

# Press release

## of the Municipality of Hanau

3 March 2020/gül

### **The victims were not foreigners** **Central memorial service for the victims of 19 February**

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With a central memorial service at Congress Park Hanau on 4 March, the Municipality of Hanau and the State of Hesse are taking a stand in expressing their respect and condolences for the victims of the racial-hatred attack on 19 February. President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Chancellor Angela Merkel, President of the German Bundesrat Dietmar Woidke, and Minister President Volker Bouffier will also be among the total of 650 invited mourners. In addition to the official addresses by Steinmeier, Bouffier, and the Mayor of Hanau Claus Kaminsky, the agenda will also include speeches by representatives of the affected families.

In the late evening hours of 19 February, nine persons with a migration background fell victim to a racial-hatred attack. Afterwards, the perpetrator killed his mother and then himself. In the days following, the Hanau urban community responded directly to the crime with vigils, memorial marches, and diverse demonstrations against racism. Many people from the region also participated in the public prayers for the dead and the interment of the murder victims.

The central memorial service two weeks after the attack represents the municipality's and state's official act of remembrance. There was great interest in attending the act as an expression of shared grief, even from far beyond the state borders. The very limited space, reserved above all for the victims' families, could not meet the demand to any appreciable degree. The municipality has therefore decided to broadcast the memorial service live on two public squares, primarily as a means to offer Hanau citizens the opportunity of following the official service and mourning together. To this end, big screens will be set up on the Freiheitsplatz and on the marketplace in the town centre. In addition,



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the local broadcaster HR will be televising the entire service and streaming it live online from 5:15 p.m.

For security reasons, a large area around Congress Park Hanau (CPH) in the Hanau town centre will be cordoned off on the day of the memorial service. The palace garden directly adjoining CPH will be closed from 12:00 noon on this day. From 12:00 noon, access to Schlossplatz will be granted exclusively to the invited guests and, from 3:30 p.m., to media professionals. Consequently, the arrival of the guests cannot be watched by onlookers.

The live broadcast will likewise lead to cordons on town centre streets and therefore considerable disruption to traffic. Also affected are the public service buses, which will not be able to drop off passengers at Freiheitsplatz or the market square between 4:00 and 9:00 p.m. An overview of possible access routes and cordons and the alternative public transport stops is provided on a map available on the internet at [www.hanau-steht-zusammen.de](http://www.hanau-steht-zusammen.de).

The citizen services centre in the marketplace town hall will close at 4:30 p.m. However, the doors to the building will remain open until 8:00 p.m., permitting access to the condolence book. This book will remain there for the next few days for all wishing to convey their condolences.

“The victims were not foreigners!” is a central message that is shaping remembrance. The municipality has prepared a remembrance poster bearing this motif, symbolising the peaceful coexistence in Hanau. Ready for printing, this poster is available for download from the website [www.hanau-steht-zusammen.de](http://www.hanau-steht-zusammen.de) to all wishing to print it out themselves.

