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Oannes Consulting – Medien & Kommunikationsberatung GmbH/Rechte Brandstr. 34/86167 Augsburg  
Telefon +49 89 - 24 88 300 50/Fax +49 89 - 24 88 300 51/www.oannes-consulting.com/info@oannes-consulting.com  
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### **Ramstein Reunion 2013 - Comradeship - Partnership - Friendship**

"The digital and global rise of new extremist groups"

Simon Jacob, former chairman of the Central Council of Oriental Christians in Germany and journalist with a focus on the Middle East, meets with retired General Klaus Naumann and Lieutenant General Richard Roßmanith in Ramstein.

In addition to lectures by high-ranking officers such as retired General Klaus Naumann, Lieutenant General Richard Roßmanith and Colonel Kuhn, the participants present at the German-American Reserve Officers' Exchange also listened to the presentation by Simon Jacob. He explained the interrelationship between traditional clan structures in the Middle East and religion, the respective legal system and new terrorist organizations that were forming in Iraq and Syria at that time.

Jacob particularly addressed the problematic issue of integrating clan structures into a Western value system and their conflicts, which are also fought out in the European region. In 2013, even before the official appearance of the so-called Islamic State, the Middle East expert pointed out the forming of a new organization at the conference held at the U.S. base in Ramstein, which uses "digitalization" as a gateway to recruit young "fighters" in particular among Sunni-influenced clan structures in Europe. One year later, in 2014, the Islamic State appeared, as predicted, digitally staged and with great media impact.

Furthermore, he also described the interpretation and significance of Sharia law for social development in the Orient and the interactions between a rigid theology bound to the Word and the society living there. Using the two major movements of Islam, Shia and Sunna, and their very different views of theology, Jacob illustrated the need for a more nuanced perspective.

The present troubles of Christians and other religious communities in the Middle East and the possibility that they could play a role as mediators after overcoming the present threatening persecution were another important key point of the lecture.

Finally, Jacob, who has many years of experience in the technological developments of modern computer and communication technology, addressed the importance of digitalization, in connection with asymmetric conflicts.

The expert considers it essential that a European cyber defense center is established within the military structure as soon as possible in order to protect against various attack vectors.

Independent author,  
September 14, 2013

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Requests should be addressed to: Oannes Consulting GmbH, Ms. Daniela Hofmann, Rechte Brandstr. 34, 86167 Augsburg,  
Phone. + 49 89 24 88 300 50, [info@oannes-consulting.com](mailto:info@oannes-consulting.com)