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My name is Ender Cetin. I am from Ditib Turkish Islamic Union in Berlin. The Situation for Muslim communities in Germany has filled us with sorrow.

Only last year, nearly every day there was an attack against refugees or mosques because of Islamophobia. These attacks have made a big part of German Society very afraid of Muslim groups and Islam.

Terrorism in France or Belgium have parallel effect and the discrimination against Muslims have increased. Compared to anti-Semitism or anti LGBT, there is no registration of attacks against Muslim communities that are on the rise because of Islamophobia. At the same time, there are no officially financed projects against Islamophobia, while we are happy that projects against anti-Semitism and discrimination against LGBT community have projects which are financed by authorities.

Add to that another fact that Muslim religious NGOs do not have the same possibilities as Church or Synagogue based organizations. In the case of mosques, we are expected to maintain these with community support. That decreases their ability to act professionally and thus the expectation that mosques work in the same professional manner like the other religious organizations becomes unrealistic. There must be more projects for Muslim communities to hold the standard high.

With this situation in mind, we would also like to remind the authorities that compared to the past, Muslim organizations have now more contact with official departments in Germany. There is partnership between police, churches, politicians in the districts, or schools. This increased contact and open communication, for example in the school classes can help to disassociate the youth from going towards extremism as well as help to reduce Islamophobia in the mind of non-Muslim teachers.

Muslim NGOs have arranged visits and led more about 10 thousand police officers through the mosques and made guided tours for German teachers and soldiers. This face to face contact helped both sides to minimize the common prejudices.

Intercultural Trainings with soldiers, police officers, teachers and prison officers have been very successful. We learnt from each other because we talked together and not about each other. Islam teaches us to focus on humanity. The Quran says: “O mankind, we created you from Male and Female and made you nations and tribes that you may know one another.”

So we are sure that the open and respectful communication between German majority and Muslim communities is the only way forward to end discrimination.



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As German Muslims, we look alarmingly to France and Belgium where the situation between Muslim groups and non-Muslim majorities is much more problematic. Because of French insistence on secularism, there is no contact between Muslim organizations and State departments.

That is why, we would recommend Intercultural Training and Guided Tours. It would help to fight discrimination, because it is the need of the hour. Such open co-operation would send a good signal to many young Muslims that State departments are not enemies but partners in the society.

In the end, I would like to appeal to Europeans that they should stop looking at us Muslims as Aliens. Islam has existed in Europe since 8th Century, first through Moors in Spain and then Ottoman Empire up until 19th Century.

We must respect and accept each other, if we have to create a peaceful future. Hostility and Islamophobia is the last thing, we need these days.

Chairman Ender Çetin