Catholic church in Baku prior to the arrival of the Pope
- [Photo 6](#): Thomas Schirmmacher with Fr. Jozef Cerkov
- [Photo 7](#): The big mosque in Baku
- [Photo 8](#): The seating for the Pope and the Grand Scheikh in the big mosque in Baku shortly before their meeting

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