



THE AMERICAN
ACADEMY IN BERLIN
HANS ARNHOLD CENTER

THE 2022 HENRY A. KISSINGER PRIZE

INTRODUCTION

SANDRA E. PETERSON

CHAIRMAN, AMERICAN ACADEMY IN BERLIN

*Ladies and Gentleman,
Meine Damen und Herren,*

I am Sandi Peterson, and as Chairman of the American Academy in Berlin and on behalf of the board of trustees, it is my great pleasure and honor to address you this evening.

You have heard from Daniel Benjamin about how the Academy thrives as a haven for writers, artists, scholars from the humanities and social sciences, policy experts, and many others to live and work. A setting where people from different disciplines mix in a unique setting. For this alone, it is an exceptional place.

But the Academy's reach extends far beyond the wall of the Hans Arnhold Center in Berlin. The conversations that happen there both among those at the Academy and with their many German interlocutors – the ideas that surface – the work that is done – and the relationships that are forged – all continue on once fellows and Distinguished Visitors return the United States. This at its essence is the Academy's broader mission – to uphold the bonds we as Americans have with our European friends and allies, and to remind us that we share values, interests, and a profound cultural heritage.

Since 2007, the Henry A. Kissinger Prize has been awarded annually to a renowned European or American figure in the field of international affairs in recognition of his or her outstanding services to the transatlantic partnership.

The award honors the achievements of Dr. Kissinger – scholar, former secretary of state, former national security advisor, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient.

A towering figure of international diplomacy and U.S. foreign policy, Dr. Kissinger's initiatives for arms control and détente in the 1970s helped to clear a path for the U.S., Europe and the Soviet Union that ultimately resulted in the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany.

Former recipients of the Kissinger Prize include, Chancellors Angela Merkel, Helmut Schmidt, and Helmut Kohl, President George H.W. Bush, Senator John McCain, Secretary of Defense James Mattis, and Ambassador Samantha Power, among others.

This year, the trustees of the American Academy in Berlin are proud to honor German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.



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President Steinmeier –

In your 2017 inaugural address, you made clear the guiding principle that would define your first term in office: democracy is not to be taken for granted, but must be constantly reaffirmed and expressed anew.

You concluded, and I quote: “We must not only talk about democracy – we must learn to stand up for it once again.”

Five years later and in your second term, you have indeed renewed your steadfast commitment to championing the essential – albeit imperfect – processes of debate, negotiation, and compromise that allow democracy to thrive.

Throughout more than three decades of dedicated public service, you have been a beacon of compelling moral guidance, which is why – among other reasons our speakers will elucidate – the Academy is awarding you with the Henry A. Kissinger Prize.

And so let me now welcome Dr. Condoleezza Rice, who will deliver the *Laudatio* this evening.

Dr. Rice, on this year’s Constitution Day, you offered a counterpoint to one of today’s most anxiety-inducing questions: Why do democracies fail?

Instead you posed, “Why do they succeed?”

Like Dr. Kissinger, you have served the United States as both National Security Adviser and Secretary of State. You have brought a steadfast determination as well as an optimism and faith that is historically minded, with a keen awareness of the more vexing aspects of our past – an awareness rooted in your decades’ worth of experience.

You too have been a key link in the chain of American leaders whose efforts have been animated by a deep commitment to our alliances and to Germany. You embody the United States’ commitment to a vision of enduring peace and security.

We are honored to have you here with us and are grateful that you have come to speak about President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

And last but far, far from least, Dr. Kissinger. While we wish he could be here with us in person, we could not be more pleased to have his words of wisdom tonight.

As Founding Co-Chairman of our institution and ardent supporter of our mission, Dr. Kissinger, we are deeply grateful for the central role you have played in making the Academy a reality, and for your longstanding support of our work. The world continues to look to you for insight and guidance on the most challenging problems in global politics. In addition, it is no secret that tonight’s honoree is a good friend of yours and someone who has devoted his life to strengthening a global order that advances our shared values.

Without further ado, ladies and gentleman, Dr. Henry Kissinger.