



Statement of Foreign Minister Gabriel on the recently finalized coalition agreement

For the first time ever, “internal” and “external” cultural policy have been successfully treated as a unified concept, and a mandate has been issued for the drafting of a new agenda over the next couple of years. Germany is thereby pursuing truly progressive cultural policy. I am very grateful to my predecessor and to the German Bundestag for the work they have done during the past legislative term. They mapped out the path that we subsequently pursued in the negotiation committees.

- We accept the mandate contained in the coalition agreement, and we will, together with all stakeholders, draft a new agenda by 2020, the year marking the 100th anniversary of German cultural relations policy.

The coalition agreement contains three guiding principles:

1) **Standing up for our values and interests, and for the freedom of art, science and opinion.** To this end, in cooperation with Deutsche Welle and other actors, we will make a special effort to further expand and fully bring into the digital age our strategic communication abroad. We aim to promote a realistic image of Germany, counter hybrid misinformation, strengthen our friendly ties with the United States through Deutschlandjahr USA (“Year of Germany in the US”), and encourage new cooperation through active scientific diplomacy.

2) **Creating access to culture and education**, and to science and freedom of opinion, in a society of immigration and between partner societies. Our cultural and scientific representations in our partner countries are key assets in this regard. What is important here as well is that, for many people, Germany has become a beacon of hope. Therefore, based on the Philipp Schwartz Initiative, we will create programs that also provide protection from persecution for those artists, researchers and journalists who are living in exile. In parallel to this, we will even better harness the expertise of our intermediary and partner organizations with a view to finding answers to the unresolved questions of a society of immigration. For example, I have asked the Goethe-Institut to develop, in cooperation with the Georg Eckert Institute, new teaching modules about the Shoah that cater to the needs of current immigrants. We will also step up our intermediary organizations’ efforts that aim to help people live in dignity in crisis regions.

3) **Cooperation instead of representation:** collectively working to strengthen reason as a driving force in the world, as Willy Brandt defined cultural work, means that we must jointly adapt our

structures and programs. In particular, we need to develop, especially together with our closest partner France, a cultural relations and education policy that is no longer designed to serve particular national agendas.

Important political projects and programs are permanently enshrined in the coalition agreement. These include Deutschlandjahr USA, enhancing civil society structures in Eastern Partnership countries, *kulturweit* – the voluntary service of the Federal Foreign Office and our essential contribution to protecting cultural heritage through the Cultural Preservation Program of the Federal Foreign Office –, the German Commission for UNESCO, the German Archaeological Institute, and the renovation of Dormitio Abbey, a place for interfaith dialogue.

Sustainable cultural policy requires, first and foremost, investing in cultural infrastructure and realigning our work. We have therefore decided to redouble our efforts to strengthen the network of German Schools Abroad and international school partnerships, international cooperation in the field of sport, and the impact of our intermediary organizations such as the German Academic Exchange Service, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen), as well as to explore new forms of cooperation. The Goethe-Institut network will be expanded, in particular through Franco-German cooperation. We aim to create at least 10 joint institutes by the year 2020. In addition, we will modernize the Goethe-Institut in the digital domain and further develop it with new models of cooperation.

Particularly in Africa, as well as in other regions, we want to expand the horizons of our cultural work in terms of our staff and structures: This includes helping establish museums and cultural sites, as well as international fora for examining colonialism, and taking into account the increasing significance of the creative industries, for which we want to establish an advisory council at the Federal Foreign Office during the coming weeks.