

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Schirmmacher promotes interfaith dialogue and human brotherhood in Abu Dhabi

(Bonn, 22.05.2026) Prof Dr Dr Thomas Paul Schirmmacher, President of the International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) and President of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR), held a series of high-level discussions in Abu Dhabi (see photo gallery at <https://thomasschirmmacher.net/?p=25149>) covering the fields of academia, politics and religion.

The focus was on a meeting with the leadership of the think tank TRENDS Research & Advisory, to which the founder and CEO, political and security researcher Dr Mohammed Abdullah Al-Ali, had extended an invitation. The exchange with the senior management was followed by a discussion with Schirmmacher led by the institute's researchers on the global situation. Al-Ali and Schirmmacher exchanged literature and gifts and agreed to work more closely together in the fight against religious extremism.



Meeting the leadership of UAE's re-eminent think tank TRENDS, invited by its famous founder and CEO Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Ali (second from left) © BQ

Schirmmacher also met the Secretary-General of the Higher Committee for Human Fraternity, Ambassador Dr Khalid Ghanim Al-Ghaith, accompanied by Imam Mohammed Twahidi. The discussions centred on the implementation of the values of human fraternity and interfaith cooperation. Schirmmacher was in Abu Dhabi as a direct witness when, on 4 February 2019, Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmad al-Tayyeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar University, signed the "Document on Human Fraternity for Living Together in Peace in the World", thereby establishing the Committee. Literature and gifts were exchanged on this occasion as well.

In addition to further discussions, Schirmmacher once again visited the Abrahamic Family House, where he paid a particular visit to the synagogue and its rabbi, having

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

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Evangelical Missiology, Journal of missiopot – Evangelical Forum for Missions, Cultures and Religions (Evangelical Alliance in Germany) missiopot.org

Evangelical Review of Theology (New York, Bonn) theology.worlddea.org/evangelical-review-of-theology

Giving Hands – International Charity (Bonn) gebende-haende.de

Institut für Islamfragen der Deutschen, Schweizer und Österreichischen Allianz (IfI) islaminstitut.de

International Institute for Islamic Studies (IIS) (Bonn) islamistitute.net

International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) (Bonn, Vancouver, San José – Costa Rica) iirf.global

International Journal for Religious Freedom (IJRF) (Bonn/Toronto) ijrf.org

International Secretariat of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR) ishr.org

Islam and Christianity journal.islamistitute.net

Martin Bucer Seminary (Munich, Zürich, Tirana, São Paulo, Helsinki, Istanbul) bucer.org

SOS World (Brussels) sosworld.be/page-daccueil

Theological Commission of the European Evangelical Alliance europeanea.org

Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft (VKW) (Culture and Science Publ.) vkwonline.com

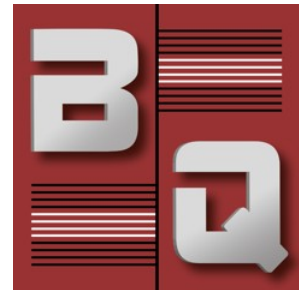
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met the Catholic bishop and the mosque's leadership during his last visit. He was accompanied by Zelma, the Catholic Church's representative for religious affairs.

TRENDS is an independent research centre founded in Abu Dhabi in 2014 that specialises in strategic analysis of global challenges. It conducts studies in the fields of international relations, politics, economics and the social sciences, and offers in-depth insights into regional and international issues, often with a focus on future prospects and conflict analysis. TRENDS maintains partnerships and offices with research institutions in 20 countries across almost every continent.

The Higher Committee of Human Fraternity is an independent international body based in Abu Dhabi that promotes the values of human fraternity worldwide. It implements the objectives of the Document on Human Fraternity, which strengthens interfaith dialogue, promotes peace, tolerance and coexistence, and advances interfaith initiatives. The board includes Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot (President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue), Mohamed Hussein Mahrasawi (President of Al-Azhar University), M. Bruce Lustig (Chief Rabbi of the Washington Hebrew Congregation), Mohammed Khalifa Al Mubarak (Director of the Department of Culture and Tourism, Abu Dhabi), as well as Irina Bokova (former Director-General of UNESCO) and Leymah Gbowee (Nobel Peace Prize laureate).



HCHF His Excellency Ambassador Dr Khalid Ghanim Al-Ghaith Secretary-General of the Higher Committee on Human Fraternity © BQ

The Abrahamic Family House is an interfaith complex on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi comprising a mosque, a church and a synagogue, all three of which are the same size, built from the same material and designed by the same star architect, David Adjaye (from Ghana), although they look very different in keeping with their respective religions. It serves as a meeting place for the three Abrahamic religions. The idea arose immediately following the Document on Human Fraternity (2019). Construction began around 2020, with the opening scheduled for 2023. The Yearbook on Religious Freedom provided a detailed assessment of the building in an article by Gerard Arnold on 'The Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi' (Yearbook on Religious Freedom/Jahrbuch Religionsfreiheit 2025, pp. 49–72: <https://iirf.global/?p=6393>).

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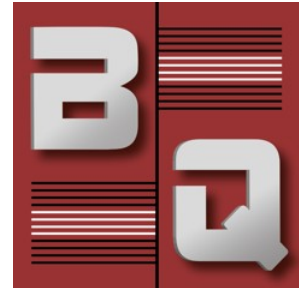
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Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1:** Meeting the leadership of UAE's re-eminent think tank TRENDS, invited by its famous founder and CEO Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Ali (second from left) © BQ
- **Photo 2:** HCHF His Exzellenz Ambassador Dr Khalid Ghanim Al-Ghaith Secretary-General of the Higher Committee on Human Fraternity © BQ
- **Photo 3:** Abrahamic House – Thomas Schirmmacher in the synagogue of the Abrahamic House in Abu Dhabi © BQ

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