

Dresden Statement from Religions

for the 2016 anniversary of German unification

We believe:

- that every person has the right to live according to his or her own religious convictions, and that no one may impose a different faith on another person;
- that every person has the right to change his or her religious affiliation, to choose a different faith or to give up having a specific faith;
- that every person has the right to confess his or her faith publicly and together with others, and that religion is therefore not exclusively a private matter;
- that the state and religion should be separate, but that the state is nonetheless responsible for supporting its citizens in practicing their religion.

We are grateful:

- that freedom of religion in Germany is guaranteed by the Constitution, and that religions are able to practice their religion under the law;
- that the collaboration between the state and religions is clearly regulated by law for the benefit of the citizens;
- that there are many examples of peaceful coexistence between different religions in Germany.

We lament:

- that freedom of religion is not guaranteed in many parts of the world, and that people are persecuted and oppressed on the basis of their faith;
- that religions are not treated equally everywhere, and do not have the same rights and obligations;
- that violence is committed and justified in the name of religions;
- that people allow themselves to be spurred on to hatred against other religions;
- that in Germany, too, people do not respect freedom of religion.

We hereby pledge:

- to allow people of other religions to give witness to their faith both privately and in public;
- to ensure that members of other religions all over the world can also establish worthy and appropriate places of prayer;
- to listen to one another and try to understand one another at a deeper level;
- not to create distorted images of another religion, and to seek interreligious dialogue;
- to ensure that our own religion does not justify violence in any form;
- to promote equal treatment of men and women as established in the Constitution;
- to work with partners from other religions and from secular society for the good of society

