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Jews and Christians Take a Stand against Antisemitism in Bern

Thomas Schirrmacher speaks about the history of hatred of Jews and Christian replacement theology

(Bonn, 23.11.2026) On the anniversary of the November pogroms of 1938, the Jewish-Christian platform "Shalom Switzerland" invited people to Bern on November 9, 2026, for a day of talks and reflection against antisemitism and hatred of Jews. A joint declaration was read publicly at the Evangelisches Gemeinschaftswerk on Nägeligasse. Archbishop Thomas Schirrmacher, President of the International Council of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR/IGFM), spoke about the history of hatred of Jews and the responsibility of the churches. Tibor Shalev Schlosser, Israel's Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein, also spoke at the event and heard Schirrmacher's lecture.


The joint declaration against antisemitism and hatred of Jews is read publicly in Bern. It is shown on the screen in German and French. © Shalom-Switzerland

Schirrmacher's lecture was entitled "3000 Years: The Jews as 'Enemies of Humanity' – 1700 Years: 'Replacement Theology'." Schirrmacher traced how, since antiquity, Jews have again and again been portrayed as a threat in very different societies. Using the examples of Constantine's statements on the date of Easter in the context of the Council of Nicaea and of Luther's late writings on the Jews, he showed how Christians reinforced anti-Jewish notions. Turning to the present, he distinguished between legitimate criticism of Israeli government policy and the antisemitic attribution of collective guilt to Jews. He linked the protection of Jewish life and the defense of Israel's right to exist with the demand that human rights and religious freedom be upheld for all.

In the presence of the Israeli ambassador, Schirrmacher emphasized that Jewish people must enjoy the same rights as the members of any other ethnic or religious community. Nor did he call for special rights for Israel. The same standards must apply to the country

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

Bonn Abrahamic Center for Global Justice, Peace and Sustainability

Business Coalition of the World Evangelical Alliance (Bonn, Hamburg) *business.worldea.org*

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

Evangelical Review of Theology (New York, Bonn) *theology.worldea.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 (IIIS) (Bonn) *islaminstitute.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.islaminstitute.net*

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

SOS World (Brussels) *sosworld.be*

Theological Commission of the European Evangelical Alliance *europeanea.org*

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

WEA book series: Global Issues Series *theology.worldea.org/global-issues*
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as to any other state. Israel's government and its policies may be criticized just as clearly as any other government and its policies. But making Israel a scapegoat, or even calling its existence as a state into question, must "not even appear on the horizon."

The day linked the commemoration of the November pogroms with the question of how Jews experience antisemitism in Switzerland today. A short film in the program recalled Walter Strauss, who as a teenager lived through the pogrom night in Berlin and fled to Switzerland. Four Jewish Swiss men and women, among them Rabbi Eliezer di Martino, who serves in the cantons of Vaud and Geneva, were interviewed about antisemitic attacks they had experienced themselves. They reported verbal and physical assaults. The program also provided for a lecture by Israeli attorney Calev Myers on Israel-related antisemitism since October 7, 2023.

The initiators of Shalom Switzerland include the Catholic theologian Markus Neurohr-Schäfer, the Reformed pastor Christoph Monsch-Rinderknecht and Martin Bühlmann, co-founder of Vineyard Bern. The platform seeks to promote Jewish-Christian encounters and calls on people to sign the declaration online. From 2027 onward, a similar event is to be held each year on October 7.

Downloads and Links

- Photo 1: Archbishop Thomas Schirrmacher during his lecture on the history of hatred of Jews and Christian replacement theology © Shalom-Switzerland
- Photo 2: Christina Bumbacher Berli, Rabbi Eliezer di Martino and Anne Weil-Lévy during a panel discussion in Bern © Shalom-Switzerland
- Photo 3: The joint declaration against antisemitism and hatred of Jews is read publicly in Bern. It is shown on the screen in German and French. © Shalom-Switzerland
- Photo 4: Thomas Schirrmacher, Martin Bühlmann and Israeli Ambassador Tibor Shalev Schlosser (from left) at the event in Bern © Shalom-Switzerland
- Shalom Switzerland – A look back and photo gallery: https://shalom-switzerland.ch/en/veranstaltung
- The lecture by Thomas Schirrmacher: https://thomasschirrmacher.net/?p=26156
- Joint Declaration against Anti-Semitism and Hatred of the Jewish People: https://shalom-switzerland.ch/en/erklaerung

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