International Committee of the Red Cross

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**ICRC: Syria’s Decade of Loss – Taher’s Story**

23-year old Taher Kaidarsh is originally from Idlib and now lives near Frankfurt, where he studies medicine.

Most of his family are still in Syria and he misses them a lot. They talk regularly on Skype but no virtual connection can match real life.

He is torn between staying in Germany or going home when he qualifies as a doctor. He is ambitious and has learned to speak German well, and has started his own Youtube channel where he teaches German to others.

He is doing a work placement at a dentist surgery at the moment.

A Red Cross volunteer, he says adapting to Germany was difficult at times, He says he still misses the sun and warmth of Syria, compared to the cold Northern climate.

**SHOTLIST**

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Producer: Holger Cartensen

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Editor: Hasham Cheeba

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Restrictions, if any:

Consent obtained: Yes

Duration: 13:33

**Soundbite Taher**

00:00 “*I can remember the times during Ramadan when I went to a bazaar with my brother and father. Back then it just looked very peaceful and very nice and there*

 *were so many people on the street and it felt so lively to me ... This memory stays in my head.*

*00:19 Idleb is known for its olive oil, ... And that is also very, very popular all over Syria. And Idlib is also known for the warmth of the people who live there.*

*00:30 When you are in the middle of the city the smell of pastries and mint is everywhere and you can smell it from far away. So as you approach the city center, you get a sense of what life in the city center looks like.*

*00:48 So when I think about the time before the war, I think about going out with my family, that is, the trips and excursions that we had. We drove somewhere every Friday or Saturday, together in the car. And it was a habit for all of us. And it was just a perfectly normal thing. But after the beginning of the war, it just wasn’t possible anymore.”*

**01:13 Taher waiting on platform for train to arrive to take him to University in Frankfurt.**

**Soundbites Taher**

*02:26 “So my great grandpa was a general practitioner and my father is a surgeon and in my childhood I got to know the areas of medicine, the path as a doctor and since then I have had the feeling that this is my thing. That it is just the right thing for me to go this way too. It’s not just fact that my father is a general surgeon, I have my own calling and my own motivation.*

*02:57 Once, when I was seven, I was allowed to go to the hospital with my father.*

 *He had a circumcision to do and he had to circumcise a boy. I asked my father if I could go into the operating room. And he told me that that it wasn't possible. But then I just discussed it with him some more for a few minutes and in the end I got to see this operation. And when I saw the whole thing, how he does it and how he cuts and basically does the whole thing, I just understood how good it was and how it could be my thing too.”*

**03:49 Taher going to the Frankfurt University library where he studies medicine.**

**Soundbites Taher**

06:48 “*Five years ago I stood in front of the university hospital and I looked at that sign and thought I want to go there! And the funny thing was that at first I couldn't even pronounce the name, I didn’t know how to read it.*

06:51 *I didn't speak any German before.*

 *And I also noticed at the beginning that it is extremely important to learn the language. It’s the key to open all the doors. And then I thought…let’s do this step by step…and then it worked out. So I thought if I learned like this others can learn like that too. And so that's why I'm doing this video channel too.”*

**07:14 Taher recording an episode for his Youtube chanel**

**Soundbites Taher**

8:32 *I want to reach as many people as possible through this channel. Not just the Arabic- speaking people, but also the German. There are sure to be topics later that will be interesting for German people and others that will be interesting for everyone. But that's still to come. I'll come to that later, in my channel, so to speak. Not now. I can't reveal that much yet, it's top secret! Don't forget to subscribe!*

*09:11 So what I miss the most is my family. My Mother and my Father.*

*09:24 So it doesn't refer to here, but rather to the situation of my parents in Syria.*

 *Because I don't know what it really looks like there right now and what it may really look like in the future, that is what I am most scared about. And when I think of my parents, for example, then I have the feeling that I really have a longing and that is usually difficult.*

**09:50 Old photos of Taher and friends and classmates on his wall at home.**

**11:22 GVs of Frankfurt skyline and the University Hospital**

**13:33 ENDS**