

Bonner Querschnitte

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BQ 518 – No. 01/2018

Competing Interpretations

IIRF Co-Director is commenting on a German ecumenical report on freedom of religion

(Bonn/Gießen/Kapstadt, 02.02.2018) The Co-Director of the International Institute for Religious Freedom, Prof. Dr. Christof Sauer, welcomes in an extensive analysis that the “Ecumenical report on the religious freedom of Christians around the world” has renewed attention for the discrimination and persecution of Christians.

He especially highlights the contribution of the former UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of religion or belief, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Heiner Bielefeldt, Erlangen. Bielefeldt called the freedom to change one’s faith the litmus test of freedom of religion or belief.

Overall the Professor for religious freedom and the research of persecution of Christians at Giessen School of Theology, Germany, is recommending to strengthen the Christian and theological perspective of the report, in order to more inclusively cover the real experiences of Christians on the ground.

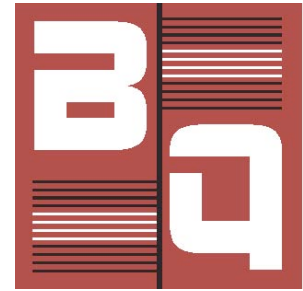
The report was presented in Berlin on 15 December 2017 by the two major church bodies in Germany, the “Evangelical (Protestant) Church in Germany” (EKD) and the German Roman Catholic Bishops’ Conference.

The analysis also deals with critical comments made about the World Watch List off the international Christian agency Open Doors. Sauer sees a competition in interpreting discrimination and persecution of Christians which is reflected in differing terminology and emphases.

Interviews: Christof Sauer is available for interviews: christofsauer@iirf.eu or phone +27 21 783 0823.



The Professors Sauer, Bielefeldt and Schirmmacher at the Congress “Christenverfolgung” (“Persecution of Christians”) in Schwäbisch Gmünd, 2013 © BQ / Vogt



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.vkwoonline.com

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

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

Institute for Prolife and Family Studies
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International Institute for Islamic Studies of the World Evangelical Alliance
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www.thomasschirmmacher.net

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

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

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- [Photo 1](#): The Professors Sauer, Bielefeldt and Schirmmacher at the Congress “Christenverfolgung” (“Persecution of Christians”) in Schwäbisch Gmünd, 2013 © BQ / Vogt
- [Photo 2](#): Prof. Dr. Christof Sauer © FTH Gießen, Streitberger
- Theses on the “Ökumenischer Bericht zur Religionsfreiheit von Christen weltweit 2017” on the Facebook page of the professorship on religious freedom and research of persecution of christians: <https://www.facebook.com/PRFCV/posts/161610617811639>
- IIRF Bulletin 2018/1: Christof Sauer: Solidarität mit bedrängten und verfolgten Christen und Einsatz für das Menschenrecht auf Religionsfreiheit für alle – Kommentar zum ökumenischen Bericht zur Religionsfreiheit 2017. Bonn: Culture and Science Publishing 2018. 28 p.: <https://iirf.eu/journal-books/iirf-bulletin-german/iirf-bulletin-2018-1/>
- Ökumenischer Bericht zur Religionsfreiheit von Christen weltweit 2017: Das Recht auf Religions- und Weltanschauungsfreiheit: Bedrohungen – Einschränkungen – Verletzungen. (Gemeinsame Texte, No 25.) Published by the secretary’s office of the German Bishops’ Conference and by the Church administrative office of the Evangelical Church in Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland – EKD), Bonn/Hannover, Oktober 2017, 70 p. Online: https://www.ekd.de/ekd_de/ds_doc/oe_kumenischer_bericht_religionsfreiheit2017.pdf and https://www.dbk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/diverse_downloads/presse_2012/GT21_Oekum-Bericht_web.pdf

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