

## Für die Presse

### **Address by the Chairman of the German Commission for Justice and Peace, Bishop Dr Heiner Wilmer SCJ, on 9 November 2023 at Yad Vashem**

*Jerusalem, 9 November 2023: The Chairman of the German Commission for Justice and Peace, Bishop Dr Heiner Wilmer SCJ, laid a wreath today at the central Holocaust memorial in Israel on the occasion of the commemoration of the Night of the Pogrom (Reichspogromnacht) in 1938.*

9 November, the memorial day for the Night of the Pogrom 1938, is not a day like many others. It is a day of mourning and remembrance. At the same time, it is a day of silence and reflection, but also of a clear public stand against anti-Semitism.

These days, anti-Semitism is showing many different faces. The existence of the state of Israel is being called into question with brutal violence. Jews all over the world are facing threats and discrimination. It particularly pains me that this is also the case in Germany. Once again, Jews are becoming a surface on which to project deep-rooted problems. All too many cannot resist the dark temptation to blame them for things that are not their responsibility. Even more, a nasty game is played. Let us therefore be honest and confront the lies and false attributions. The necessary honesty that is required of us today also includes remembering that the Church has also promoted anti-Jewish views for too long. This awareness helps us not to abandon our practical solidarity.

After all, it is up to us to stand up to anti-Semitism and not leave our Jewish brothers and sisters to fend for themselves. Standing by and watching - be it out of fear, lack of information or indifferent disinterest - is not an option. After all, hatred and discrimination strike at the very heart of our society's humanity. It is one of the lessons of our history and one of the foundations of our self-image that all people are made in the image of God and therefore all have an indestructible human dignity. Therefore, all those who are unjustly persecuted and threatened are entitled to our practical solidarity. The parable of the Good Samaritan may inspire us here, just as Pope Francis did in *Fratelli tutti*. But it is not just about caring for those who have fallen prey to robbers. We also need to make the road between Jericho and Jerusalem safe and put a stop to the robbers. We owe that to the victims.

#### **Herausgeber:**

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