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**Attack on the Freedom of Thought and Speech:
Universities Declare Solidarity**

Against the background of the terrorist attacks in France, leading members of the Polish and German Rectors' Conferences have affirmed their solidarity with France and with their French colleagues.

At a meeting of the French (CPU and Cdefi), Polish (KRASP) and German (HRK) Rectors' Conferences in Paris, the Rectors expressed their profound shock at the "attack on liberty". Presidents Wieslaw Banys (KRASP), Jean-Marie Chesneaux (Cdefi), Jean-Loup Salzmann (CPU) and Horst Hippler (HRK) also visited Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, the Minister of Education, Higher Education and Research, and Geneviève Fioraso, the Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, to offer their condolences.

"Science thrives on open, critical discourse. Freedom of thought is the foundation on which it stands. The advances made by every free society are based on this principle," said Horst Hippler. In the universities, he said, students were taught to discuss openly, to have tolerance for the opinions of others and to present their arguments peacefully. "We will not allow these principles to be suppressed with violence. We bow our heads to the victims of the attacks and offer our deepest condolences to their friends and families."

The Presidents all referred to the sympathy expressed at universities around the world. Jean-Loup Salzmann said "With this barbaric act, the terrorists have attacked the French Republic, they have attacked Europe and they have attacked us all and everything that we represent."