

**11 June 2025**

**HRK President: As the EU, we should support and strengthen Academia and research in Israel, not weaken it**

Calls for a suspension of the EU Association Agreement with Israel or even a boycott to the detriment of Israeli science and international university cooperation with Israel, as can currently be heard in some quarters of European academia, were once again clearly rejected by the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Prof Dr Walter Rosenthal, in Berlin today:

"Israeli universities and the academic community in Israel as a whole have always been a strong liberal, democratic force and a central element of academic and ethical reflection and balance, especially in the Middle East conflict – within Israeli society, in cooperation with Palestinian partners and in the international context. Especially now, they make an important contribution to maintaining links and exchanges between people, institutions and societies affected by conflict and war. Jewish and Arab Israelis and Palestinians have in many cases been studying, researching and working together there for years, providing important impetus for the challenges of the present and the shaping of the future, despite all the adversities of regional and international conflicts. This requires encouragement and support from all of us. In these challenging times, civil society institutions, such as universities and academic research institutions, should experience solidarity and be strengthened in their specific role and autonomy.

I therefore consider calls for the suspension or cancellation of the Association Agreement between Israel and the EU, with all the implications for participation in Horizon Europe, for example, to be wrong and fatal in its consequences. This would considerably weaken academia and research in Israel in its internationally recognised output as well as innovative capacity and would cause lasting damage to it as an important voice of academic reasoning in Israel that analyses, mediates and brings together different perspectives and interests."