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Meeting to strengthen Christians in the Middle East

Syriac Catholic Patriarch Younan receives global Christian and human rights leader Bishop Prof. Thomas Schirmacher to strengthen Christian presence in Middle East

Press release from the Syriac Catholic Patriarchate in Beirut
(<https://syriacpress.com/?p=72587>)

(Beirut/Bonn, 01.09.2025) In a bid to strengthen the Christian presence in the Middle East and promote human rights and human dignity, Syriac Catholic Patriarch Mar Ignatius Youssef III Younan welcomed Bishop Prof. Thomas Schirmacher, former Secretary General of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) and President of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR), at the Syriac Catholic Patriarchate headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon.

Bishop Schirmacher was accompanied by a delegation from the One Voice Foundation, along with Prof. Lara Wakim, National Coordinator of the United Nations Environment Programme's Faith for Earth Initiative. The meeting was also attended by Monsignor Habib Murad, Fr. Karim Kalash, lawyer Mai Bulos, and Diyaa Naasani.

Discussions covered the Syriac presence in Lebanon, the history and global reach of the Syriac Catholic Church, and an overview of the International Society for Human



The Syriac Catholic Patriarch in Beirut greets Thomas Schirmacher © IIRF/ Esther Schirmacher

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

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

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

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

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

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International Institute for Islamic Studies (IIIS) (Bonn) islam institute.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.islam institute.net

Martin Bucer Seminary (Bonn, Zürich, Tirana, São Paulo, Helsinki, Istanbul, Delhi) 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

WEA book series: Global Issues Series / World of Theology Series theology.worlddea.org/global-issues
theology.worlddea.org/world-of-theology

WEA Sustainability Center wea-sc.org

Yearbook on Religious Freedom of the Commission for Religious Freedom of the German and the Austrian Evangelical Alliance iirf.global/jahrbuch

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Rights' major initiatives. The talks also addressed the current situation in Lebanon and the wider Middle East, the challenges confronting the Christian faith and Church, and the essential role of dialogue in achieving lasting peace in the region.

The meeting underscored a shared commitment to interfaith cooperation, the defense of human rights, and the preservation of Christian heritage in the Middle East.



The delegations accompanying the Syriac Catholic Patriarch and Thomas Schirmacher © IIRF/Esther Schirmacher

Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1:** The Syriac Catholic Patriarch in Beirut greets Thomas Schirmacher © IIRF/Esther Schirmacher
- **Photo 2:** The Syriac Catholic Patriarch in Beirut explains the situation of Christians in the Middle East to Thomas Schirmacher © IIRF/Esther Schirmacher
- **Photo 3:** Meeting with the leaders of Caritas in the Patriarchate as SOS World and the Royal House of Ghassan cooperate with them © IIRF/Esther Schirmacher
- **Photo 4:** The delegations accompanying the Syriac Catholic Patriarch and Thomas Schirmacher © IIRF/Esther Schirmacher
- **Photo 5:** The Patriarch explains the Chaple of the Patriarchate © IIRF/Esther Schirmacher
- **Photo 6:** The Patriarch receives the highest rank in the Order of Christ the Pantokrater of the Royal House of Ghassan © IIRF/Esther Schirmacher

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