

**2.12.2015****Israeli-German Rectors' Meeting: improving cooperation between countries**

Cooperating on doctoral training programmes and supporting early career researchers were the focus of a meeting of Israeli and German rectors and presidents at Freie Universität Berlin. The Rectors' Forum organised by the German Rectors' Conference and the Association of University Heads, Israel (VERA) in collaboration with Freie Universität was the first meeting of high-ranking university representatives from the two countries. Against the backdrop of the 50th anniversary of the commencement of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany, the attendees emphasised the importance of their collaboration in research and science. To date, this collaboration has made a fundamental contribution to the development of bilateral relations.

"A long-standing and intensive collaboration in research and science has established direct ties between Israel and Germany," explained HRK President Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler. He added that the HRK Higher Education Compass cites over 180 cooperations between Israeli and German universities. "As a result, Israel is by far the most important partner in the region for German higher education institutions," said Hippler.

Prof. Dr. Peter-André Alt, President of Freie Universität Berlin, drew attention to the decades-long academic partnership between the two countries, which he believes was actually the precursor to their diplomatic rapprochement. According to Professor Alt, the network established within the past 50 years "does not just contribute to excellence in research; it helps to facilitate understanding between the two nations".

In their discussions, the university leaders discussed examples of good practice in internationalisation and in designing doctoral training programmes. During the course of the talks, HRK President Horst Hippler emphasised the nature of doctoral training as independent research work that makes a significant contribution to a discipline's development of knowledge and that is documented in written work.

In a joint declaration, the participants urged the improvement of cross-border career paths after doctoral training. Bilateral research groups should also receive support and funding should be available to ensure the mobility of doctoral candidates from both countries.

**[View the joint declaration](#)**