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DATE Berlin, 16. September 2024
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(Please quote in all correspondence)

RE **Your letter of 19 August 2024**

Dear Professor Pratt,
Dear Dr Turner,

Thank you very much for your reply to the letter sent by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) on 31 July 2024.

Academic freedom and freedom of expression are precious goods for the BMBF and must be protected and defended. How this can be achieved in practice is currently being discussed with some controversy. This debate is yet another sign of a healthy democracy and strong civil society.

We share your concern that parts of the public debate have not contributed to a constructive discussion. However, media reporting, including by the BILD-Zeitung you mention, is protected by the constitutionally-guaranteed freedom of the press. Therefore, there cannot be any influence by the BMBF on media reporting.

The protest camps, too, have to be considered from all angles as we see it: some protest camps were peaceful, others led to damage to university buildings, the use of violence and antisemitic slogans. Jewish students and university teachers felt and continue to feel threatened and intimidated and avoid the campus. This is unacceptable for us.

In a situation this tense and complex, it is all the more important that higher education institutions and academic societies such as yours have organized numerous debates and

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PAGE 2 exchange forums over the past weeks and months that have made an important contribution towards putting the debate on a factual basis and initiating a constructive dialogue.

The BMBF, too, is continuing the dialogue on this issue with different stakeholders with a view to fighting discrimination at academic institutions and strengthening academic freedom and the freedom of expression. With this in mind, I would like to thank you for your letter, also on behalf of Federal Minister Stark-Watzinger.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bettina Klingbeil". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'B'.

Bettina Klingbeil

Head of Division 415 – Head of Research on higher Education and Science