Basic Principles and Values of the German Legal System

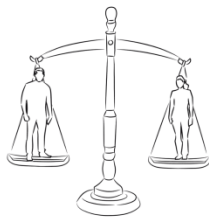**Germany is a constitutional democracy.**
Only the German government is authorized to regulate what is permitted and what is forbidden. The rules are written down in statutes that are resolved by the parliament whose members were elected by the German citizens.

Germany is a nation of freedom and equality.
Our constitution guarantees the fundamental rights of every individual person. The state respects and defends those rights.

In Germany, every person has the right to physical integrity.
Nobody has the right to hurt or harm another person – that also applies within the family, including spouses and towards children.
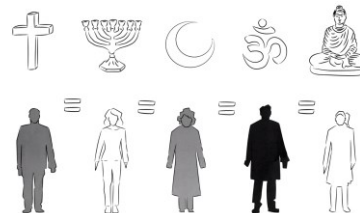
In Germany, every person is equal before the law.
No matter whether you are German or not, rich or poor: everyone is treated the same by German courts and authorities.

In Germany, men and women are equal.
They have the same rights and duties – in their occupational life, in their marriage and in the family.

In Germany, everyone has the freedom of choice of his or her faith and religion.
Every person is free to choose his or her religion – or to decide not to have any religion. All faiths are considered equal and respect each other.

In Germany, everyone has the right of free speech.
Every person may speak his or her mind as long as the opinion is not against the law, e.g. because it calls for hate or violence or personally offends other people.

Only the German authorities have the right to enforce law.
It is forbidden to take the law in your own hands. Any person whose rights have been violated will receive help by the police and the judicial system. Both are incorruptible and decide strictly according to the provisions of law.

< links to the film **"Unity. Compliance. Freedom. That is how the constitutional state of Germany works."** on our website www.justiz.bayern.de. In the film, the basic principles of the German constitution are explained quickly within three minutes and in an understandable way.