

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Global Christianity discusses “Proselytism” in Ghana

Global Consultation Discusses Issues Concerning the Church’s ‘Call to Mission and Perceptions of Proselytism’

A PRESS RELEASE BY THE GLOBAL CHRISTIAN FORUM

(Bonn, 18.09.2017) An international consultation of some thirty theologians and church leaders from a wide range of Christian traditions gathered in Accra, Ghana, to explore “perceptions of proselytism” in the exercise of the universal mandate to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

The gathering was convened by the Global Christian Forum, whose purpose is to provide space in which Christians from a wide variety of churches and traditions meet together to foster mutual respect and address common challenges. In these conversations, experiences and perceptions of ‘proselytism’ have emerged as major themes. “Proselytism” is defined in multiple ways but is often understood as unethical or unfaithful practices in evangelizing those who are in some way already members of other churches or Christian communities.

Planning and implementation were undertaken together with the Catholic Church (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity), the Pentecostal World Fellowship, the World Council of Churches, and the World Evangelical Alliance.

Beginning from a strong commitment to witness to the good news of Jesus Christ, the consultation heard keynote addresses which examined ‘the call to mission in today’s context’ and stressed the need for ongoing Christian formation in all communities.

Examining the situation in a wide variety of global contexts, participants also acknowledged ways in which each of their traditions had been complicit in improper



Schirmmacher during his presentation © BQ / Warnecke

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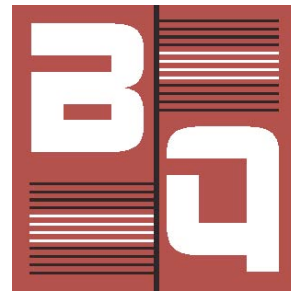
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A joint platform for the following Bonn organizations on the basis of the Evangelical Alliance:

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behaviour. They told stories of both divisive and reconciling experiences, and expressed hope that this historical moment offers unique opportunities for progress together toward common witness.

The consultation is part of an ongoing process working toward a common Statement of the Global Christian Forum. If the four co-sponsoring bodies will continue working on the Statement is still uncertain. Others will be invited also to join in support. A

working draft was considered, and further steps identified for the next year. The consultation was generously hosted by the Church of Pentecost at its Convention Centre.

The World Evangelical Alliance was represented by the head of the Department of Theological Concerns, Thomas Schirmacher, the director of the Theological Commission, Rosalee Velosso Ewell, the director of the Mission Commission, David Ruiz, the director of the International Institute for Religious Freedom, Christof Sauer, the Religious Freedom Ambassador to the Vatican, Thomas K. Johnson, and by Elmar Thiessen, Senior Advisor on Proselytism to Thomas Schirmacher. John Baxter Brown, Senior Advisor on Evangelism, was there as part of the staff and prepared the 200 pp. reader for the consultation.



Three speakers of WEA with the Catholic Archbishop of Ghana and the Anglican Archbishop of Sri Lanka © BQ / Warnecke

Downloads and Links:

- Photos:
 - [Photo 1](#): Schirmacher during his presentation © BQ / Warnecke
 - [Photo 2](#): Three speakers of WEA with the Catholic Archbishop of Ghana and the Anglican Archbishop of Sri Lanka © BQ / Warnecke
 - [Photo 3](#) and [Photo 4](#): The symposium praying © BQ / Warnecke
 - [Photo 5](#): David Ruiz during his presentation © Kim Cain / GMF
 - [Photo 6](#): Christof Sauer during his presentation in Accra, to his right Rosalee V. Ewell © BQ / Warnecke
 - [Photo 7](#): Thomas Schirmacher and David Ruiz in Accra © BQ / Warnecke
 - [Photo 8](#): Evangelical experts in discussion © BQ / Warnecke

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- [Photo 10](#): Bishop Schirmmacher with the Catholic Archbishop of Ghana and the Anglican Archbishop of Sri Lanka © BQ / Warnecke
- [Photo 11](#): Meeting members of the royal families of Ghana © BQ / Warnecke
- [Photo 12](#): The proselytism working group of GCF meeting for the first time in Strasbourg 2014 © BQ / Warnecke
- [Photo 13](#): The proselytism working group of GCF meeting in Rome 2016 © Kim Cain / GMF
- Global Christian Forum: <http://www.globalchristianforum.org>, Media Contact: Kim Cain, Phone: +61 419 373 123; Skype id: kim.cain101; email: kimcain@globalchristianforum.org

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