

CONFRONTING ANTISEMITISM AND INTOLERANCE: THE SECOND CONFERENCE

Berlin, October 2018



PREFACE

Between June 26-30, 2017, the first Confronting Antisemitism and Intolerance Conference was held at United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), where 25 experts working on the prevention of antisemitism, right-wing extremism and other enmities from 21 institutions came together. As a result of this gathering in Washington D.C., participants agreed on the need for a follow-up meeting in Germany, a hub of discussion surrounding antisemitism, Jewish-Muslim dialogue, right-wing extremism and migration. Participants also agreed that gaining an understanding of what has been happening in Germany was important. And the political developments that have taken place since the 2017 conference made it even more important to come together again.

“We were thinking democracy is in safe hands in Europe, and now it is not necessarily the case. And this creates an urgent situation.”

— Conference Participant

The Second Confronting Antisemitism and Intolerance Conference was held October 15-18, 2018 in Berlin. More than a conference, it was a gathering of people, some of whom already met in Washington D.C., all working in highly respected organizations both in the US and Germany against antisemitism, Islamophobia and for a better democracy. The four-day-long program included sharing of best practices, a public panel on Strengthening Jewish-Muslim Dialogue, and presentations of solid research on relevant topics including migration, intolerance and confronting hate.

Partners

Live Democracy! Program

This Federal Program supports civil society throughout Germany, working towards the aim of a diverse, non-violent and democratic society. The Program is conducted by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. demokratie-leben.de

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM)

A living memorial to the Holocaust, the Museum inspires citizens and leaders worldwide to confront hatred, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity. Located among the national monuments to freedom on the National Mall in Washington DC, the Museum has far-reaching educational programs and global impact. ushmm.org

The Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ)

EVZ Foundation works to promote human rights and understanding between peoples. The Foundation is an expression of the continuing political and moral responsibility of the state, the private sector and society as a whole for Nazi injustice and towards the victims. stiftung-evz.de

Kreuzberg Initiative against Antisemitism e.V. (KIgA)

KIgA is one of the first German civil society initiatives to develop education-based methods for dealing with antisemitism in a multicultural German society. kiga-berlin.org

FOREWORD

I often ask myself why we need to build coalitions between different communities, particularly between Jews and Muslims. And I deduce that it is not an option but a necessity. We should acknowledge this necessity in our hearts to be able to convince others. We, as different communities, Jewish, Muslim, Women, Black ..., have more in common as human beings than differences. And these commonalities can bind us more strongly than disagreements can divide.

We, the participants of this conference, have acknowledged that we are stronger in this way. The transatlantic alliances emerging from this event can generate effective means of action against antisemitism and intolerance.

As Rabbi Hillel said: "If I am not for myself, who is for me? If I am not for others, who am I? And if not now - when?" Rabbi Hillel draws connections with identity issues by asking these questions. We, at KlGA, think constantly about the issue of identity and always conclude that: We have to ask ourselves who we are; whether we want to appreciate the qualities in others or disqualify them; whether to include or exclude; and to build bridges or walls.

We extend special thanks to our partners, the BMFSFJ, the EVZ Foundation, and the USHMM, who made this meeting possible. We are especially grateful to the conference participants, actors for Jewish-Muslim dialogue and conference organizers. I wish you an inspiring reading.

Dervis Hizarci
Chairperson
Kreuzberg Initiative against Antisemitism (KlGA e. V.)

Allianzen

Jüdisch-M

Dialog stä



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Center for Research on Antisemitism

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but sure does rhyme"

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ConAct

Anne Frank Educational Center, Frankfurt

Competence Center for Prevention
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BMFSFJ

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Federal Government Commissioner for Jewish Life in
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Dervis Hizarci

Chair, Kreuzberg Initiative against Antisemitism

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PANELISTS

Wa’el Alzayat

CEO, Emgage Foundation

Robert Silverman

Former Director of Jewish-Muslim Relations, AJC

Sawsan Chebli

State Secretary at Federal State Government of
Berlin for International Affairs and Civic Involvement

Susanne Krause-Hinrichs

CEO, Flick Foundation Potsdam

MODERATOR

Cristina Finch

ODIHR

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**Training: Protection of Employees in the Field of
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Tad Stahnke

USHMM

Some Were Neighbors

Michael Bartel

Miteinander

Michael Wörner-Schappert

jugendschutz.net

Prof. Wade Henderson

Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Becky Monroe

Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

Stop Hate Project

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This day was financially supported by the EVZ Foundation

Workshop: Migration and Intolerance / Antisemitism and Migration in Germany

Dr. Sina Arnold

Center for Research on Antisemitism /
Technische Universität Berlin

Since the summer of 2015, more than 1.2 million refugees mostly from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries arrived in Germany. In the media, they were often portrayed as importing not only sexism and homophobia, but also antisemitism.

In 2016, Dr. Sina Arnold and her colleagues conducted 25 qualitative interviews with refugees (between 16 and 53 years of age, both male and female) from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. The researchers asked them about their views on Jews, Judaism, Israel, the Middle Eastern conflict and the Holocaust, their sources of information on the latter, but also their living conditions in Germany and experiences of discrimination. Most of the interview partners identified as Muslim and were practicing their religion, but to different extents.

The majority of those interviewed harbored antisemitic attitudes in some form. Often, these were fragmented and characterized by contradictions. When it came to images of Jews, for most interview partners these were mostly “classic” antisemitic stereotypes. At the same time, most interview partners claimed that they know very little about Jews and Judaism. Religious sources were sometimes quoted, but not primarily. About half the interview partners had personal contacts with Jews, however, a large part only after their arrival in Germany. These encounters were described as neutral or positive.

Almost all of the interview partners had a negative image of Israel. While in most cases interview partners were careful to distinguish between Jews, Israelis and the state of Israel, in some instances all Jews were being made responsible for the actions of the state of Israel. By Syrians, the stereotypical and negative image of Israel is described as common knowledge. Interestingly enough, however, the process of migrating and escaping their home country can also lead to a shift in images.

In general, there was very little knowledge about the Holocaust, and its imagery was fragmented and partly historically wrong. Most interview partners knew a bit about World War II, but the role of the Holocaust was never central in this narrative.

Much like within the majority population in Germany, antisemitic stereotypes exist among refugees coming from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. However, they take different forms and are often fragmented. While the actual stereotypes are often similar to European antisemitism, the sources tend to have more local explanations. Resentments cannot be explained with the experience of racism in Germany. And it is also too easy to speak of a specific “Muslim” or even “Arab antisemitism” because there are in fact big differences both in expression and in motivation between for example the antisemitism uttered by Arab refugees or by Arab-German descendants of immigrants. And even among refugees there is a lot of diversification, one cannot speak of “the refugee” per se.

While more studies are needed about the anti-Jewish attitudes of those newly arriving to Europe, these studies need to be embedded in an understanding of antisemitism in post-migrant societies as a whole, as societies that are structurally shaped also by racism. These understandings of the specific antisemitic forms are also important for right political and pedagogical interventions.



“History does not repeat but sure does rhyme”

Mark Hetfield

HIAS – Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

HIAS is the oldest refugee organization in the world. It started in 1881 in New York to help Jews fleeing pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe. HIAS used to be an organization that helped refugees because they were Jewish. Now we welcome refugees not because they're Jewish, but because we're Jewish. Very few of the refugees that HIAS helps today are Jewish. HIAS, together with other eight organizations, works on refugee resettlement in the USA.

‘History does not repeat but sure does rhyme!’ Today’s experience of the treatment and policies towards Muslim refugees is very similar, though not identical, to what Jewish refugees went through in the earlier part of the last century. There is a lot of fear around the question of ‘What are refugees from the Muslim world bringing to the US?’ What HIAS does is to remind the American Jewish community that these fears are no different than those expressed in 1930s when Jewish refugees were arriving. They were considered anarchists, communists and even German spies.

At the time HIAS was founded, America was a welcoming country towards Jews. Between 1881 until 1921 the Jewish population grew from 250 thousand to over 3 million. However, during the same period of time, there was an absolute ban on Chinese immigration. Many Jewish newspapers and activists spoke against the Chinese Exclusion Act, knowing they might be next. And in fact, after 1921, Jewish migrants turned out to be next. Congress passed nationality quotas that were deliberately discriminatory. The nationality quota law, which was meant to be an emergency measure lasting for one year, lasted until 1965. There were exceptions made by Congress after World War II, but the law continued to exist. Other countries followed America’s lead; Canada and South Africa also stopped allowing immigrants, mainly Jews at that time. As a consequence, HIAS had to move out of New York, to other

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countries that would allow Jews to have temporary or more permanent shelters. Polling about the acceptance of refugees from different backgrounds at different times are striking in showing similar results: 60-70% oppose allowing refugees in whereas only a 25-30% support this.

The highly debated recent US Refugee program was started in 1980 on a formal basis. The president makes the decision on how many refugees can get into the country every year. The program has long enjoyed bi-partisan support from Democrats and Republicans. This started to turn certainly after September 11 and radically under the Obama administration. Paris attacks in Nov 13, 2015 also changed the reaction enormously in the US. Within a matter of days after the Paris attacks, 31 governors (30 Republican) had come out to say they wanted to ban Syrian refugees. Some even said Syrian Muslim refugees. Governors do not have that authority; it is decided at the federal level. But these statements certainly can prevent refugees from feeling comfortable and welcomed. While some states stopped accepting federal funding for refugees, the funding not accepted by the states went to the organizations like HIAS that take on functions that belong to the state. During the presidential campaign, President Trump was not the only candidate speaking against refugees. The topic became a truly bifurcated issue. After becoming president, Trump suspended the refugee program for all refugees and took specific measures against immigrants from Muslim majority countries.

HIAS was the only one out of nine refugee organizations that challenged this in court just so that a judge would hear the case. This in itself was a huge victory. It is actually still being litigated, known as *Doe v. Trump* in Seattle. The Supreme Court rules on the issue in the travel ban case, but not on the refugee ban. Although the refugee program has officially been reopened, all these policies and the discourse of the president have had an impact. To be able to continue to have a role in welcoming refugees as HIAS, all the organizations should learn from each other and support each other.

Good Practices from Germany

Discover Diversity

Kreuzber Initiative against Antisemitism

Discover Diversity - between the Present and the Past is a KIgA pilot project aimed at finding new approaches to civic education in a changing society. As Germany has been a migrant country for long time, KIgA initially focused on concepts targeting young people already born in Germany, socialized within German systems and familiar with the country. The recent migration and refugee flow brings a new group of people who are totally foreign to life in Germany in all senses.

The project involves civic education for young refugees, taking their experience into account, and using it to seek new approaches to historical-political education. The focus is on living together in a diverse society in Germany. Civic education is linked also to the history of migration and how diversity has been dealt within the past.

kiga-berlin.org/uploads/Discover_Diversity.pdf

“One important finding for us has been that the Holocaust matters to the refugees: all of them showed interest in the topic. But it may not be their main focus when talking about history. Most of them came from their very own troubled geographies. For them it is also very important that they have room to share their own experiences. So, for the team it was important to de-center the topic of the Holocaust.”

— Peer Educator, Discover Diversity

“We don’t consider ourselves teachers. We don’t want to take away their identities from them. We start by asking them: What are the important things for you as a person, what are the important places in your society and what are the important places here? What do they have in common and how might they be different?”

— Peer Educator, Discover Diversity

“Our first aim was to overcome language barriers. When we talk with the young people coming from different countries with different experiences of democracy and dictatorship, we are challenged to think about what we have learned until now in Europe and in Germany. We have to start discussing these terms as they are used nowadays and find a common language. Democracy is defined differently in different contexts. Democracy has a different meaning in the Middle East and a different political reality.”

— Peer Educator, Discover Diversity



Franziska Göpner Anne Frank Zentrum

Anne Frank Zentrum is the German partner institution of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, working on historical and political education for almost 25 years. The main aim is remembering Anne Frank and her family as well as the history of the Holocaust, promoting youth engagement and combating antisemitism. Anne Frank Zentrum works with a biographical approach, using Anne Frank's story to open up space for other stories in history and past.

Escape in Life Project consists of texts and short film biographies of three migrant women: Hara from Kosovo and Marah from Syria, both new to Berlin, and Anne Frank. The stories are used to open up questions like: What are the experiences of migration? What are the experiences of persecution? What are difficulties in building up a new home, in getting asylum? How has the social environment been reacting to them?

flucht.annefrank.de

Travelling exhibitions deals with the history of Anne Frank and the history of National Socialism, relevant to antisemitism and discrimination today. Anne Frank Zentrum is working with school students as well as youngsters who train as peer guides to get to know the exhibition and learn methods of telling the story to people their own age. Anne Frank and her diary do raise a lot of issues that are still important for young people today, such as belonging to groups, collective identity, the construction of “we” and “others,” discrimination and human rights. The peer education approach is a way to involve young people in a very active and participative way. Anne Frank Zentrum also works with young, mostly male, prisoners.

Stories that Move uses an intersectional perspective to show the connection between antisemitism and all the other forms of hatred. Within the toolbox, people from various backgrounds talk about their own experiences of discrimination.

storiesthatmove.org

Sara Spring

Action Reconciliation Service for Peace

ARSP was founded in 1958 to offer international voluntary placements in 13 different countries: in Europe, Israel and the US. The volunteers work with Holocaust survivors, former Nazi forced laborers, refugees, homeless and people with special needs. A pedagogical program forms the framework in which participants discuss with young adults from the host country topics around identity, collective and individual memory as well as political, social and religious commitment. In 2000, ARSP undertook a new project on historical, intercultural education and Holocaust education in post-migrant Germany, *Geschichte(n) in der Migrationsgesellschaft* (“history/stories in a culturally diverse society”). The project aims to raise awareness of antisemitism and racism through the history of National Socialism, focusing on antisemitism, the Holocaust and the genocide of the Sinti and Roma.

The participants in these programs are mostly female multipliers with different migration backgrounds. The Neighbourhood Mothers (started in 2006) are migrant women with Arabic or Turkish or other backgrounds who are family counselors and provide advice to families within migrant communities on topics such as education, health and child development. Since 2015, ARSP has been reaching out to Roma women as well, some of whom have lived in Germany a long time, and some who came recently from mostly Eastern European countries. In 2016, ARSP started working with refugees.

geschichte-interkulturell.de

“I am waiting for the day, when German school books tell my story as well.”

– Project Participant

“Sinti live here since more than 600 years. They are German, a German minority. But even today, after 600 years, they are still confronted with discrimination and social exclusion. So, I am asking myself, how are people going to talk about us in 600 years?”

– Project Participant

Falko Kliewe

ConAct – Coordination Center for German-Israeli Youth Exchange

The individual stories and unique life contexts of young people in Germany and Israel are greatly varied but at the same time have a number of similarities. The processes and different streams of migration are accompanied by similar discrimination experiences as well as power structures. There is a great treasure of knowledge and experience on both sides from which both can learn.

The project “Living Diversity in Germany and Israel” aims at developing an educational network of organizations and professionals. As part of this Project, under the title “Your Story Moves!”, twenty young adults from Germany and Israel met between October 8 and 14 for a first exchange program in Israel. The program was organized by ConAct and the Israel Youth Exchange Authority in cooperation with Multikulturelles Forum and the Hebrew Scouts Movement. Over the course of seven days, two separate groups from two different countries became one diverse group of young peer-to-peer educators whose individual stories of belonging became visible, who had a lot of common interests, and jointly experienced this exchange. The visit to Shefar’am, witnessing its vivid coexistence, and the journey to Jerusalem were important milestones in this exchange project. Visiting Yad Vashem and meeting a Shoah survivor was an impressive and moving experience for the participants. Socio-political processes that could lead to the exclusion, persecution and murder of certain groups of people became very obvious.

One aim of the exchange project is to write “a new story [into their] life library”, as one of the participants described. Thus, participants from Israel and Germany were looking forward to the upcoming return visit of the Israeli group to Germany in March 2019 in Dortmund.

living-diversity.org

Deborah Krieg

Anne Frank Educational Center,
Frankfurt am Main

Just a few hundred meters from her birthplace, the “Anne Frank. Tomorrow more.” learning lab presents the famous Frankfurt author's story and makes use of interactive methods to transfer historical learning to everyday life. More than a museum, it is a place for public debate to discover new perspectives. The learning lab was developed for school classes and youth groups but can be explored by individuals of any age. Visitors decide the relevance of the content for themselves and determine freely how they move through the exhibition. The lab provides possibilities for active participation, debriefing, and feedback.

The focus is on young people's perspectives on historical and contemporary discrimination. It takes their views and opinions seriously, as well as their unique ways of dealing with historical experience: conflict, resistance, hope. Anne Frank's diary illustrates how an intimate account of one's experience can suddenly become political. Visitors also encounter other young authors who powerfully expressed themselves under very different conditions: Charlotte L. Fortens on racism in the 19th century America; the diaries of Ana Novac and Arie Koretz from Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen-Belsen; and blogs such as Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai's. The exhibition invites young visitors to tell their own experiences of racism, exclusion, and discrimination. These may be invisible to others who are often unaware of subtle ways that classifications such as “normal” and “deviant” can impact lives.

bs-anne-frank.de/morgenmehr



**WELCOME REMARKS FROM THE
FEDERAL FAMILY MINISTRY**

“The aim of the Federal program "Live Democracy!" established by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, is to strengthen those who raise their voice against discrimination, intolerance and hate and tirelessly work for democracy. We take care of those who care for others and for our society!

Your exchange on confronting antisemitism and intolerance especially takes into consideration the current discussion about immigration, antisemitism and the supposed connection between both. Looking at the agenda of this exchange, I can see that does not lead to assigning blame. Your agenda is all about coalition building, building alliances, strengthening Jewish-Muslim dialogue and sharing best practice examples from Germany and the United States. This seems to me a very feasible way to successfully tackle antisemitism, racism or anti-Muslim hatred.”

Dr. Heiko Geue, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs,
Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)



**“Dialogue might be necessary,
but not always. People don’t
come together unless they are
able to see a common course
of actions for themselves.”**

– Conference Participant

Jana Scheuring
Competence Center for Prevention and
Empowerment / ZWST

ZWST (The Central Board of Jewish Welfare in Germany) established “Perspektivwechsel” (Change of Perspective) in 2007. It has been active in Thuringia and across Germany since then, which mainly targets professionals in schools -youth workers, educators, administrators- and police to enhance their competencies in confronting racism and anti-semitism.

The Competence Center for Prevention and Empowerment based in Berlin was founded in 2015. As an agency for education, counselling and networking it aims to develop effective empowerment and prevention approaches in the context of antisemitism and discrimination. The Center created an education and counselling program, ACT (Acceptance, Commitment, Training). It is addressed to educators, teachers, youth workers and social workers to enhance their competencies in confronting antisemitism.

The goals of ACT are:

- to identify and reassess antisemitism’s current manifestations as well as links to other collective attitudes of rejection and phenomena of group-focused enmity;
- to critically question their own attitudes about antisemitism;
- to perceive contemporary antisemitism from a Jewish perspective;
- to practice and apply contemporary pedagogical approaches and teaching methods;
- to test and implement reaction and intervention possibilities.

zwst-kompetenzzentrum.de
zwst-perspektivwechsel.de



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social welfare office, there are also some who already work and can pay on their own. Independence and responsibility are the two goals of the Refugio community. Residents are expected to participate in the community project. They run a café and organize events.

Site Visit: Refugio Berlin

Refugio Berlin is a community center in Neukölln, where refugees and locals live and work together. Since its foundation in 2015, this project of the Berliner Stadtmission became a model for similar houses. Today around 40 people from Syria, Somalia, England, Germany, Sweden, Afghanistan, Palestine, Turkey, Croatia and Bosnia are living in Refugio in private rooms with a shared kitchen. They have a garden on the rooftop and a very nice café and a conference hall on the entrance floor. The age of the adult residents ranges from 22 to 36, and there are five Refugio-Babies.

The concept of community management is followed in Refugio, meaning that there is no social worker in the house but people are helping each other with various challenges that they are facing as newcomers to the city regarding language, job finding, dealing with bureaucracy etc. While many get their rent for Refugio paid by the job center or the

“One day at a party on the rooftop, the founder of the Refugio told us: ‘Well, this is your house now and you can decide when the party will end by yourself – I am going to bed.’ This is when I realized that I finally found my home.”

– Refugio Resident

While living and working together, residents are also learning to respect each other in their various different cultural habits and lifestyles. Integration works in both ways in Refugio, refugees learn from Germans living here the cultural codes and practical necessities; while Germans and also the residents from other European countries learn from the refugees from all around the world. No one is expected to become German unless they choose in time to define themselves that way. A resident who came from Syria said he already considered himself German and felt himself to be a part of the society and community here.

“I would consider myself someone who is open to everyone and trying to make the atmosphere good for everyone. After the last federal elections with AfD getting into parliament we got a little bit more nervous, but I still don’t think they can come into power. Last Saturday (October 13) at the #Unteilbar demonstration I felt completely safe – it was a nice feeling.”

– Refugio Resident

Refugio Berlin is giving its residents the feeling of home and not isolation from the rest of the society as used to be the case at huge refugee camps. They are also thinking and talking about the political situation not only in Germany but also around the world, mostly the countries they fled. But the general feeling is far from being pessimistic in Refugio.

refugio.berlin

Tuesday, October 16

82 Names – Syria, Please Don’t Forget Us

The participants of the workshop watched the documentary *82 Names: Syria, Please Don’t Forget Us*. We asked Klaus Mueller and Tad Stahnke from USHMM some questions about the movie itself and the discussions around the movie:

Would you tell us a little bit about the story of how this documentary idea came up?

82 Names: Syria, Please Don’t Forget Us is a documentary film commissioned by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington and directed by Iranian filmmaker Maziar Bahari. The film traces the journey of Mansour Omari, a survivor of torture and imprisonment in Syria.

A human rights activist, he was detained for almost a year. While in prison, he and his fellow prisoners wrote their names on five scraps of fabric in an ink made of rust and their own blood. When Mansour was released, he smuggled out the pieces of fabric so he could inform his cellmates’ families about what had happened to them. Mansour brought these artifacts to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where our conservators aided in their preservation to help tell this story. The five pieces of cloth are on display in our exhibition *Syria, Please Don’t Forget Us* that the Museum shows since December 2017.

The exhibition also presents a film about Caesar, a military photographer forced to take pictures of detainees killed in custody. Caesar defected from Syria smuggling out with him 55,000 images on flash drives hidden in his shoes. One of Caesar’s flash drives is on display, as is a cell phone he used to take the pictures that link the Assad regime to the torture and killing of those in custody. Mansour’s and Caesar’s stories demonstrate the power of individual actions.

The film follows Mansour as he seeks to rebuild his life in exile. As the USHMM prepares to display the cloths, he visits sites in Germany that memorialize the victims of the Holocaust and he reflects on how to bring attention to the brutal regime he escaped—and how to counter extremist ideology in the future.

One of the comments coming from the Syrian audience at the pre-screening was on the controversy about talking about memorialization while the war is still continuing and justice far from reached. What are your thoughts about this?

The exhibition and film provide information on the conflict in Syria where the Syrian government is perpetrating well-documented crimes against humanity against its own citizens. More than 500,000 people have been killed and 11 million people have fled their homes.

After his release, Mansour contacted the families of those detained and is now using the cloths to educate the public about the conflict in Syria and the government's strategy of "disappearing" people. He also hopes, one day to use the cloths as evidence of the crimes committed by the Assad regime to hold perpetrators in Syria accountable for mass atrocities against civilians.

How does the Syrian war resonate with the Holocaust in general and the work of USHMM in particular?

The Museum is a living memorial to the Holocaust and works to raise awareness about contemporary mass atrocities. As Elie Wiesel wrote in the Museum's founding document: "A memorial unresponsive to the future would violate the memory of the past." A core part of the Museum's mission is to be a voice for victims of mass atrocities, which the Jews of Europe did not have during the 1930s-40s.

Since the start of the conflict in Syria, the Museum has been sounding the alarm for policymakers and the public about atrocities being committed by the Assad regime. As part of its campaign of violence, the Syrian government has detained more than 100,000 of its own citizens. In many cases, the government has refused to release their names. Families of the missing do not know whether loved ones are alive or dead.

The Museum is committed to shedding light on those atrocities and is working with Mansour, Caesar, and others to tell their stories and preserve evidence of these crimes which may be used to hold the perpetrators accountable in the future.

"Germany and the US are very similar in the sense of being multi-cultural societies. Learning about the German context is important in order to understand how you build a multi-cultural bridge in society."

— Conference Participant

"We share a common desire to learn from each other. Hearing the work of each institution is crucial. There is a chance for lots of coalition activities. There is a limit of what NGOs can achieve, which is why deepening the institutional engagements is crucial."

— Conference Participant

"Intersectionality has to be our understanding. Hostility against Islam should also be analyzed while talking about antisemitism here."

— Conference Participant



Wednesday, October 17

Site Visit: The Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe

The American participants of the Conference visited the Memorial in three groups, each led by German guides, who were also among workshop participants. One guide: “I was wondering what good it would do to have one of the participants guide you around rather than professional guides, or Google. It would not be the information you get as much as the perspective from us, the people working in a certain field, on the monument and the debates around it. I try to give the basic information really needed to understand the discussions that came after. I thought it would be interesting to learn about the struggle people had to build such a memorial here, to do it in a good way, and how it was re-

ceived after it opened. What stories are being told, how people are perceiving the whole thing and the explosive aspects of it. It was so much about German people, maybe even more than it was at the beginning for Jewish people from all over the world.”

“The majority of the American Jewish community is active in refugee work. We always observe Germany, and recent perception in the US is that ‘things are going bad in Germany and we don’t want to be in the same direction.’ I want to answer the questions in my head by being informed about Germany.”

— Conference Participant

Immigration and Antisemitism in Western Europe Today – Findings and Recom- mendations from a Five-Nation Study

Prof. David Feldman

Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism

The report titled *Immigration and Antisemitism in Western Europe Today – Is There a Connection? Findings and Recommendations from a Five-Nation Study* is published in April 2018, based on the research project conducted in 2016/2017 across five European countries - Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The main research question of the study was to what extent (if it does) the recent refugee crisis in Europe and influx of migrants from North Africa and the Middle East (MENA) relates to the phenomena of rising antisemitism throughout Western Europe.

Before examining the main question, the research team first outlined the scale and dimension of migration in these countries. The size of the foreign-born population is similar in all Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. However, the proportionate increase in international migrants since 2000 in Germany and the United Kingdom has been significantly higher than in Belgium, the Netherlands, and France. Besides, if there is a common pattern among MENA migrants across all five countries, it is that labor migrants from North Africa and Turkey greatly outnumber refugees.

Recently, several studies conducted among Jewish communities in the respective countries confirms widespread apprehension among Jews at the incidence of antisemitism. Also, there appears to be a widespread belief that MENA migrants, who arrive from countries in which antisemitic attitudes are commonplace, would be one of the root causes for the rise of antisemitism within European societies.

The study looked at the extent and nature of antisemitism in the countries under consideration through surveys of attitudes and tallies of antisemitic incidents and crimes. Despite the problems and limitations of the data, one of the main findings of the study is that attitudes to Jews are largely positive and not worsening and that statistics indicate that a rise in antisemitic hate crimes and other incidents do not display a rising trend, but rather “peak with flash points of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.” One exception is the UK, where the figures for antisemitic incidents and hate crime did not return to previous levels after 2014. This exceptional pattern underlines the absence of any observable connection between MENA migrants and the pattern of recorded antisemitic crime and incidents. In the UK, where MENA migrants have a small presence, there is a rising trend in recorded antisemitic incidents.

Given this picture of complexity, four reasons can be identified for the focus on immigrants of MENA and refugees:

- Association of terror with refugees in the popular mind
- Incidents of antisemitism among Muslim minorities in Europe and fears arising from that being projected on to the refugees
- Negative assumptions about refugees
- Absence of data about what refugee attitudes really are

The report states that antisemitic attitudes are disproportionately present among Muslim minorities as well as among people with extreme right-wing tendencies. But it is important to understand that elevated antisemitic attitudes among Muslim minorities are found among a minority of the Muslims surveyed. So, the data does not indicate that it is a general phenomenon among Muslims in Europe.

In the case of Muslim minorities, antisemitic attitudes can acquire meaning in the light of their own experiences of prejudice, discrimination and ‘thwarted integration.’ The lives of recent refugees are framed by insecurity and their



priority is to establish a new life. There is some evidence that antisemitic attitudes are widely diffused among MENA refugees, as are positive attitudes to democracy, equal rights and peaceful coexistence among Muslims, Christians, and Jews. According to the report, there is no clear evidence that MENA migrants make any significant contribution to antisemitism at a societal level.

Key Recommendations

Policy and Practice

- Antisemitism should be understood as a singular phenomenon but it can and should be related to other forms of prejudice, discrimination, and racialization.
- We should map existing initiatives aimed at the prevention of antisemitism and racism.
- Politicians, policy makers, and NGOs must safeguard against both complacency and alarmism by taking into account the limitations of surveys and hate crime data.
- Between Jews and Muslims, there is a need for substantive interaction that provides a counterweight to the negative stereotypes and political discourses that generate mutual suspicion.

Discourse

- The issue should be addressed in ways that promote balanced and evidence-based discussion.
- Public discussion and policy responses should reflect that antisemitism arises within society as a whole and not only among immigrant or religious minorities. It is only in this context that we will effectively address antisemitism when it does arise among Muslim populations, including MENA migrants.

Research

- We need a representative survey of attitudes among MENA refugees.
- We need to know more about the profile of individuals who commit antisemitic acts, including those who operate online and on social media.
- There is a need for studies that look at relations between different minorities.



ABOUT THE STUDY

“The situation for Jews and Muslims living in Germany and probably all over Europe has become more difficult than a year ago when most of us present here today met in Washington. But there are many things I learned from our encounter in Washington. One is keeping my optimism.

There has been a perceived threat mentioned by Jewish communities living in Europe. We aimed to learn what lies at the background of this threat. Due to our German history, it's pretty hard to realize that Jews experience again a feeling of insecurity in our common country. Recognizing that there was not much valid data on the background of this development was an important motivation for initiating this study which will be presented by David Feldman.

The study aims to start a debate on the forms of antisemitism we are facing in Europe today. The subject of antisemitism always comes with a lot of perceptions and stereotypes. Factual data to be reached with a well-organized research was thought to be the way to fight these perceptions and stereotypes. It is dangerous to give simple answers to complex topics. This study gives inputs to start a debate concerning these issues. The findings of this study were and are still highly debated. However, this is what we hoped for: to spark a wide and critical discussion between academia, policymakers, politicians and actors in civil society at national and international levels.

One of the conclusions for EVZ, as a funding organization, is the need to foster dialogues in many controversial areas and especially encourage Jewish-Muslim dialogue. We have to be very much aware that these societies, actors, institutions need safe spaces and opportunities to debate. This is something I want to learn about today by taking part in your debates, listening to your needs and thinking about how we can continue to support you in creating safe and open spaces to debate topics like this.”

Dr. Andreas Eberhardt
CEO, Foundation Remembrance,
Responsibility and Future (EVZ)



Workshop: Challenges and Opportunities of Jewish-Muslim Dialogue and Coalition Building

At these workshops, the participants of the Conference came together with the actors from Germany to find answers to questions on the importance, objectives, challenges, and challenges of Jewish-Muslim dialogue. The grassroots actors were from the following organizations: Rostock Jewish Community, W. M. Blumenthal Academy, Munich Islam Forum, Multikulturelles Forum (Dortmund), Berlin Jewish Community, KlG Initiative in Bielefeld, Fraenkelufer Community, and Avicenna Student Organization.

Why do you think Jewish-Muslim dialogue is important, and what should be its objectives?

Jewish-Muslim dialogue is about discussing civic, political, social issues that are affecting both communities and finding out how they respond to them, and whether they can partner up in addressing some of those issues together. It is very important to form a dialogue between these communities mainly because of rising hate crimes, which target both Muslim and Jewish communities at the same time. It is important to form a counter-narrative to the dominant view that there are no common values between Muslim and Jewish communities.

“Be transparent, open and name the problems on the table and be courageous.”

– Participant of the Jewish-Muslim Dialog Workshop

Objectives of such a dialogue might be:

- to combat racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia by forming coalitions;
- to provide new narratives in a society that is increasingly polarized and divided;
- to protect religious freedom in general;
- to empower each other;
- to create the symbolic meaning of Jews and Muslims working together; and,
- to gain understanding by learning to look beyond your own community.



SPEECH BY DR. FELIX KLEIN

‘In Germany now you hear debate regarding which kind of antisemitism is more dangerous. I think we should not have started any discussion about this. Every case is a case too many and crosses a red line. We have to have an absolute term; we have to be combating it with our means, our police, and our prosecutors. But at the same time, we have to try to do prevention work. That is where you come in.

Our remembrance policy is a very important key, I believe. It is not a guarantee but if it is well organized and prepared, it helps a lot. Secondly, education and training, in general, is key. We should go to schools and enable teachers to discern antisemitism when it exists and we have to give them tools for responding when they see antisemitic incidents. Political training is also needed, for example, of the police forces in order to prevent similar actions like what happened in Chemnitz, where police forces treated an openly antisemitic act as an assault on property. This is also where my Office comes in. I want people to make use of the tools we have. The definition of antisemitism adopted by the Federal Government last year is not well-known and should be made known at all educational facilities. I am happy that many of the Bundesländer in Germany have either appointed a Commissioner or are about to do so.

This is a global fight, and we shouldn't give up!"

Dr. Felix Klein
Federal Government Commissioner for Jewish Life in Germany and the Fight against Antisemitism



What kind of challenges and opportunities does Jewish-Muslim dialogue present?

Opportunities

- to set the agenda and address discrimination in a coalition of people affected by it;
- to pursue justice and legal victories;
- to address broader issues. Muslim-Jewish coalition is unusual and it can be a good tool for addressing other forms of social discrimination;
- to get to know each other in a more genuine way and form relationships both at a grassroots level and among religious and institutional leaders and institutions.

Challenges

- Having different agendas and priorities.
- The risk of instrumentalization: When Jewish and Muslim organizations are willing to act together by accepting certain problems among their communities. There is the risk of right-wing organizations instrumentalizing this acceptance (arguing, for instance, that Muslims themselves agree on their antisemitism).
- The culture of suspicion: “If these communities come together, either one or both would carry a hidden agenda.”
- The rise of right-wing extremism, nationalism, white supremacy, while a challenge, also underlines the need to come together.
- Being denounced by their own community as a traitor, a spoiler.
- Existing stereotypes, prejudices, and fears both communities have towards each other.
- Middle East conflict, the elephant in the room: Both communities have distinctive opinions about the issue.
- Lack of safe spaces needed for dialogue: There are not enough host forums and institutions.

In which way can civil society tackle these challenges? How can we connect the dialogue work with the work against antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism?

Self-reflection is crucial. In addition to looking inward, both communities should define the issues dividing them and work in partnership to overcome them. Working in coordination, passing legislation, working at both the local and national level together, doing things publicly as a model, are positive examples of coalition building.

Research and education is another way to tackle these challenges. Research on the way the media portrays the challenging issues and trying to deconstruct these images might be a project to develop. Jewish-Muslim coalitions should work for the totality of society. Connecting specific issues to the broader interests of society is important. And these coalitions should not refrain from challenging society.

Creating safe spaces to enable Jewish and Muslim communities and organizations to have these discussions is vital. These spaces make it possible for communities to learn from each other and to learn from different contexts. It is argued that in the US, Jewish and Muslim communities have been working together longer and have well-established coalitions. Communities living and working in other contexts, i.e., the German and the US contexts, might learn from these best practices and established tools. In order to continue the dialogue, it is important also to focus on the advantages that would come from it, not the challenges.



**WORDS INTO ACTION PROJECT
TO ADDRESS ANTI-SEMITISM**

The Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department of OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) implemented "The Turning Words into Action to Address Anti-Semitism" project in 2016. The project aims to help turn the commitments of OSCE participating states on combatting antisemitism into action by providing government officials, parliamentarians and civil society with the knowledge and skills they need to do so effectively.

ODIHR recently published a guideline to foster coalition building among communities:

- Coalition Building for Tolerance and Non-Discrimination: A Practical Guideline

Following are the other guidelines published within the extent of this project:

- Addressing Anti-Semitism Through Education: Guidelines for Policy Makers
- Understanding Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of Jewish Communities: A Practical Guide



Welcome Remarks: Why the Muslim Community Needs to Commit Itself to Standing against Antisemitism

Dervis Hizarci

Kreuzberg Initiative against Antisemitism

When Jews in Germany say that they feel threatened by Muslim anti-Semites, it is up to the Muslims here to work on their stance. And as a natural part of German society, it is also their task to protect it from dangers. This is where we need to approach two important questions: Does society recognize the dangers posed by antisemitism? And are Muslims even part of this society? For both of these questions, the answer is not so clear.

In Germany there is latent antisemitism at about 20% for many years. But with the rise of the AfD the latent aspect, the view of it as scandalous, is disappearing, and the acceptance of antisemitic statements is growing at a rapid pace. The AfD even tries to instrumentalize Jewish voices in its "fight against Islam." But this doesn't succeed, due to Jews here not wanting to take part in this, refusing to be instrumentalized.

Both in politics and civil society, there is a large amount of attention devoted to antisemitism, standing against its rise and leaving us with some glimmers of hope for the future. As a society we, need to be vigilant.

The second question concerning Muslim affiliation with German society is answered neither in Muslims' self-perception nor in the views of the non-Muslim dominant society. Muslims often see themselves as "foreigners" or "strangers," and they are perceived as such in society. These perceptions re-enforce each other in a "downward spiral."



This sorry state of things has become a part of their perceived identity for some. This reminds me of a teacher who already subscribed to this model: "that's how Muslims are, there is nothing you can do about it." Such capitulation, especially from a teacher, is worrisome, as it shows a generalization that can never ever be true.

Quite often, we hear the idea of Jews as a sort of societal litmus test. Sometimes the metaphor of the canary taken into the mineshaft by the workers to check the air quality is also used in this context. To me, the reduction of Jews into a "warning signal" for society is repugnant - but you have to admit that there is some truth to it. Maybe simple analogies can show us that the way to a solution is simpler than we believed.

The identity-defining feature of a modern, diverse society must be a stance for tolerance and against hatred. And to convey stances, we need emphatic approaches to education and honest encounters. The fight against antisemitism is always a matter of identity and belonging.

Public Panel Discussion: Building Alliances – Strengthening Jewish Muslim Dialogue

PANELISTS

Wa'el Alzayat (CEO, Emgage Foundation)

Robert Silverman (Former Director of Jewish-Muslim
Relations, AJC)

Sawsan Chebli (State Secretary at Federal State
Government of Berlin for International Affairs
and Civic Involvement)

Susanne Krause-Hinrichs
(CEO, Flick Foundation, Potsdam)

MODERATOR

Cristina Finch (ODIHR)

The Building Alliances: Strengthening Jewish-Muslim Dialogue public panel brought together politicians, funders and practitioners from Germany and the US who are working on strengthening Jewish-Muslim dialogue. They do so by fostering alliances and coalitions to fight emerging and worsening problems faced by both communities. Addressing antisemitism and discrimination against Muslim, it was agreed, is crucial, particularly nowadays, when both Jewish and Muslim communities are feeling under attack and unsafe. It is important to bring an international perspective to these discussions. For example, multiple organizations in the US have long experience in establishing and running Jewish-Muslim alliances.

“The fight against antisemitism has to be the fight of Muslims, too. Both Jews and Muslims are discriminated against in Germany and thus both don’t feel safe here anymore. In the US, it is already reality that Jewish and Muslim communities fight together against antisemitism and Islamophobia. But also here in Germany, we can see that this is slowly happening. I believe that there is a huge potential here. This event is itself an example of that.”

– Sawsan Chebli

The participants underlined the importance of the panel as a bridge between organizations working on similar topics on both sides of the Atlantic. It turned out to be very fruitful and necessary to both in differentiating respective contexts and recognizing how similar global developments are playing a role in necessitating such an alliance. The experiences of some organizations play a very crucial role in terms of positively encouraging other alliance-building efforts by presenting the lessons-learned:



“Three lessons for alliance-building:

Lesson 1:

Be concrete and practical. In our group, the Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council, we looked for one item to work on together in public. Although the issues of refugees and immigration were common ground between the two communities in the US, we decided not to work on these. It wasn't likely to lead to an early victory because there is so much polarization around them in the US. Instead, hate crimes are common ground. This coalition in the US got behind a bill that passed Congress and was signed by President Trump two weeks ago. The law expands the federal jurisdiction for hate crime laws in the US and protects religions and institutions. We had an early victory by being concrete and specific.

Lesson 2:

Be public. It cannot be only the people in the room who benefit. You should have a media strategy from the start. If you are trying to reach young people, you need people who know how to make cool videos. A good YouTube video is worth a thousand meetings.

Lesson 3:

Be bold. Muslim-Jewish coalition is powerful also because it is unexpected. Other partners may join and support you, but keep the brand of Muslim-Jewish. I don't say that Muslim-Jewish alliance in the US or in Germany will solve the Middle East conflict soon, that shouldn't be the expectation. But it is the hope for these two communities to know each other, work together and become friends.”

— Robert Silverman

Wednesday, October 17 “Building Alliances, Strengthening Jewish-Muslim Dialog”

Establishing common ground and setting an agenda in partnership forms a solid ground for Jewish-Muslim dialogue. However, a genuine and sustainable relationship does also require being able to identify with the issue being presented:

“You cannot build a coalition with someone if they cannot identify with the issue you are presenting to them. You have to have a shared value. The Muslim ban is not just about Muslims, it is about religious freedom, it is about equal protection under the law. In order to have these partnerships be sustainable, you have to be there for the other community when they need you. As a Muslim American institution, that means we have to be there for the immigrants, for the other groups that are not being treated fairly, for other social justice issues that might not affect the average Muslim American community. Two most important lessons learned for me: make it universal and find shared values and be there for the others even before they ask you.”

– Wa’el Alzayyat

Facilitation and mediation are key instruments for fostering Jewish-Muslim ties. Something as simple as providing a safe and secure place to meet, where people can get to know and talk with each other, is a crucial incentive that a third party can provide.

“We, as Flick Foundation, have the role of mediator, working with Jewish and Muslim organizations. Once when we had a meeting in Potsdam, I noticed how both communities were concerned about the future. I told back then to start by getting to know each other. This is how it all started. It is very important to have a place to meet. There is not a naturally existing place for these communities to meet and talk. That’s why a platform is needed to facilitate these meetings. Foundations like us have the resources to support this process.”

– Susanne Krause-Hinrichs

In addition to the support of foundations, it was emphasized that governmental support was equally decisive. Having an active endorsement of Jewish-Muslim dialogue from government, party or even an individual politician can also make a considerable difference:

“Many Jews do not feel safe in Germany anymore and, given Germany’s history and the Holocaust, we, of course, cannot tolerate that. Therefore, I founded an antisemitism expert group that will soon issue recommendations to the Berlin Senate on how to combat antisemitism more effectively.”

– Sawsan Chebli

Several challenges and counter-strategies mentioned at the panel were discussed previously that day. A central point underlying all the ideas put forward at the panel and repeatedly emphasized was that all actions and strategies applied ought to be carried out very decisively with regard to forming alliances against the growing threat.

“You are considered naive and liberal-minded by your own community if you try to get into such a dialogue. Just ignore it. You should be concrete and specific and this will help you to deliver early results that help to disprove that. A second-generation alliance, not just to work in public together to achieve a public policy benefit, but also to start addressing the issues between these two communities, is what we are trying to do in the US. We can address anti-semitism in the Muslim community and Islamophobia in the Jewish community. In the US, the Jewish community is numerically larger and more well-established. And it makes sense that the more established community start this model.”

– Robert Silverman

“It will be harder for us to do it in Germany than in the US. The Jewish community is smaller here and we know why. We need the right formats. Maybe, smaller groups should meet in order to show that there is nothing dangerous in doing so. We need more institutions in Germany that are open to dealing with this whole range of issues. It will require time. Jewish and Muslim people can only live in peace when there is democracy and rule of law. And we cannot have democracy without these communities protecting each other.”

– Susanne Krause-Hinrichs

“The major threat confronting the world today is the rise of international fascism that is manifesting itself on the local level, be it in Europe, the Middle East, or even the United States. As Muslims and Jews, we must work together with other communities to combat this evil despite any historical or current differences and challenges.”

– Wa’el Alzayyat

Best Practices from Germany and the US against Hate

Tad Stahnke

Some Were Neighbors / USHMM

USHMM developed the idea to create a version of its *Some Were Neighbors* exhibition in a small format that is relatively easy to print out, download, display, and use. This version of the exhibition, created mainly for Europe, will be available in German, French, Hungarian and Polish. The subtitle of the exhibition is Choice, Human Behavior and the Holocaust. It begins with the question ‘How was the Holocaust possible?’ This question focuses on the involvement of many others besides the Nazis. The Holocaust did not happen in secret. Many of the photos in the exhibition show the presence of ordinary people while ‘bad things were happening.’ What choices do these people have, what human behavior are they exhibiting? This exhibition also wants to make young people especially think about their role in society today by using this historical material.

USHMM wants to form partnerships with German and other European institutions interested in using the exhibition in their educational efforts and in developing different educational models around it. Interested people and institutions are encouraged to contact the Museum.



MOBILE COUNSELING AGAINST RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM (MBR)

Starting in 2001, MBR has been offering counsel and support to anyone in Berlin willing or needing to become active against right-wing extremism, racism and anti-semitism. They are organizing trainings and workshops to inform interested parties. Many publications can be found on their webpage.

mbr-berlin.de



Michael Barthel

Miteinander – Network for Democracy and Open-mindedness in Saxony-Anhalt

Miteinander e.V. provides information on right-wing extremism, support democratic networking, consult with democratic actors, support victims of right-wing violence, and offer seminars and workshops for educational purposes. Today, Miteinander hosts three local offices in Halle (Saale), Magdeburg, and Salzwedel.

Strengthening civic engagement in more rural areas like Sachsen-Anhalt/East Germany comes with other difficulties than the work in bigger cities like Berlin. There is a high unemployment rate, a post-industrial area especially in the South, and in the North more of an agricultural area. Miteinander also struggles against the publicity campaign that is targeting them by arguing that they support left-wing extremism and by trying to intimidate the staff.

The area around Halle/Saale is a nation-wide center for far-right activists. Miteinander tries to work in this geographical and political environment in line with its aims and defined areas of activity. Miteinander tries to form personal relationships with the people in the neighborhood, giving special importance to confidentiality for security reasons, and trying to reach as many people as possible who would like to learn more about right-wing extremism and get organized against it. Not only individual people but also institutions and shop-owners are in their target group. The activities facilitated by Miteinander give the chance for all these actors to meet with each other and raise the question of ‘how we want to live as a community in our neighborhoods?’



Michael Wörner-Schappert jugendschutz.net

jugendschutz.net is the joint center of the German Federal Government and the federal states aimed at promoting children's and young people's right to protection and participation on the internet.

jugendschutz.net operates a hotline accepting reports about illegal and harmful content and takes appropriate action to have this content removed as quickly as possible. The focus of the work is on topics and services that are specifically important for children and young people, on risky contacts, self-harm behavior, political extremism and child sexual exploitation.

It established the Department Political Extremism in 2000 and worked out a multi-dimensional strategy against hate online including monitoring of hate on the internet, taking measures against illegal content, filing complaints, forging national and international cooperation against it, and organizing pedagogical work and workshops. jugendschutz.net operates additional websites on specific topics:

- hass-im-netz.info informs about political extremism on the internet.
- Internet users can report problematic content to: hass-im-netz.info/hass-im-netz-melden.
- chatten-ohne-risiko.net informs about risks in communication services and provides tips for behaving safely online.
- klick-tipps.net presents web & app tips for children, also with videos. The 'klick-tipps' can be integrated free of charge.
- app-geprüft.net evaluates the most popular children's apps in terms of youth, data and consumer protection.
- kompass-social.media evaluates web content that is popular with young people and provides tips on how to use the internet safely.
- surfen-ohne-risiko.net provides practical knowledge for parents and experts on how to protect children online.



“My circle of friends has a strong urge; there is much interest in the topic of Jewish-Muslim dialogue. What we are missing is a platform that connects us.”

— Participant of the Jewish-Muslim Dialog Workshop

Prof. Wade Henderson Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States. It is the living example of the power of coalition to bring transformative change in the society.

As an African American born into a racially segregated society, I'm honored that I have been part of the change that I wanted to see come. The U.S. Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century is the single most transformative social justice movement of its time. It had its origins in 1909 with the birth of *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)* established by a group of African Americans, Jewish Americans and other progressive whites as a coalition to advance the rights of African Americans primarily. But it was also done with the understanding that by ending discrimination the Jewish community - and American society - would also benefit.

The experiences that motivated Jews and Blacks to come together to build NAACP and the broader Movement are thought to also encourage Jews and Muslims to come together:

- the struggle for equal rights and justice is a marathon, not a sprint. Progress is slow, but it is achievable and sustainable. Don't expect victories without setbacks. But always remember ...,
- "It takes the hottest fire to make the strongest steel."
You will be better advocates for your cause because of the struggle.

Coalitions are born from necessity. Coalitions emerge from organizations that lack enough political power unto themselves to accomplish essential goals. Coalitions are living entities that must be nurtured and sustained. It is hard work. In a coalition, you must have a long-term strategy, but also short-term victories are important. You must be able to plan on how to advance your goals sequentially, step by step, so that ultimately you get where you want to be.

Neither the Muslim community nor the Jewish community has enough power unto itself to resolve Islamophobia or Antisemitism. If they had the power, these problems would have been already resolved.

Always remember, allies are important; and the civil and human rights community has always sought allies that are multi-racial, multi-sectoral, and multi-religious. The Movement has always sought diversity."

Becky Monroe Stop Hate Project

Hate incidents across the United States are surging, devastating individuals and entire communities. Hundreds of organizations in communities across the country work to combat hate every day. To help combat this trend and support those organizations, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law launched the Stop Hate Project in March 2017. The Stop Hate Project works to strengthen the capacity of community leaders, law enforcement, and organizations around the country to combat hate by connecting these groups with established legal and social services resources.

The Lawyers' Committee has run an Election Protection Hotline for over a decade, providing resources and assistance to callers ahead of and on Election Day. Building on this expertise, the Lawyers' Committee launched a resource and reporting hotline for hate incidents: *1-844-9-NO-HATE (1-844-966-4283)*. Individuals and organizations that call the hotline receive resources they need as the Lawyers' Committee leverages their national network of pro bono attorneys, connect callers and individuals targeted by hate to community organizations, mental health services, and in appropriate cases, provide access to counsel. Examples of resources provided have included template letters to make sure undocumented students are admitted to school, support for reaching out to and training law enforcement, and connecting callers with local and national civil rights and service organizations.

866ourvote.org

The Stop Hate Project works with a broad range of community organizations and seeks to engage organizations to ensure that (1) the resource and reporting hotline is accessible to a diverse range of community members, and (2) that we are developing resources that are most useful to communities on the ground.

The Stop Hate Project also works to provide training for law enforcement and community leaders on responding to, investigating, and prosecuting hate crimes. The Project also partnered with the International Association of Chiefs of Police to convene a series of meetings of law enforcement and civil rights leaders, culminating in an action agenda for police and communities to enhance the response to hate crimes.

Evaluation Session

At the end of the extensive three-and-a-half-day-long, all participants agreed that the meeting deepened their relationships and helped them to understand each other's individual and common challenges. The dialogue facilitated by these meetings was very crucial but needs to be translated into action. All the participants left with ideas for future projects in their heads and the knowledge of potential partners with whom projects can be realized.

“The opposite of love is not hate, but fear. . . So we shouldn't only talk about hate but we have also to talk about fear. We have to deal with the issue of fear and where it comes from. It is so hard to convince people to admit that they hate other people, but it is not hard to get them to admit that they are afraid. Providing a platform to start this discussion would be a chance.”

“In Germany, we will be faced with a funding challenge due to regulations here and the fact that Federal states have representation from the far-right party. I would like to form some coalitions to speak out for us.”

– Conference Participant

“We need a genuine collaboration as Jewish and Muslim institutions.”

– Conference Participant

“Sitting in a room with people from different countries but roughly doing the same kind of work and envisioning a better world is energizing. Learning from other institutions how they overcome challenges will enrich my knowledge base. I can borrow from them.”

– Conference Participant

The meeting enabled the participants to define the challenges and the problems that need to be tackled. Everyone was sure that they wanted to take an active part in solving the problems and overcoming the challenges. While continuing to deal with their already over-loaded working agendas, participants agreed on the positive impact of international exchange and on collaborative actions.



PARTICIPANTS



NAME	ORGANISATION	CITY
ALAM, EFTAKHAR	Islamic Relief USA	Washington, DC
ALZAYAT, WA'EL	Emgage Foundation	Alexandria, VA
BARTHEL, MICHAEL	Miteinander e. V.	Halle
GÖPNER, FRANZISKA	Anne Frank Zentrum	Berlin
GRESCHNER, DENIZ	Multikulturelles Forum	Dortmund
GÜRSEL, EMRAH	KIgA e. V.	Berlin
HENDERSON, PROF. WADE	Former President of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights	Washington, DC
HETFIELD, MARK	HIAS	Washington, DC
HIZARCI, DERSIS	KIgA e. V.	Berlin
KHAN, ANWAR	Islamic Relief USA	Alexandria, VA
KLIEWE, FALKO	ConAct – the Coordination Center for German-Israeli Youth Exchange	Lutherstadt Wittenberg
KRAHL, KATHRIN	Weiterdenken - Heinrich Böll Foundation	Dresden
KRIEG, DEBORAH	Anne Frank Educational Center	Frankfurt am Main
MCSTRAVOG, JULIA	USHMM	Washington, DC
MONROE, BECKY	Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights	Washington, DC
MUELLER, KLAUS	USHMM	Berlin
PETERSEN, FRIEDERIKE	BBE – National Network for Civil Society	Berlin
SANDMEL, RABBI DAVID	Anti-Defamation League	New York
SCHEURING, JANA	ZWST – Central Board of Jewish Welfare	Berlin
SILVERMAN, ROBERT	Former Director of Muslim-Jewish Relations, American Jewish Committee	Washington, DC
SPRING, SARA	Action Reconciliation Service for Peace	Berlin
AZOULAI, SILKE	KIgA e. V.	Berlin
STAHNKE, TAD	USHMM	Washington, DC
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