

Media release, 19 December 2023

Status of the administrative investigation at the Institute for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Societies (ISNO)

Work on the report on the administrative investigation of the Institute for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Societies (ISNO) is well advanced. Due to legal requirements, the so-called fair hearing on the report will now be granted. The University of Bern expects to provide information on the final report at the end of January.

After a lecturer at the Institute for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Societies (ISNO) at the University of Bern published unacceptable X-postings in October 2023, he was terminated without notice. In addition, an administrative investigation of the institute was initiated, and the co-institute director Prof. Dr. Serena Tolino was temporarily relieved of her duties. The administrative investigation is being led by Prof. emeritus Antonio Loprieno. He is the former Rector of the University of Basel and former President of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences. (For more information, see [media release dated October 17, 2023](#))

Next steps

Before the report can be finalized, the so-called fair hearing must be granted due to legal requirements. The people in charge at the ISNO will be given the opportunity to comment on the report. The report will then be finalized in the light of any comments. Prof. em. Loprieno will then submit the report to the Executive Board of the University of Bern. The latter will take note of the report and, if necessary, decide on measures based on it and inform accordingly.

Communication on the report expected at the end of January

The University of Bern will communicate the next steps at a media conference, probably at the end of January 2024. The University of Bern is endeavoring to proceed as transparently as possible and to make the content of the report accessible, taking into account the legal framework such as the protection of privacy. No more information can be provided at this time. Prof. em. Loprieno is also not available for media inquiries. Media representatives will receive an invitation to the media conference at the appropriate time.

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