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## *Remembering Dr. Henry A. Kissinger*

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1923-2023

**BERLIN—November 30, 2023—** The American Academy in Berlin mourns the passing of founding chairman Henry A. Kissinger. We offer heartfelt condolences to his wife, Nancy, his children, David and Elizabeth, and to his extended family and innumerable friends.

The American Academy's debt to Dr. Kissinger is profound. Present at the institution's founding, in 1994, he was instrumental in setting the Academy's course over the following two decades. He mentored Academy founder Richard C. Holbrooke—who made no secret of his indebtedness to the former Secretary of State—and helped bring scores of the foremost political and intellectual figures to speak at the Academy.

In gratitude for his support and in recognition of his extraordinary place in the history of the last century, the Academy created the Henry A. Kissinger Prize, which since 2007 has been awarded to an outstanding European or American figure for their contribution to the transatlantic relationship. The prize counts among its recipients Helmut Schmidt, Helmut Kohl, George H.W. Bush, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, James A. Baker, III, Angela Merkel, Samantha Power, and, most recently, on November 10, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who called Kissinger "a great man, a passionate transatlanticist, and a very skilled diplomat."

Dr. Kissinger generously gave of his guidance, intelligence, wisdom, and unfailing humor to our young institution. He will be greatly missed.

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### **Reflections on Dr. Kissinger's life from the American Academy's president, chair, and trustees**

"Dr. Kissinger's stewardship was essential in developing this institution and honing our mission to foster strong transatlantic bonds. As our sole remaining founder, his passing marks a handover to the next generations, for whom this mission remains more crucial than ever. Amid serious threats to peace and democracy, Dr. Kissinger's legacy will endure as we work to deepen intellectual, cultural and political understanding. He was a towering figure of the last century," said **Daniel Benjamin, president of the American Academy.**

"The American Academy is deeply grateful for Dr. Kissinger's founding vision and decades of support. Now in our twenty-fifth year, the Academy owes a great deal of its success to his efforts and influence in fortifying the transatlantic relationship, even when no one could have foreseen just how important this would become today," said **Sandra Peterson, chair of the American Academy in Berlin.**

“Henry Kissinger was a towering pillar in transatlantic relationships. Able to forgive the immense pain inflicted upon his family by German antisemitism, his insatiable desire to share political and cultural values based on deep-rooted mutual understanding led him to co-found the American Academy in Berlin, certainly among the most wonderful and lasting parts of his immense legacy. His energy and his wit, his insights and his smile will be greatly missed,” said **Stefan von Holtzbrinck, vice chairman of the American Academy in Berlin.**

“As a founding trustee of the American Academy in Berlin, Dr. Kissinger believed in its mission of promoting German-American understanding from its conception, and helped steward and grow our organization since 1996. His active role in awarding the Academy’s annual Henry A. Kissinger Prize reflected his desire to honor the statesmanship of others. His devotion to the country of his birth, despite being driven from it by the Nazis at age 17, never left him. He cared deeply about the US-German relationship. He will be sorely missed,” said **Gahl Burt, chairman emerita of the American Academy in Berlin.**

“What a wonderful miracle, this outstanding life. A German Jew, expelled from Fürth in the darkest of times, becoming a great American statesman, advisor to presidents, and negotiator of peace treaties. This same person stayed close to his German roots, kept his hometown accent on purpose, and lived for the German-American friendship and our belonging together as free civilized nations. The American Academy in Berlin could not have chosen a better person as the pilot for bringing together our nations. He will stay with us in beloved memory,” said **Dirk Ippen, trustee of the American Academy in Berlin.**

“When the Academy was started by Holbrooke and my grandfather, Stephen Kellen, I remember how excited they both were to have Kissinger’s strong support and backing. Not only for Henry’s prestige value in helping grow the Academy into its success, but also the personal friendship that Henry had with Richard, and the personal connection that Henry had with my grandfather. In the later years, the roles seemed to reverse as the Academy was the platform through which Henry re-examined his own personal relationship with Germany, and maybe even rediscovered and redefined what it meant, as a successful American, to also be German. I had the privilege of working with Henry on the board of the Academy for nearly 20 years,” said **Andrew Gundlach, trustee of the American Academy in Berlin.**

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### **About Henry A. Kissinger**

Born in Fürth, Germany, on May 27, 1923, Kissinger fled Nazi persecution with his family in 1938, first to London and eventually New York. He became an American citizen on June 19, 1943, the year he joined the US Army to return to Germany to fight against the Nazi regime.

From 1954 until 1969, Kissinger taught as a member of the Government Department at Harvard, where he also directed the acclaimed Harvard International Seminar. During this time, he served as an adviser to New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Richard M. Nixon. In Nixon’s administration, he served as National Security Advisor beginning on January 20, 1969, and continued in that position until 1975 under President Gerald Ford. On September 22, 1973, Kissinger was sworn in as the fifty-sixth Secretary of State, becoming the first person to simultaneously serve as both

Secretary of State and National Security Adviser. He held the position of Secretary of State until the end of President Gerald Ford's term in January 1977.

The recipient of the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize, Kissinger also received the 1977 Presidential Medal of Freedom and the 1986 Medal of Liberty. He is the author of more than 15 books and hundreds of articles and editorials on United States foreign policy, international affairs, diplomatic history, and the future of artificial intelligence, among other topics. In 1981, Kissinger founded Kissinger Associates, Inc., an international consulting firm that assists clients in identifying strategic partners and investment opportunities and advising them on government relations. He has also served on numerous government advisory bodies and as a director or trustee of private firms, research institutes, and NGOs.

In 1994, Kissinger was approached by then-ambassador to Germany Richard Holbrooke to become a chairman of the newly founded American Academy in Berlin, along with then-president of Germany Richard von Weizsäcker, both of whom were to represent the guiding idea behind the American Academy: the essential importance of the German-American relationship.

The idea behind the establishment of the American Academy in Berlin, Kissinger said from the outset, was the replacement of a US military presence in Berlin with an intellectual and cultural one. In many ways, Kissinger saw the American Academy as a bookend on a peacefully resolved Cold War, where American ideas and values would become a permanent presence in the German capital's cultural and social landscape.

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