

Press release

Taboo topic Nakba and German Protestant Kirchentag: Flüchtlingskinder im Libanon e.V. protests against its exclusion from DEKT 2025 in Hannover by the Kirchentag Presidium

We protest against the ban on admission of our association Flüchtlingskinder im Libanon e.V. to the German Protestant Kirchentag 2025 in Hanover by the Kirchentag Presidium! More than a year before the Kirchentag, we were advised to refrain from applying. As feared, our application was nevertheless rejected. Unfortunately, this attitude and this approach in no way correspond to the motto "Courageous - strong – with passionate heartwith" proclaimed by the Kirchentag.

It is not "courageous" if the fear of the current Presidium of the German Protestant Church of unjustified accusations of anti-Semitism is greater than its courage to stand up for international and human rights. In doing so, the Presidium is betraying the legitimate and vital concerns of its Palestinian brothers and sisters in the "Holy Land".

It is also not "strong", but rather authoritarian, to exclude our association. Fact is that we have been involved in all Protestant church congresses since 1999 in a constructive and open-minded manner and have regularly presented our traveling exhibition "The Nakba - the flight and expulsion of the Palestinians in 1948", sponsored by the EED (Protestant Development Service), there since 2009 without objection from previous church congress presidencies. That is why the ban on the exhibition for DEKT 2023 hit us particularly hard. Instead of seeking a discussion, as we had requested, all members of the Presidium refused to engage in any discussion before and even during the Kirchentag in Nuremberg. The now complete exclusion of our association from DEKT 2025 underlines the lack of willingness to talk and respect shown by those responsible towards an association that has been actively involved in the Kirchentag for years.

It is also not "with passionate heartwith", but rather heartless, when the current DEKT presidium lacks any real sympathy for the flight and current ongoing displacement of Palestinians, for their decades of painful experiences of dispossession, oppression and disenfranchisement by Israeli politics, by excluding Palestinian voices from the church congress.

Despite our less than encouraging experiences, we hope that future presidencies with different composition will finally allow the topic of Palestine/Israel to be discussed at the Kirchentag in a way that is appropriate to the seriousness of the situation and the interests of Kirchentag visitors!

The Nakba traveling exhibition will not be shown in Hannover, but the exhibition by photographer Ursula Mindermann with photos and stories of people from Palestine who had to find a new home will be on display at the Kirchentag in Hall 17. In addition, the private gallery "Odyssey" in the DANA Senioreneinrichtungen GmbH building in Hannover, Weidendamm 1A, is presenting a permanent exhibition of works by the world-famous Palestinian artist couple Ismail Shammout and Tamam El Akhal. Their pictures deal with the Nakba in an impressive way. The gallery will be open on May 3 as part of Palestine Day. Admission is free.