No tolerance for domestic violence and forced marriage

Domestic violence and forced marriage violate fundamental human rights. Every individual regardless of sex, religion, ideology, age, disability or ethnic origin is entitled to physical and mental integrity and has the right to decide freely and within the framework of applicable law whether to marry or not.

Unfortunately, even today these universal human rights are often ignored. There are still cases of women and men forced into marriage or affected by violence or threats in their families - also in Germany, where forced marriage and bodily injury constitute criminal offences.

Neither domestic violence nor forced marriage are rooted in a specific religion, but in certain traditional patriarchal structures. The Muslims represented in the German Islam Conference expressly stress that Islam rejects domestic violence and marriages concluded against a spouse's will. They emphasize that Islam is an open and tolerant religion opposed to physical or psychological violence and forced marriage, which encourages self-determination and freedom of opinion and expression.

The German Islam Conference has studied these phenomena and rejects every form of domestic violence and forced marriage. The members of the German Islam Conference underline that domestic violence and forced marriage constitute serious interference in an individual's personal rights, the right to self-determination and the right to physical integrity and hence cannot be accepted nor tolerated. They call upon all stakeholders not to tolerate these practices beyond the already existing punishability of the offence and to condemn violence. Civil society actors, in particular, should, whenever possible,

- help prevent such acts through awareness-raising and other appropriate measures, also with public support, and
- strengthen those concerned - mainly by informing them about their rights and possibilities of support and intervention, by jointly developing strategies to cope with this problem and by motivating and strengthening the victims' initiative and their capacity to help themselves and take action against forced marriage and/or domestic violence.