



PEACE THROUGH DIALOGUE



**Central
Council of Oriental
Christians in Germany**

ZOCD.DE



The Oriental Christians

Many Oriental Christians came to Germany from the Middle East. Today, there are estimated to over 650,000 members of various Middle Eastern churches in Germany, who have not only internalized democracy, with all its freedoms and duties, but also live exemplary lives. Accordingly, many consider themselves as German citizens with an Oriental Christian faith, belonging to a community of values that not only allows diversity but also consider it as enrichment.

Objectives

One of the main concerns of the Central Council of Oriental Christians in Germany is to associate a respectful treatment of religions, traditions and cultures, based on the values of charity, tolerance and above all open, factual and also critical dialogue.

In doing so, we oriental Christians understand democracy with all its rights and obligations as a form of government, which offers the people, regardless of their faith, their origin or culture, equal opportunities. Integration into these frames of value is an essential part of our duties. For us, integration means to participate in a society characterized by diversity.



Strengthening Christians in the Middle East

We are committed to ensuring that similar rights are applied in the countries of origin as well. In particular, the right to freedom of religion and the change of religion, freedom of expression and equality between men and women are fundamental to us.





Social tasks in Germany

We regard it as our duty to counter the division of society by extremists and populists of all kinds. Especially we, who have always been bridge builders between Orient and Occident, can play an important role here. The focus is particularly on the relationship of the individual to patriarchal authoritarian structures that, religiously legitimized, lead to parallel societies. This influence in Germany is reinforced by the influx of people from Oriental regions, who still have to internalize the basic democratic values. We cannot and will not accept the deviation from democratic values.

Most German - Oriental Christians, whether in person or through previous generations, have had experiences of religious and cultural intolerance and developed a corresponding sensitivity that allows them to recognize dangers very early, which could lead to the restriction of many freedoms.





Promoting ecumenism

A vibrant variety of churches leaves room for new ideas and promotes tolerance. This was not always the case in the past. Even in Germany in the 1960s, the two big churches did not like to see Protestants cooperate with Catholic Christians in an ecumenical event. Similarly, the followers of the various oriental and Byzantine religious communities still have the same behaviors. In Germany, a young generation is precisely pursuing such developments.

The governing bodies of the Central Council of Oriental Christians define themselves on the basis of common Christian values and the associated diversity of Christian belief. Belonging to a church is important, but is overarched by the belief in a common Christian God. It is only in this way that one can be credible to conduct the discourse with other religions and also with politics.





Promotion of women's rights

The value of women in patriarchal structures, often religiously legitimized, is far away from what we understand in modern societies to be equality between men and women. Reduced to traditional functions, e.g. the role as mother, sister, and wife, over whose „purity“ the honor of the clan is defined, she is discriminated as the weakest member of society, often abused in war contexts to humiliate and weaken opponents. This is exactly what has ISIS made while its raids in Iraq and Syria as it abducted thousands of Yazidis and Christians and made them available to its henchmen to satisfy their sexual needs. We also see this form of dehumanization weakened in Germany, when, for example, Honor killings are committed or women are openly sexually harassed.

Based on the symbolic wisdom of the figure „Athena“ from the Greek mythology, equated with the female being which is more than just the mother, the wife or the sister, the working group „Council of Athena“ was founded. From women for women.



How do we achieve our goals?



Media activities

Television reports, radio broadcasts, videos, newspaper articles, interviews



Political activities

Visits and informal exchange with politicians at all levels



Education

Participation and organization of lectures, panel discussions and workshops

Ecumenical events

Participation and organization of events such as services with representatives of various Christian movements





How do we finance ourselves?

We finance ourselves almost exclusively through donations and membership fees. We often have to turn over every penny twice. Without the countless volunteer helpers, our work would not be possible. Even the boards' members of the association have been exclusively volunteers in recent years and have invested a part of their private income in projects that are important for the whole country. They liked to do it because it is about our new and old homeland.

Become a member of the ZOCD

If you are interested in becoming a membership, visit our website at www.zocd.de/mitgliedschaft and print out the application form online. Or send the following section below by mail or fax to our address. We will then send you an application form immediately. den Ihnen dann umgehend einen Aufnahmeantrag zu

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Postal code / City

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You are welcome to financially support our work with a monthly promotion / donation. Of course you will receive a donation receipt. Please indicate your address accordingly when transferring.

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ZOCD

The Central Council of Oriental Christians in Germany is a non-profit association of Christians living in Germany who belong to the Oriental Churches. It was founded in Munich on the 18.03.2013 and is registered in the register of associations of the Munich District Court under the name „Central Council of Oriental Christians in Germany; in short“ ZOCD“.



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Non-profit status:

Entry in the register of associations

Register court: District court Munich

Register number: VR 204728

Trade ID: 103/111/70460

Umsatzsteuer-ID. gemäß § 5 TMG: 143/224/91043