



Press Release

14 September 2023

“A clear political commitment is missing”

Former President of the Federal Constitutional Court Hans-Jürgen Papier calls for more competences and legal binding force for the Advisory Commission - Celebration of the 20th anniversary at the Jewish Museum Berlin

Berlin - The Advisory Commission will celebrate its 20th anniversary on 14 September 2023 at the Jewish Museum in Berlin. This anniversary marks two decades of intensive voluntary work and significant recommendations on the restitution of looted art from the National Socialist era. During this time, the commission, consisting of ten public figures with a legal, art historical, historical or political background, has decided on the restitution of Nazi-looted cultural property in 23 cases. The Commission's recommendations were and are regarded as groundbreaking in Germany and abroad and have a significant influence on the decision-making of museums and their state or municipal sponsors as well as the art market.

Under the chairmanship of Prof. Hans-Jürgen Papier, former President of the Federal Constitutional Court, the Advisory Commission adopted a **memorandum** on 4 September 2023 in which it makes demands on politicians. The Commission calls for **more competences and a legal and legally binding basis for its work**. These demands are an expression of the need for efficient and comprehensive processing of claims in connection with Nazi-looted property. The Commission is faced with a large number of unresolved claims and considers it necessary to strengthen its role in order to be able to act effectively. The aim must be to fulfil the moral and political responsibility of the Federal Republic of Germany towards the descendants of the victims of Nazi terror.

The Chairman of the Advisory Commission, Prof. Papier, states: "There is a lack of a clear political commitment in the form of legally binding guidelines for the processing of looted art cases that have not yet been restituted. Only on the basis of a formal federal law can the three fundamental requirements for an appropriate and sufficient restitution law be

met: These are the unilateral invocability of the Commission, the binding effect of its decisions and, finally, the possibility of initiating restitution proceedings even if the cultural property is in private hands."

The festive event will take place on **Thursday, 14 September 2023**, with invited participants at the **Jewish Museum Berlin**. Guests can expect a top-class programme. The Chairman Prof Hans-Jürgen Papier will speak. **The Minister of State for Culture and Media of the Federal Republic of Germany, Claudia Roth, the State Secretary in the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture, Prof Dr Joachim Schachtner, the President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Dr Josef Schuster, and Prof Anthony Friend**, descendant of Julius Freund, whose art collection seized as a result of Nazi persecution he has been researching for decades, will give welcoming addresses. **Prof Dr Mary Fulbrook**, the renowned British historian and professor of German history, will give a speech on the topic of "Restitution - But how?".

Beratende Kommission
im Zusammenhang mit der Rückgabe
NS-verfolgungsbedingt entzogenen Kulturguts,
insbesondere aus jüdischem Besitz

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