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Declaration Regarding the Paris Terrorist Attacks by the Academy of World Religions, University of Hamburg / Germany

We condemn the terrorist attacks in Paris as an atrocious act. They are a crime against humanity that can be justified by nothing; not by the war in Syria, and certainly not by any religious reasoning. We commemorate the many victims in Paris and mourn with their families and all of France.

The attacks in Paris will bring many changes to France, Germany, Europe, and the world. They will give rise to fear and increase the desire for safety. Politicians will need to react to this. Yet at the same time we hope that the need for solidarity in our societies, a solidarity that at this moment is especially necessary towards refugees, will not be undermined. The terror of the so-called "Islamic State" is rooted in a brutal, inhumane ideology which has no right to claim Islam as its justification. We understand that the refugees coming to Europe today have fled precisely this form of terrorism, and we feel with them. All of us are concerned by it.

Now, it is more necessary than ever for people in our society to share mutual bonds across and in spite of their cultural and religious differences and to jointly oppose hatred and terrorism. Especially at a time when some deliberately trample on humanity, we must be all the more careful that our path continues towards the mutual understanding of all people with their different cultures and religions, not into the dead end of hatred. We at the Academy of World Religions at Hamburg University are dedicated to fostering this mutual understanding and respect between people of different religions and beliefs. We will continue our effort in research, teaching, and public dissemination with greater determination in the face of the recent attacks in Paris.

In the name of the Academy of World Religions at Hamburg University and its co-directors, with Professor Katajun Amirpur, Professor Ursula Neumann, Professor Ulrich Dehn, Dr. Anna Körs und Junior Professor Handan Aksünger

Professor Wolfram Weisse

Director of the Academy of World Religions at Hamburg University