“Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers that you do unto me.”

― The Gospel of Matthew 20:40
Iraq, in pictures. We are grateful to everyone, who donated and continues to donate to our projects, especially these one. We urge them not to relent in their efforts. We invite other well-meaning individual, companies and corporate bodies across countries, to donate to these efforts of giving back a little dignity, to those mostly in need of it. We thank Mr. Khalil Al Rasho, who is our project anchor for Kurdistan and Northern Iraq. We thank his team on the ground, who support him as he goes about fulfilling the ISHR mandate for this project. We thank the ISHR Germany under the leadership of Mr. Edgar Lamm. We thank also all members of his board for their support. We thank in a special way the former executive director of the ISHR Germany, Mr. Karl Hafen for everything he does, to ensure the success of these projects. We thank also Mrs. Karin Muller-kinet and her team that work ceaselessly in helping our humanitarian assistance program. We are grateful to all the human rights warriors in the field, doing their very best to ensure that human rights are respected, and that no one is condemned to die because they cannot afford to live. We thank our sections and their members, who are doing their utmost best, to meet the demands of human rights work in the world of today. You all are heroes!

We forget no one.

Thank you all.

Happy reading!

Thomas Schirrmacher, Prof. Dr.
President of the International Council of the ISHR

REPORTS

The President catches up on Human Rights Situation in Ecuador and Peru

The ISHR President Prof. Thomas Schirrmacher in company of the wife, Prof. Christine Schirrmacher visited Ecuador and Peru to learn about the human rights situation, including freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and the situation of indigenous peoples.

While in Ecuador, they met with the President, the General Secretary, and the Board of the Evangelical Alliance of Ecuador, Confraternidad Evangélica Ecuatoriana (CEE), and were informed about the situation of religious freedom and human rights in the country. Founded in 1964, this Evangelical Alliance is recognized by the Ecuadorian government as the professional association representing the Evangelicals in the country. Its president is Pastor Estuardo López.

The CEE reported that the improved relationship of the WEA to the Pope and to the Vatican had also had a positive impact in their country and that the churches were now jointly addressing human rights issues.
**Fundamedios, Partner of the IGFM**

Christine and Thomas Schirrmacher also met with María Belén Tinajero, Project Director, and Verónica Manoslavas, Financial Director of ‘Fundamedios’, an organisation that stands up for press freedom and imprisoned journalists and is financially supported by the German section of the International Society for Human Rights. Fundamedios shared their assessment that with the new president Lenín Moreno there is hope that change will happen.

The Andean Foundation for Observation and Study of Media, also known as Fundamedios, is an Ecuadorian non-governmental organization created in 2007, with the aim of supporting media and journalists by monitoring threats and attacks against freedom of expression, as well as documenting the violations that have occurred against the press. Executive director of 'Fundamedios' is César Ricaurte, President of the Board Juan Carlos Calderón.

**UNASUR**

The two experts on religious freedom and human rights also visited the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and its futuristic headquarters “Edificio Néstor Kirchner” in La Ciudad Mitad del Mundo near Quito. It was inaugurated in 2014. 12 South American states belong to UNASUR.

They then spoke with representatives of indigenous peoples in Pichincha Park. Thomas Schirrmacher reports: “Linguistically Ecuador and Quito both have the same meaning, namely ‘equal’, and refer to the equator line. French scientists mismeasured the equator line at the time. Today there is a family park, a tourist magnet. 200 meters to the south is the real equator line in an inconspicuous park ‘pichincha,’ which is also called ‘Mitad del Mundo’ (center of the world). It is not only very suitable for experiments around the position of the sun at the equator line, but also to study the history of different ethnic groups in Ecuador. It shows how people lived 300 years ago and how the original ethnic groups of the country in the tropical rainforest live today, who, by the way, do not care much about the borders between Ecuador and the neighbouring countries Peru and Colombia.”
Peru

The journey continued to Peru, where Christine and Thomas Schirrmacher met with human rights lawyers and refreshed their knowledge of indigenous peoples in Chinchero, Pisac, Ollantaytambo and Urubamba.

Thomas Schirrmacher reports: “As President of the ISHR I have been invited to testify in the Human Rights Council of the German Federal Parliament (‘Deutscher Bundestag’) on ‘Threatened People’. Having studied ethnology/cultural anthropology among other subjects, this is a topic that has accompanied me all my life. In my statement, I wrote:

‘There are human rights violations that do not target just individuals, but whole peoples, may it be ethnic people groups, language groups, religious groups, low-class economic groups, or very often a mix out of those elements. I just visited such ethnic groups in Ecuador and in Peru on an altitude between 2600 and 3500 meter, beside partner organisations there involved in fighting for the freedom of press.

In Ecuador it is more the tribes that did fight against the Inkas centuries ago, in Peru it is more the descendants of the Inkas in the mountains of the picturesque Andes, that are threatened – see the photo with descendants from the Inkas showing us, how they still produce clothes out of alpaca wool with naturals dyes the same way as it was done 500 years ago.

The ISHR has a long history of fighting for the human rights of threatened people like the Jezids in Iraq, the Kurds in Turkey, the Rohingya in Myanmar, the Syrian-Orthodox Christians in Syria, the Tibetans and Uigurs in China, the Ahmadiyya in Pakistan, or the Armenians in Turkey and else. This has led us to a network of good friends and an experience of hospitality worldwide, which I never want to miss.’”

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FROM THE SECTIONS

ISHR Iraq: Spotlight on Iraq – Picture Gallery of the 25th Iraq trip
April–May 2019

City tour with the medical team in Erbil in northern Iraq.

Treatment of a patient by the dentist Dr. Kirsten Holst and her team at Camp Mam Rashan. In just seven days, the team treated over 200 patients.

Katrin Bornmüller, Honorary Chairwoman of the ISHR, visits two IS-liberated boys at the age of six and eleven in the wild camp for refugees in Baadre. The children are deeply traumatized and brainwashed by their time at the IS: they both show the IS typical sign, consisting of a finger pointing upwards, symbolizing the one God they believe in. The children therefore need psychological care.

Visit of Khalil Al-Rasho and Shirin to a deeply traumatized mother with her five children, recently freed from IS, who are also traumatized and brainwashed. The ISHR supported the family with household appliances, clothing, beds, and mattresses.
A 35-year-old woman who has been liberated from the IS. Her husband was killed by Al Qaeda in 2014. During the liberation of Bagos, her 11-year-old son died and her leg was injured. She is also being supported by the ISHR.

Two women in front of the “Commission for Investigation & Gathering Evidence” in Duhok in northern Iraq, where IS-exempt women have to make statements, file charges and claim damages for pain and suffering.

Group of IS-liberated traumatized persons, on a trip organized by the ISHR with Khalil Al-Rasho. Among other things, the young adults visited a sacred area for Yazidi, a historical area and a church.

Group of traumatized persons liberated from the IS, during a trip organized by the ISHR with Khalil Al-Rasho. The trips were designed to alleviate their trauma, and help the children and teenagers to think differently and for a short time to free themselves from thinking all the time about the atrocities inflicted on them by the IS.
Commission for Investigation & Gathering Evidence in Duhok, Northern Iraq.

“Survivors help survivors.” In this project Shirin (right) helps a liberated and survivor of the IS after the IGFM has obtained a permit from the health department.

Dialysis machines and couches, donated by the kidney centers in Düren and Würzburg, in front of the main health office in Dohuk.

Mr. Musa, Head of the Basari Foundation (BCF), the largest national organization in the Kurdistan region, with Khalil Al-Rasho. The Basari Foundation has already been a partner in several ISHR projects.

Michaela Koller and Khalil Al-Rasho visit Bishop Mekhael in Al-Qosh. The conversation was about the situation of Christian refugees with disabilities and the reconstruction of a destroyed Christian church.

A volunteer ISHR engineer examines the remains of a destroyed Christian church.
Joint sewing workshop of the ISHR and the Lalisch Cultural Centre in Baadre for 15 refugees. Among them also several girls liberated from the IS.

Medical assistance in Camp Shekhan refugee camp that the ISHR brought to northern Iraq as part of its humanitarian assistance.

Bicycles for the five best students at Camp Shekhan.

Bicycles and helmets are given to the five best students at Camp Shekhan. This should motivate the students and encourage them to work hard at the school.

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Refugees at the computer project at Camp Mam Rashan. For one month 10 girls can learn how to use computer programs like Microsoft Word, Excel or Photoshop. Some of them are traumatised girls.
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Two small children, testing out a bed, at distribution of beds to poor families in Shekhan refugee camp, to protect them from snakes and scorpions.

This mentally handicapped 16-year-old girl in Camp Qadian has been regularly cared for by the ISHR for four years.

The 16-year-old girl's sister has no legs.

The ISHR has already installed four such water filters in the buildings in the wildlife camp in Shekhan. They will provide clean water for the refugees and thus prevent the outbreak of diseases.