

# Minister of State Böhmer responds to murder of former head Palmyra archaeologist by ISIS

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19.08.2015 - Press release 

Maria Böhmer, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, issued the following statement on 19 August upon hearing that the terrorist militia group ISIS had murdered Khaled al-Asaad, former head archaeologist of the ancient city of Palmyra in the Syrian desert:

We condemn the horrific killing of Khaled al-Asaad by the terrorist militia group ISIS. There can be no justification for this inhuman crime. Our profound sympathy goes out to Mr al-Asaad's family. Khaled al-Asaad was one of Syria's most outstanding experts on the ancient world and the ruins of Palmyra, which has been on the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage List since 1980 and on the List of World Heritage in Danger since 2013. This crime is therefore also an attack on the cultural identity of Syria's people and humanity as a whole. Khaled al-Asaad's personal commitment to international archaeological cooperation, particularly with the German Archaeological Institute, was exemplary. His beheading and the disrespectful treatment of his mortal remains are yet another demonstration of the barbarity of ISIS. This act shows that the international community must stand together to combat ISIS terrorism.

## Background information:

Eighty-two-year-old Khaled al-Asaad was beheaded on Tuesday (18 August) and his body hung up in the ruins of Palmyra. Photographs published online show Mr al-Asaad's body tied to a pillar. According to reports from the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, he was put to death in an open space in Palmyra with dozens of people watching.

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