



EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has been active as a partner of German development cooperation around the world for over 50 years. Our key mission in this context is absolutely clear: to make a sustainable contribution to peace, freedom and democracy. For this reason, we are engaged in projects in over 100 countries. Moreover, we consult foreign and development policy circles with our expertise. In this respect, *KAS International Reports* have developed into an important and sought-after source of inspiration. The fact that our colleagues report from the regions they operate in and connect the analysis of political events with practical knowhow has become the journal's hallmark. The foundation is particularly proud to celebrate the 30th anniversary of *KAS International Reports* this year.

Historic highlights illustrate the extent to which international politics have changed since the first issue. In 1984, the Cold War was at its height, while at the end of the 1980s, the socialist regimes of the Eastern Bloc collapsed one after the other. This cleared the way for German reunification. In other countries, the upheaval entailed violence, manifested in a horrifying manner by the wars in the former Yugoslavia. At the same time, European integration made enormous progress in both political and geographic terms. New transport and communication technologies have furthered globalisation. However, they are also being exploited by the opponents of democracy, freedom and the rule of law. The attacks of 11 September 2001 marked a turning point in this context.

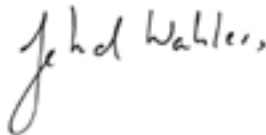
Over the years, *KAS International Reports* have consistently reflected on these diverse changes on all continents. With their contributions and from a unique angle, our authors have been able to shape the debate on matters of foreign and development policy in Germany. 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this discussion is now

more important than ever. The achievements of the last few decades, the peacebuilding influence of European integration, our civil liberties as well as our strong economy are not to be taken for granted. The preservation of our values relies on the well-being of our neighbours and a liberal international system. For this reason alone we condemn Russia's annexation of the Crimea, a violation of international law, and the redrawing of territorial borders by force. Germany bears special responsibility, not least because of its economic strength and its consolidated political situation. It is therefore not surprising that the question of our international engagement is becoming subject to more intensive discussions in the political and public arena as well as in our partner countries.

In this issue, our authors focus on the consequences of the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe for German foreign policy. This goes along with a review of the tasks that have evolved for Germany on both the European and international level. In Poland, for example, the free trade union movement *Solidarność* began challenging the communist system in the early 1980s, fighting for freedom and democracy. As Bartosz T. Wieliński points out, the neighbours on the other side of the Oder-Neisse line were not unaware of those developments. Today, the relationship between Germans and Poles is more solid than ever, with some commentators even talking of a "German-Polish engine" within the European Union. Hungary's contribution to the peaceful revolution is not forgotten either, as underlined by Bence Bauer and András Hettyey. This is where the Iron Curtain opened first and permanently in 1989. In that regard, the Pan-European Picnic held at that time became a "fateful moment". It did not only accelerate the end of the GDR, but also sealed Hungary's orientation toward the West.

The changes in German foreign policy since 1989 are not only evident in retrospect. Germany's current G7 presidency is an opportunity to enter the debate about the country's increased international responsibility and to draw conclusions for the political practice. This is the topic Daniela Haarhuis examines in her contribution. Germany's G7 presidency will culminate in the summit of the Heads of State and Government in June 2015 at Schloss Elmau

in Bavaria. In the preparation of this event, Chancellor Angela Merkel has already named key questions to be covered: sustainable economic activities and quality of life, a new climate agreement as well as the post-MDG process. Moreover, in view of the threats posed to our system of values by Islamist fundamentalists and terrorists, that topic might also figure strongly on the agenda. Germany will contribute actively to this multi-faceted debate with dedication, ideas and financial commitments. Our partners are counting on it. This stance follows on logically from the past. Throughout the Cold War, Germany was a beneficiary of international security, enjoying the protection of the United States and NATO. Now the time has come to play a more active role in maintaining international security and thereby also creating opportunities for others to live in freedom and peace.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerhard Wahlers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'G'.

Dr. Gerhard Wahlers
Deputy Secretary General

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