

Welcome address Gesellschaft für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit e.V.

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Ladies and gentlemen, dear fellow citizens, dear guests!

"An individual is forgotten not until his name is forgotten." Our Stolperstein project in Göttingen is guided by this sentence from the Jewish Talmud. Ten years ago the first stone was laid and, as of today, there will be 88 stones commemorating the names of people who once lived in our midst in Göttingen. On behalf of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, I would also like to welcome you to this 7th laying of Stolpersteine. I am very pleased that today – different from last year – we are able to celebrate this ceremony live with all of you.

With affection, I welcome amongst our guests the descendants of those people we are remembering today. People who had to flee our city from the National Socialist terror, or else were deported and murdered. Thank you for not only agreeing to the laying of the Stolpersteine but also for travelling from England, Berlin and northern Germany so that we can meet in person in common remembrance of your families.

I would also like to welcome the people who have financed the Stolpersteine through their donations and who have taken on the responsibility for specific stones: Individuals, groups, but also institutions – this year obviously the officers of the Göttingen Police Department. Concerning this station in Papendiek, it is a matter of particular importance to two former Göttingen residents, one living in Bonn, the other in Hamburg, to support the remembrance of Jewish families in their old home town with the aid of Stolpersteine. I thank them all very much for their commitment.

I can only greet the artist Gunter Demnig in his absence; it was he who conceived the Europe-wide Gesamtkunstwerk of these traces of remembrance and, up to now, has laid thousands of these Stolpersteine himself. For reasons of age, he no longer attends all the appointments personally but relies on the experienced staff of the Göttingen builder's yard in our case. A big thank you to Mr Grops and his team!

I would also like to thank the historians from the Göttingen Historical Society who played a part in the preparation of this Stolperstein laying with their expertise, especially Dr Peter Kriedte who had a good deal of research work and also some trouble with the conception of the inscriptions. My thanks also go to the team of the City of Göttingen, above all to Mrs Kalisch, who as head of the city archives coordinated the joint work for this laying. Although we as the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation are officially in charge, we would not be able to carry out the laying [of the Stolpersteine] in this form without the cooperation in the Stolperstein-AG which has proven itself for years.

For the musical contribution at each station, I would like to thank three members of the Göttingen project orchestra KlezPO – Ms Kalinke, Ms Kueßner and Mr Buschhaus – as well as their conductor Wieland Ulrichs who has chosen the music for today's occasion and put together this "mobile task force".

Last but not least, I would like to welcome the students of the Georg-Christoph-Lichtenberg-Gesamtschule with their teacher Dr Ingo Trüter and their headmistress Tanja Laspe at this station. As a tutorial study group, they dealt with the biographies of the eleven people whom we want to bring back to the Göttingen memory with the aid of these Stolpersteine in Papendiek. As a former teacher, I know how much time and energy such a special project requires in addition to the normal workload. Thank you, dear Ingo, for taking on the task of introducing us to the Wagner and Prager families with your study group. In addition to your presentation, you even prepared a flyer including photos and an overview of this large family. You show us the people whose names we want to recall. Thank you very much for your work!

And now the floor is yours.