

# Bonner Querschnitte

*Bonn Profiles – Press Reports*

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## **BQ 404 – No. 09/2016**

### **World Evangelical Alliance provided with Information on Discussion between the Pope and the Russian Patriarch**

#### **Schirmmacher commemorates 70 Years of Christian Persecution in Russia**

(Bonn, 21.03.2016) The Russian Orthodox Church's department for foreign affairs has provided the Director of the International Institute for Religious Freedom and moderator for intrafaith (ecumenical) relationships for the World Evangelical Alliance, together with the General Secretary of the Asian Evangelical Alliance, Richard Howell, (New Delhi) with information on the results of a discussion between the Pope and the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church. The meeting between the Pope and the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church climaxed in a joint statement – including the topic of the persecution of Christians. Archimandrite Philaret Bulekov, Vice President of the Russian Orthodox Church Department of External Church Relations, welcomed that large churches and Christian associations were coming closer to each other in matters relating to Christian persecution.



Howell and Schirmmacher were in Moscow for executive sessions of the Global Christian Forum, both acting as representatives of the World Evangelical Alliance. For 20 years, the Global Christian Forum has been a discussion forum for the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, the World Evangelical Alliance, and the Pentecostal World Fellowship.

Additionally, Schirmmacher visited the Russian Evangelical Alliance and conducted discussions with the General Secretary, Sergey Vdovin, and with the presidents of both of the largest member churches, the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists and the Pentecostal Churches of Evangelical Faith. In the course of the Global Christian Forum, the head of the baptists, Pentecostals, and Lutherans met representatives of

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[www.vkwoonline.com](http://www.vkwoonline.com)

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Institute for Pro-life and Family Studies  
[www.bucer.de/ilfw](http://www.bucer.de/ilfw)

International Institute for Islamic Studies of the World Evangelical Alliance  
[www.islaminstitute.net](http://www.islaminstitute.net)

International Institute for Religious Freedom of the World Evangelical Alliance  
[www.iirf.eu](http://www.iirf.eu)

Martin Bucer Seminary  
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Pro Mundis e. V.  
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Theological Commission of "Hope for Europe" (European Evangelical Alliance)  
[www.hfe.org](http://www.hfe.org)

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the Russian Orthodox church at the patriarchate. During the meeting, Schirmmacher and Howell thanked the Russian churches for having upheld faith in Jesus Christ during 70 years of communist rule and the most brutal Christian persecution and commemorated the martyrs. However, he also called upon churches to learn from history and advocate religious freedom in Russia and stand up for the persecuted church around the world.

In addition, Schirmmacher met with the board and the youth board of the Russian Section of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR; German name:



The international committee of the Global Christian Forum in Moskau 2016. © KimCain / Global Christian Forum (for free use).

Internationalen Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte, or IGFM). Thomas Schirmmacher is the International President of the ISHR. The Russian Section of the ISHR is one of the largest human rights organizations in Russia. As the chairman, Vladimir Novitski stated, the organization has a multitude of followers among young people. The preparations for the ISHR's next international council meeting in Bonn in April were among other matters covered in the discussions. Schirmmacher will stand for reelection at the time of the next international council meeting.

### Downloads and Links:

- Global Christian Forum report: <https://mospat.ru/en/2016/03/02/news128801/>
- Statement by the Pope and the Patriarch: [http://de.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/12/im\\_wortlaut\\_gemeinsame\\_erklärung\\_von\\_franziskus\\_und\\_kyryll/1208118](http://de.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/12/im_wortlaut_gemeinsame_erklärung_von_franziskus_und_kyryll/1208118)
- **Photo 1:** From the left: Schirmmacher, Bulekov, Howell. © KimCain / Global Christian Forum (for free use).
- **Photo 2:** Schirmmacher with the General Secretary of the Russian Evangelical Alliance, Sergey Vdovin. © Martin Warnecke / BQ
- **Photo 3:** The head office of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchat in Moscow. © Martin Warnecke / BQ
- **Photo 4:** The international committee of the Global Christian Forum in Moskau 2016. © KimCain / Global Christian Forum (for free use).

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