

DINO

Deutsche Initiative für den Nahen Osten



Spokesman for the initiative

Manfred Erdenberger

Journalist, former editor-in-chief and long-standing chief political correspondent at the German radio and television network WDR in Cologne



Managing director

Jürgen Bremer

Head of Communications at the television channel PHOENIX

German Initiative for the Middle East

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Supported by



Members of the initiative

**Jürgen Bremer**

Managing director of the initiative,
Head of Communications at the
TV channel PHOENIX

**Dr. Klaus Kinkel**

Long-standing Foreign
Secretary and Vice Chancellor of
Germany

**Wolfgang Clement**

Former Prime Minister of
North-Rhine Westphalia and
former Minister of Economics

**Manfred Kock**

Former Chairman of the Council
of the Protestant Church in
Germany

**Rudolf Dreßler**

Long-standing ambassador of
Germany in Israel

**Avi Primor**

Israeli political scientist
and long-standing ambassador of
Israel in Germany

**Manfred Erdenberger**

Spokesman for the initiative,
journalist, former editor-in-
chief and long-standing chief
political correspondent at WDR
TV and radio network, Cologne

**Dr. Mitri Raheb**

Priest of the Bethlehem Lutheran-
Protestant Christmas Church and
Director of the International
Community Center

**His Beatitude
Gregorios III.**

Patriarch of the Greek Catholic
Church of Antioch and all the
East, and Alexandria and
Jerusalem

**Prof. Dr. Rita Süßmuth**

Former President of the German
Bundestag

**Msgr. Martin Hülskamp**

Episcopal official,
Diocese of Münster

**Muhammad Salim
Abdullah**

Senior director of the Central
Institute Islam Archive in Germany



The basics of the German Initiative for the Middle East

The basis for the foundation of the project DINO, which stands for the German Initiative for the Middle East, were a lot of discussions, held by Manfred Erdenberger (former chief editor of the German Radio and Television Network WDR, Commander of the Order of Saint Lazarus) and political representatives as well as members of the church. The dialogues dealt with the question, if there is a chance for supporting initiatives for the Middle East from Germany.

Influenced through his several trips to the Middle East and his reports from that region during the past ten years, Erdenberger suggested to set up a circle of like-minded people, which would constructively support the peace process and balance in the Middle East. DINO is planning to present the situation in the Middle East to the public once a year and discuss possible chances for any improvements.

The circle of DINO-members is supposed to be present at various occasions and to give insights on the developments in the Middle East and on the difficult process of approach of the parties involved. DINO always acts non-partisan and inter religious.

The Middle East is the birthplace of three big world religions and deserves special attention. Especially the people, who are living in this region, which is continuously shaken by war and terror, need our support, exceeding the political aspects. Europe, and Germany in particular has to take the responsibility.

Basically it is about the never ending conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, but also about the situation in the adjoining countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria as well as Iran and Iraq. With other words: A stronger focus has to be put on the surrounding countries in that region. It is about rising the public awareness about the problems in the Middle East.

"Taking these aspects into account, DINO, together with a network of committed people, wants to make the attempt to support and facilitate the understanding of the complicated contexts by raising awareness, to prevent and fight prejudices and support approaches of the conflicting parties, all that without political statements or influences. So, it is about collecting information and passing them on, motivating possible partners and to raise tolerance."

In that context, the private networks of all members of DINO are very essential for the initiative. Interviews, lectures and discussions which go beyond the usual known statements of politicians and military members, are important contributions – in public as well as in the background.



The headquarters located in Münster, where also the annual meeting takes place, DINO follows the tradition of The Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which brought peace to Europe after a war of 30 years, restructuring the political and religious situations. In the Friedenssaal of the town hall there are still some of the basics for this historic treaty, which can be taken as a model for many shaken regions in the world – especially for the Middle East.

„Pax optima rerum“ – „Peace is the greatest good“ – is written on the stove of the Friedenssaal, within sight of the cathedral. Written on the chandelier: „Befleißigt Euch der Gerechtigkeit, die ihr auf Erden richtet...!“ , „Practice justice, you, who judge somebody....!“ and on the gate to the court, „Man höre beide Parteien“, meaning „Listen to both parties“. Three simple sentences which were the key to the peacetreaty in 1648, putting an end to suffering, death and destruction, still serving as the instructions for today’s world.

Members of DINO – German Initiative for the Middle East – were from the very beginning on Manfred Kock, the former Chairman of the Council of the Protestant Church of Germany (EKD), as well as the priest of the Bethlehem Lutheran-Protestant Christmas Church and director of the International Community Center, Dr. Mitri Raheb. Dr. Raheb was given the famous „Tschelebi-Friedenspreis 2006“ by the Central Institute Islam Archive of Germany in Soest.

Monsignore Martin Hülskamp, capitular of the Dom in Münster and prior of the Ritterorden vom Heiligen Grab zu Jerusalem (knightly order of the Holy Grave of Jerusalem) and Avi Primor, former ambassador of Israel in Germany as well as the manager of the initiative, Jürgen Bremer, head of the communication sector of the eventchannel PHOENIX, also joined DINO at the very beginning.

In the meantime, Primor has become the director of the Center for European Studies (at the private university of Herzliyya (IDC)) and is also a publicist. He is cooperating with representatives of the Palestinian University of East-Jerusalem and Amman/Jordan. By doing this, he is connecting the Middle East with Europe.

The circle was enlarged by the joining of Dr. h.c. Johannes Rau, who passed away in January 2006. As prime minister, head of the Federal Council of Germany and Federal President and member of the Protestant Church, Rau always stood up for peace in the Middle East and was appointed honorary doctor of the University of Haifa in 1986, as the first German ever. He is also honorary member of the „Israel Museum“ of Jerusalem.

Paul Spiegel, head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, was also part of the initiative, until his death in April, 2006.



A new member since March 2006 is the former President of the German Bundestag Prof. Dr. Rita Süßmuth. She supported the processes which encouraged people to live peacefully next to people of different origins and religion and is internationally respected. The DINO-Initiative welcomes her willingness to join this voluntary and engaged team.

In June 2006, the circle was once again enlarged by His Beatitude Gregorios III., Patriarch of the Melkite-Greek Catholic Church of Antioch and all the East of Alexandria and of Jerusalem. The reason for his participation: "26 years in the Holy Land - for me it is an engagement for the peace in the Holy Land, which is the key of peace in the Middle East and the whole world."

Rudolf Dressler, having been the ambassador of Germany in Israel for many years and former politician (SPD-MdB) and parliamentary State Secretary, also joined the Initiative. He stood up for the region, especially Israel and Palestine, with more engagement than his actual work demanded.

Dr. Klaus Kinkel also promised his commitment and support to DINO in September 2006. He was the German foreign secretary and Vice Chancellor of Germany. Now, Kinkel is CEO of the Deutsche Telekom Trust.

Dr. Kinkel has supported the peace process in the Middle East for many years now and launched several projects and meetings. Despite of his numerous charges and duties, he finally joined initiative, after having close contact with DINO-spokesman Manfred Erdenberger.

In February 2007 the Prime Minister of Northrhine Westphalia and former Minister of Economics Wolfgang Clement decided to become a member of the initiative. Clement has been a frequent visitor to the Middle East, particularly to Israel, especially during his time in Northrhine Westphalia. All of the members of DINO are thankful for the joining of Wolfgang Clement.

In April 2007 Muhammad Salim Abdullah, Senior director of the Central Institute Islam Archive in Germany, decided to become a member as well. Thus for the first time one representative of the Muslim Confraternity joined the initiative.

April 2007

1st initiative symposium on January 26-27, 2007 in Münster

The German Initiative for the Middle East took stock of the current situation for the first time at its 1st symposium on Saturday, January 27, 2007 in Münster. Following an internal session, invited members of the public were welcomed to the public session in the Freiherr-vom-Stein room in the district government building Von-Vincke-Haus by the district president Dr. Jörg Twenhöven. Archimandrite Mtanios Haddad then passed on best regards from the Patriarch, His Beatitude, Gregorios III. and outlined the situation in the Middle East under the influence of the different religions. Four introductory presentations subsequently gave different views of the current situation in the Middle East:

Major General Hans-Werner Ahrens,

Commander of the Air Transport Commando in Münster, spoke on the subject of "Flying for Peace",

Rudolf Dreßler,

Former ambassador of Germany in Israel, analyzed German-Israeli relations in the Middle East conflict,

Hermann-Josef Großimlinghaus,

Vice-President of the German Association of the Holy Land, presented the situation of Christians in Israel and Palestine,

Manfred Kock,

Former Chairman of the Council of the Protestant Church of Germany, talked about the initiative's contribution to peace in the Middle East.

This was followed by a panel discussion led by DINO spokesman **Manfred Erdenberger** with the following participants:

Clemens Verenkotte,

ARD correspondent in Tel Aviv,

Jörg Kaminski,

ARD correspondent in Amman,

Monsignore Martin Hülskamp,

Episcopalian official, District of Münster.



2nd initiative symposium on August 31/September 1, 2007 in Cologne

"DINO – Ways towards peace"

The 2nd symposium of the German Initiative for the Middle East was held in Cologne on August 31/September 1, 2007 under the patronage of the Mayor of Cologne, Fritz Schramma.

Its motto was "DINO – Ways towards peace."

The initiative took stock of the Middle East peace process and ventured a look at the future together with its members, guests and selected speakers. The meeting also focused on the fate of the people affected in the region.

In addition to a reception and working meeting with members of the initiative, there were various introductory presentations and a panel discussion with invited guests.

The program included:

Prof. Dr. med. Joachim Gardemann, Head of the Competence Center Humanitarian Aid at Münster university of applied sciences on "Humanitarian action as a fundamental part of all world religions"

Monika Möller, Chairwoman of the association to promote the twinning program Köln-Tel Aviv-Yafo e.V., "Cologne-Tel Aviv – Difficulties of twinning"

Heinz-Rudolf Hönings, Chairman of the association to promote the twinning program Köln-Bethlehem e. V., "Cologne-Bethlehem – Difficulties of twinning"

Abdallah Frangi, Foreign Policy Spokesman and Head of the Foreign Policy department of Fatah, on behalf of the President of the Palestinian Autonomy Authority, Mahmud Abbas: "Conveying the President's greeting message"

Panel discussion with His Beatitude, Patriarch Gregorios III., Abdallah Frangi, Rudolf Dreßler, Prof. Dr. Joachim Gardemann and Manfred Erdenberger.



Reception in the Hansa room by Mayor Fritz Schramma
(left to right Dr. Klaus Kinkel, Wolfgang Clement, Fritz Schramma,
Patriarch Gregorios III., Abdallah Frangi, Manfred Erdenberger)
(Photo: Loehrer)



Press release

Olmert and Abbas: Respect and recognition for DINO

Münster, September 21, 2007 – The Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, expressed their respect and recognition for the commitment and goals of the German Initiative for the Middle East (DINO).

In a letter to the DINO member and former German Foreign Secretary, Dr. Klaus Kinkel, Mr. Olmert expressed his hope that the DINO and its activities would bear fruit. Mr. Olmert wrote that he had no doubt that DINO's message would attract the world's attention.

In his greeting to the 2nd DINO symposium in Cologne, President Abbas conveyed his hope that the initiative would be a bridge towards peace. He said that the members were getting their message across, which was extremely important "for us Palestinians, for the Israelis and the entire Middle East". Mr. Abbas assured the initiative in his message that they could count on his support.



DINO Development Association

At the working meeting of the 2nd DINO symposium on September 1, 2007,

the "Förderverein Deutsche Initiative für den Nahen Osten e.V." (German Initiative for the Middle East Development Association), a registered non-profit organisation,

was established with its headquarters in Cologne.

That gives potential supporters and sponsors the opportunity to make a direct donation - tax-deductible due to its certified donation status.

The association is creating the financial basis for the varied tasks of the initiative. Nevertheless, the members of the initiative are still working voluntarily for this body.

Deutsche Telekom has provided material and communications resources to the association since it was established.

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Managing Director: Jürgen Bremer

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