

Fight Antisemitism, Protect Jewish Life

Declaration on the 80th Anniversary of the Wannsee Conference

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference, influential representatives of Protestant churches and Jewish associations from Europe and the USA have called on Christians to show active solidarity with their Jewish brothers and sisters in faith. At a symposium of the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin and the European Coalition for Israel in Berlin, the following declaration was adopted:

As participants of the conference “The Contemporary Church and Antisemitism Today: What Must We Do?” held in Berlin on the 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference, we affirm our commitment to fight antisemitism and to protect Jewish life in Europe, Israel, and every nation around the world. We experience today a rising tide of antisemitism in the form of delegitimation of the Jewish religion as well as the state of Israel.

The Holocaust did not start with the Wannsee Conference, but with a long series of laws and edicts, which were passed to isolate, discredit, and delegitimise Jewish culture and religion. These efforts culminated in the so-called “Final Solution.” Remembering these atrocities, we call on Christians and Christian churches to be “their brother’s keeper,” to show solidarity with their Jewish neighbours and create conditions in which Jewish life flourishes.

For instance, the criminalisation of circumcision and of kosher slaughter under the guise of the rights of the child and of animal welfare must be resisted. They are central to Jewish religious practice and are protected by the freedom of religion or belief, as enshrined in article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Signatories:

- Dr Sarah Cardaun, Research Associate, Helmut Schmidt Universität
- Count Alexander Castell zu Castell
- Gady Gronich, CEO, Conference of European Rabbis Foundation
- Dr Arto Hämmäläinen, Chairman of the Pentecostal Commission on Religious Liberty (PCRL)
- Sir Charles Hoare
- Simon Rufus Isaacs, 4th Marquess of Reading
- Dr Katharina von Kellenbach, Evangelische Akademie, Berlin
- Dr Gregory Lafitte, Founding Director, Forum for Cultural Diplomacy
- Martin Limbach, Prague
- Shorena Mikava, Legal Advisor, Conference of European Rabbis Foundation
- Tomas Sandell, Founding Director, European Coalition for Israel
- Dr Thomas Schirrmacher, Secretary-General, World Evangelical Alliance
- Dr Christian Staffa, Evangelische Akademie, Berlin
- Cary Summers, Founder and CEO, The Nehemiah Group
- Johnnie Moore, Founder and CEO, The Kairos Company (via live stream)
- Pastor Peter Wenz, Gospel Forum, Stuttgart (via live stream)

Conference participants meeting at the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin on January 19, 2022 discussed the theological and political lessons of the churches’ failure to resist the persecution and

murder of Jews during National Socialism. On January 20, 1942, 15 high-ranking government officials of the Nazi administration met in a villa at the Großer Wannsee in Berlin to coordinate and organize in detail the state measures of mass murder of European Jews.

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