



HOUSE OF ONE

DREI RELIGIONEN. EIN HAUS.

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PRESS RELEASE

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY IN MAY 2021

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Symbolic start of construction of the multifaith center House of One in Berlin will be celebrated on May 27, 2021

Jews, Christians and Muslims will lay the foundation stone for the House of One on May 27, 2021, in the heart of the German capital Berlin. "This is an important step toward the structural completion of our interfaith peace project," **Rabbi Andreas Nachama, chairman of the House of One Foundation Board**, said Tuesday. "We have already been active in interfaith dialogue for many years, and contribute in our daily work to more understanding, tolerance and togetherness in our society." It is therefore all the more gratifying to soon be able to accompany the erection of this built symbol of that work of understanding.

The **President of the Bundestag, Wolfgang Schäuble**, and the **Governing Mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller**, have already confirmed their participation in the ceremony.

Rev. Gregor Hohberg from the presidium of the House of One commented on the upcoming event with the following words: "We are very happy to have come this far thanks to great support from many sides and with God's help." For ten years, he said, the House of One has already been setting the tone in terms of interreligious encounters. Now this work will soon be more visible day by day. "And this joy about the now also structural growth of this unique religious peace project increases with every stone that will be laid for the house." The House of One will be built on the historic foundations of the former St. Peter's Church. The church, which was damaged in World War II, was completely demolished in GDR times.

Originally, this groundbreaking ceremony should have taken place on April 14 this year. Due to Covid-19 it had to be canceled. This date would have been the anniversary of the premiere of Lessing's drama "Nathan the Wise" in Berlin in 1783. This work of literature is a plea for humanism and peaceful understanding between religions and society. "It was then that Berlin opened up for the first performance of Lessing's important work, which was very controversial at the time," **said Imam Kadir Sanci, also a member of the House of One presidium**. "Today, Berlin is opening up once again to a special path of understanding among the religions." This openness, he said, will not only affect the three religions - Judaism, Christianity and Islam – whose

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representatives established the House of One Foundation. It goes far beyond that and invites all those of other faiths and non-beliefs to engage in dialogue.

Financing is mostly secured

Four years are envisaged for the construction of the House of One. The total cost of the building sums up to 47 million Euro. Last Friday, the German Bundestag approved another 10 million Euro for the building. The total amount contributed by the federal government to the construction now amounts to 20 million Euro. The state of Berlin had pledged a further 10 million Euro. With private donations and other contributions, a large part of the construction costs has now been covered. The remaining gap of nearly eight million Euro is to be closed by donation campaigns, as the one launched currently before Christmas.

Last archaeological excavations

Before the foundation stone is laid, archaeologists will return to the site at the beginning of 2021. A small area of this site, which is one of the oldest in Berlin, has not yet been scientifically investigated. Where once stood a mighty plane tree, which had to be cut down last year, the archaeologists expect, among other things, further grave finds in the former cemetery of the St. Peter's church. Almost 4000 skeletons had already been recovered during the first phase of excavation, which lasted several years.

With the House of One, a new type of sacred building is being built with a synagogue, a church and a mosque under one roof - connected by a meeting space in the center of the building that is open to all. People of other religions and world views as well as the secular urban society are explicitly invited and included in this fourth room.

For the latest information, please check our website at www.house-of-one.org or subscribe to our [Newsletter](#).

*If you have any further questions, please contact our **press officer Kerstin Krupp** at press@house-of-one.org or by phone on +49-170 24 75 955.*