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**The President of the HRK on the signing of the Higher Education Pact:
a decision in favour of the universities – still with significant omissions**

Following the signing of the Higher Education Pact III by the Prime Ministers of the federal states and by Chancellor Merkel, the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler said in Berlin

"The continuation of the Higher Education Pact, which was finally passed yesterday, is a decision in favour of the universities that will benefit the students of the future.

It appears that sufficient opportunities to study have been secured for them over the next few years. The federal government and the federal states have based their agreement on the current forecasts of first year student numbers. It is now important that the federal states genuinely contribute at least the same amount to the federal funding. Otherwise, universities in some federal states will be at a disadvantage, as has already been the case in the past. Therefore, on behalf of the students, we are calling upon the federal states not to devalue the Pact signed today with insufficient counterfinancing.

The increase in the overhead payment passed today as part of the Pact also represents an improvement in the situation of the universities. Nevertheless, we must point out that the funding actually required is much higher: When a research project is set up at a university, it has been proven that the university will have to bear costs amounting to 40-70% of the total project costs – for premises, infrastructure, administration and so on. If less than half of that is covered by the programme overhead payment, the universities will be faced with increasingly unsolvable problems."