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New chair of the Advisory Commission

At the meeting of the Advisory Commission on the return of cultural property seized as a result of Nazi persecution, especially Jewish property, on 09 November 2017 Professor Hans-Jürgen Papier was elected as the new chairman and Professor Wolf Tegethoff as the new deputy chairman of the Commission.

Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, Monika Grütters, welcomed the election of Hans-Jürgen Papier: “With the election of Prof. Papier, a well-known and highly regarded individual is taking over as chair of the Advisory Commission. Prof. Papier has extensive experience in dealing with complicated and complex situations and this will be invaluable in his new honorary post. I am delighted that, once again, a former president of the Federal Constitutional Court is taking up this important position as the successor to Prof. Limbach. In-depth legal knowledge, experience in striking a balance and the high social reputation of a president of the Federal Constitutional Court will continue to strengthen the work of the Advisory Commission in a national and international context. The Commission’s voluntary work, which involves great personal commitment, is so important because the recommendations of the Advisory Commission are a significant part of fulfilling Germany’s moral obligation to deal with Nazi-confiscated property and the practical implementation of the Washington Principles.”

Professor Papier said: “I am looking forward to taking up this new position of responsibility. In Jutta Limbach, the Commission was chaired by an individual who was highly regarded both in Germany and abroad, and who had exerted a decisive influence on the work of the Commission since it was founded. It is a great honor for me to continue this work because the search for fair and just solutions with regard to Nazi-confiscated property remains a highly sensitive obligation, both ethically and politically.”

Professor Papier has been a member of the Advisory Commission since 2016. He was president of the Federal Constitutional Court from 2002 to 2010. Between 2010 and 2015, Professor Papier was chair of the Chamber of Public Responsibility of the Evangelical Church in Germany. From 1991 to 1998, he was chairman of the Independent Commission for the Review of Assets of Parties and Mass Organisations of the GDR. He was deputy chairman of the ethics committee of the Bayerische Landesärztekammer from 1996 to 1998.

Professor Tegethoff has been a member of the Advisory Commission since 2008. He has been the director of the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich since 1991 and has held guest professorships in Bonn, Haifa and Venice. Prof. Tegethoff has been honorary professor at the University of Munich since 2000.

Professor Limbach was the elected chairwoman of the Commission from 2003 until her death in September 2016. Professor Thomas Gaethgens was deputy chairman until 2008; he was then succeeded in the post in 2008 by Professor Reinhard Rürup, who has acted as chairman since the end of 2015 due to the illness and death of Professor Limbach.