



Jonathan Makkonen introducing Ali Can

# International Café Giessen Book Presentation with Ali Can

Giessen, Germany, December 2, 2017

By Dieter Schmidt

International Cafe', an initiative of UPF Gießen, hosted an event on 2 December 2017, featuring Ali Can, author of a new book published by Lübbe: „Hotline for Concerned Citizens-a Trusted Asylum Seeker Answers your Questions”.

Ali started his book presentation with a reading from the chapter „Belief, Feelings and Conscience “- with a telephone conversation he had with Mr. S. from East Germany. This conversation brought out diverse opinions and understandings of religion, differences between Christianity and Islam. But many other topics were broached. With this excerpt, Ali was able to give us a good insight into his project „Hotline for Concerned Citizens “. Ali also spoke about meetings he had had with people connected to ‚Pegida‘, who meet on a monthly basis in Dresden. He has also learnt much from these interactions.

Concerning direct interactions and discussions, Ali’s desire was to especially emphasize two factors: firstly, the art of listening, and the willingness to be open to another person and to their point of view. We

tend to wait until the other has finished before voicing our opinion. Real listening is a skill that must be practiced. Secondly, we must have eye-level discussions, and for this we need to be prepared to examine our own opinions and to be open to learning. That means to be open to other points of view, to consider other perspectives and to have empathy. A true encounter can only succeed when goodwill is displayed by both sides.

This statement stimulated a question from the audience as to whether Ali considers that refugees with a Moslem background feel bound by the German Constitution and basic law. Ali considers this to be mostly the case and asked us to bear in mind that most Moslems living in our country have themselves fled from radical Islam.

He then read an excerpt from the epilogue of his book in which he makes a case for more humaneness and solidarity.

In conclusion, he introduced briefly some of his projects and plans to open the way for interaction. He sees himself as a bridge-builder. For example, his ‘Intercultural Streetwork’ project, established as part of the organization he founded in 2016,

**LESUNG IM INTERNATIONALEN CAFÉ GIESSEN**

**Am anderen Ende der Leitung...**



Der Giessener Student Ali Can, Gründer der Initiative "Hotline für besorgte Bürger" und Autor des gleichnamigen Buches liest aus seinem Werk und erzählt von seiner ereignisreichen Arbeit als Vermittler und Friedensstifter.

Nach dem Vortrag kann man sich bei Kaffee und Kuchen weiter austauschen und diskutieren.

Die Veranstaltung ist kostenfrei.

**SAMSTAG, DER 14. OKTOBER  
BEGINN UM 15:00 UHR**

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‘Intercultural Peace’, is concerned with working on the basics and is tackling the theory of humane cooperation by dealing with and putting into practice topics that people are really concerned about.

All in all, this was a very interesting and enlightening presentation and gave some good insights into the content of this valuable book.