

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Forgotten Christians in Brunei and Laos

(Bonn, 27.09.2019) Thomas Schirmmacher visited Laos and Brunei to draw attention to the situation of Christians living in countries where local Christians are not allowed to have contact with foreign Christians. In those countries even tourists are not allowed to attend a church service of a local church on Sunday. Schirmmacher was accompanied by his daughter Esther Schirmmacher, a doctoral student in Islamic Studies.

Schirmmacher, who heads the department responsible for the relations of the World Evangelical Alliance to the world religions, officially visited Buddhist temples and government buildings in Laos and several mosques in Brunei and, after a long river trip into the jungle, had the condition of the Mangrove forest in Brunei explained to him by experts.

In both countries it was agreed not to disclose any details of the meetings.

1.5 percent of the 7.038 million inhabitants of Laos are Christians, 66.3 percent Buddhists, 30.7 percent followers of ethnic religions. In Brunei, Christians make up 10 percent of the 429,000 inhabitants. With the exception of the St. Andrews Church, which is used by Catholics and Protestants, the Christian faith may only be practiced in private rooms that are not open to the public. This includes Christmas as well.

On the same trip, Schirmmacher also attended a service in the Anglican cathedral in Singapore and visited the Islamic quarter in Manila.

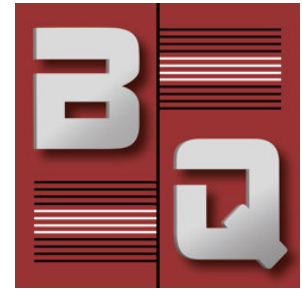


St. Andrews Church, Brunei (Anglican and Catholic) © CC0 1.0

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

Commission for Religious Freedom of the German and the Austrian Evangelical Alliance
www.ead.de/akref

Culture and Science Publ.
www.vkwonline.com

Department of Theological Concerns of World Evangelical Alliance
www.worldevangelicals.org/pdf/TN-47-1-Jan-2018.pdf

Giving Hands – International Charity
www.gebende-haende.de

International Institute for Islamic Studies (IIIS) of the World Evangelical Alliance
www.islaminstitute.net

International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) of the World Evangelical Alliance (International Headquarter, German Branch Tübingen, EU-Office Brüssel)
www.iirf.eu

Martin Bucer Seminary (Bonn, Linz, Zürich, Prague, Tirana, Istanbul, São Paulo, Delhi)
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www.missiotop.org

Office of Intrafaith and Interfaith Relations of the World Evangelical Alliance

Theological Commission of the European Evangelical Alliance
www.europeanea.org

Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance
www.worldevangelicals.org/tc/

UN Bonn liaison for inter-religious concerns of WEA

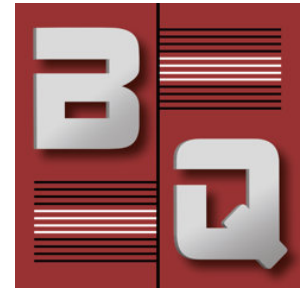
WEA Sustainability Center
www.wea-sc.org

World Evangelical Alliance – Office Bonn

SOS World (Brussels)
www.sosworld.be/page-daccueil/

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Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1:** Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkihah Mosque in Brunei (inside view) © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 2:** St. Andrews Church, Brunei (Anglican and Catholic) © CC0 1.0
- **Photo 3:** Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkihah Mosque in Brunei, on the left hand side the smaller cupola of the women's mosque © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 4:** Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkihah Mosque in Brunei (court) © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 5:** Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 6:** Sultan Suleiman Mosque, Brunei © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 7:** In the mangrove forests of the Brunei jungle © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 8:** Pha That Luang, Buddhist Stupa, in Vientiane, Laos © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 9:** The Laos Parliament in Vientiane © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 10:** In front of the Presidential Palace in Vientiane, Laos © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 11:** Worship Service in the Anglican Cathedral in Singapore © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 12:** Entrance to the Muslim Quarter of Manila © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 13:** Manila's largest mosque in the Muslim Quarter © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 14:** Wat Si Saket – Temple of a Thousand Buddhas, Vientiane, Laos © BQ/Schirmmacher

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