

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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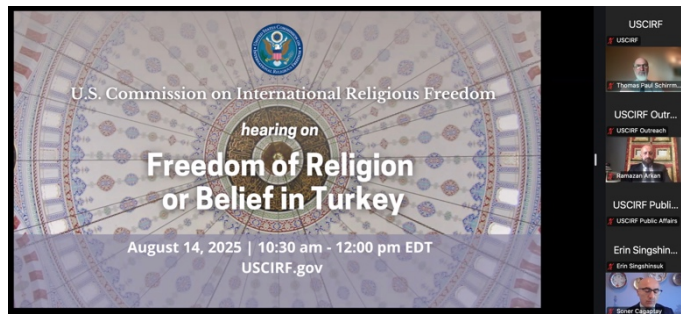
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BQ 873 – No. 53/2025

Schirmmacher publishes his statement at the USCIRF hearing on Freedom of Religion or Belief in Turkey

(Bonn, 09.09.2025) On August 14, 2025, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) organized a virtual Hearing on “Freedom of Religion or Belief in Turkey”.

The official announcement of the hearing stated: “USCIRF’s visit to Turkey in September 2024 and subsequent reporting have confirmed that the Turkish government continues to restrict religious freedom through a variety of means, including administrative, educational, and judicial. This hearing will assess these areas of FoRB restrictions and how they impact Turkey’s many religious communities: Alevis, Protestant Christians, Orthodox and Apostolic Christians, Jews, Sunni Muslims, secularists, and others. It will also consider how the United States can leverage bilateral and multilateral mechanisms to support FoRB for all who call Turkey home. In its 2025 Annual Report, USCIRF recommended that the U.S. Department of State designate Turkey for the U.S. Department of State’s Special Watch List, or SWL, for engaging in systematic and ongoing violations of religious freedom, as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).”



Screenshots of the hearing

After opening remarks by the Chair of USCIRF, Vicky Hartzler, and the Vice Chair of USCIRF, Asif Mahmood, witnesses discussed “potential next steps to advance freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in Turkey and to improve conditions for members of the country’s religious minority and majority communities alike.” Among the witnesses were the Congressman of the 12th District of Florida, Gus M. Bilirakis, the Chair of the Association of Protestant Churches in Turkey (Protestan Kiliseler Derneği) and Senior Pastor of the Antalya Evangelical Churches, Ramazan Arkan, the President of the Alevi Foundations Federation, Haydar Baki Dogan, the Beyer Family Senior Fellow and Director of the Turkish Research Program, The Washington Institute for Near East

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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 missiotope – Evangelical Forum for Missions, Cultures and Religions (German Evangelical Alliance) missiotope.org

Evangelical Review of Theology (New York, Bonn) theology.worlddea.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) 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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Policy, Soner Cagaptay, and the President of the International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) and the International Council of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR), Thomas Paul Schirmacher.



Screenshots of the hearing

Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1** and **photo 2**: Screenshots of the hearing
- The official announcement of the USCIRF, the full recording of the hearing, and the full testimonies of : <https://uscirf.gov/events/hearings/freedom-religion-or-belief-turkey>
- The statement of Thomas Paul Schirmacher:
<https://thomasschirmacher.net/?p=24272>,
<https://uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/Schirmacher%20Turkey%20USCIRF%202025%20FINAL.pdf>

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