

# Bonner Querschnitte

## Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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## BQ 833 – No. 13/2025

# Thomas Schirmmacher and Matthias Boehning on an ISHR-Panama Exploration Mission

## From a report by the Secretary General of the ISHR Matthias Boehning

(Bonn, 06.02.2025) The President and the Secretary General (SG) of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR), Thomas Schirmmacher and Matthias Boehning, conducted an exploration mission in Panama since ISHR currently does not have a representation in the country. During his recent trips to Miami, however, the SG during a meeting with Dr. Haydee Marin's, Vice President of the ISHR for the American region, to engage with some of her friends and colleagues, eg Ana Abaunza Ramos, who is half-Panamanian, and has long had plans to start a human rights work in Panama. Dr. Marin connected the SG to a Panamanian lady in Panama City, Miriam Morales, who served the ISHR leadership very well during their presence in Panama by taking them around in her car and introducing them to very interesting and promising contacts:

(1) Maria del Carmen Salaverry, who works in the Office of the First Lady of Panama and is very close to her and many other influential people in the highest levels of Panama's government – the ISHR leadership had a very friendly and warm introductory meeting with her in her office and made plans for a joint event on the human rights situation in February 2025 in Panama City to which all human rights actors and key stakeholders in Panama would be invited to kickoff an initiative to foster greater justice in the country;



President and Secretary General of ISHR with the leadership of with Funda Género © ISHR/Martin Warnecke

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(2) three representatives of the Panamanian women's rights organization "Funda Género", President Gilma de León, Vice President Haydee Méndez de Espino and Xiomara de Armijo – all three doctors, who presented their work to the ISHR leadership and articulated concrete needs that could potentially be met through the cooperation with ISHR: very specifically, they published a collection of all women-related legislation in Panama a few years ago, a book which now needs to be updated for which funds are needed that can potentially be raised through ISHR's support from the German embassy's small project fund;



Thomas Schirmacher and Matthias Boehning with Ministers of the government of Panama © ISHR/Martin Warnecke

(3) Miriam Morales' son Luigi Pezzotti who is a young criminal lawyer in Panama that has a passion for human rights and also international law and could potentially be a good founding member of a Panamanian section of the ISHR due to his passion and dynamism.

Not through Miriam but during the Faith & Freedom Summit in the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament in Panama, the ISHR leadership got to know another potential founding member like Pastor Adonis Betancourt Hechavarria of the Iglesia Evangélica Comunicación Bíblica Internacional, heading the human rights commission of the Evangelical Alliance in Panama.

This is the conclusion, the ISHR leadership draw from the exploration mission: "With all quality contacts and existing willingness and readiness, the ISHR leadership believes that the establishment of a Panamanian representation of ISHR is not only realistic but also feasible in the rather short to medium term."

### Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1:** Thomas Schirmacher addressing the human rights summit in the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament © Esther Schirmacher
- **Photo 2** (left to right): Matthias Boehning Pastor Adonis Betancourt Hechavarria Thomas Schirmacher © Esther Schirmacher
- **Photo 3:** Matthias Boehning and Luigi Pezzotti © ISHR/Martin Warnecke

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- **Photo 4:** President and Secretary General of ISHR with the leadership of with Funda Género © ISHR/Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 5:** Thomas Schirmmacher and Matthias Boehning with Ministers of the government of Panama © ISHR/Martin Warnecke

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