

RESOLUTION

Protest against the unacceptable and undemocratic manner of installing a new director for the »Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies« (Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa-Institut) in Vienna

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Thank you for your support!
Sincerely yours,

Moritz Csáky & Anton Pelinka

Information

The respective reform process at the »Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies« (Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa-Institut, OSI) in Vienna was initiated by former director Waltraud Heindl, in order to improve the institute's international standing and to further enable OSI to fully participate in contemporary scientific discourses and international transdisciplinary projects as well as in scientific networks. This evaluation and reform process was undertaken in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (BMBWK). Following the conclusion of a one-year discussion process, a reform paper was provided by the »project group« and supported by the »steering committee« – both bodies consisting of OSI staff, members of the board of the institute and representatives of the BMBWK.

As a first and important step to implement the suggested reforms, a call for applications for the post of director to be submitted by February 15th, 2002 was announced in various national and one international newspaper and via the Internet. Subsequently, a »search committee«, consisting of three renowned scientists – Renate Rathmayr (Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration), Walter Lukan (OSI) and Rainer Münz (Humboldt University, Berlin) and one representative of the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Anneliese Stoklaska, was set up.

Out of 59 applicants, this committee invited seven candidates to take part in a public hearing on June 14th, 2002 – among them Peter Jordan, one of the interim directors since July 1st, 2001. Finally, the search committee unanimously recommended three candidates for the post of director by placing Ralf Schattkowsky (Historical Institute, University of Rostock) first, Stefan Troebst (Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas, Leipzig) second and Dieter Segert (Ost-West-Kolleg Brühl/Cologne) third on the list. The board of the institute, consisting of twelve members – including three representatives of the Austrian Federal government – met on July 3rd, 2002. Disregarding the unanimous recommendations of the search committee, the board, chaired by Arnold Suppan, completely ignored the usual academic procedure and nominated Peter Jordan for new director. The board members did so, although only three of them were among the audience at the hearing of the candidates. Two members of the board – the historian Moritz Csáky (Austrian Academy of Sciences) and the political scientist Anton Pelinka (University of Innsbruck) – left the board meeting before the new director was nominated, to express their protest against a procedure which – by neglecting the recommendations of the search committee – is in total disrespect of the practices of the international scientific community.

The Austrian daily *Der Standard* (July 11th, 2002) published a critical article on the proceedings in issue and on the decision of the board meeting, quoting Moritz Csáky and Anton Pelinka as assuming a tacit influence of the government (coalition parties) on this choice. Pelinka emphasized that, with this »scandalous and deeply provincial« decision, the international reputation of OSI as well as of Austrian science and research institutions in general was profoundly damaged. To this, Arnold Suppan replied via the Austria Press Agency, by maintaining that the search committee's »recommendations were simply bad« and offending Ralph Schattkowsky's scientific work as ranking far below average and being insufficient for habilitation in Austria. In the same statement, he said that Stephan Troebst was known to be a »difficult colleague«.

Resolution

By signing this resolution, we protest against the unacceptable and undemocratic manner of installing a new director for the »Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies« (Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa-Institut, OSI) in Vienna, an internationally well known research institute in the field of social and cultural sciences and humanities, with branch offices in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia.

On July 3rd, 2002 the board of the institute, chaired by the historian Arnold Suppan, a former director of the institute, disregarded the unanimous recommendations of the search committee – that had placed Ralf Schattkowsky (Historical Institute, University of Rostock) first, Stefan Troebst (Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas, Leipzig) second and Dieter Segert (Ost-West-Kolleg Brühl/Cologne) third. Completely ignoring the usual democratic academic procedure the board nominated Peter Jordan for new director by September 1st, 2002.

We want to express our deepest concerns regarding the future of OSI. With its decision, the board of the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies is inhibiting the ongoing reform process at OSI – that is aimed at a sustainable renewal of OSI as regards its organisation and communication structures and scientific profile – and putting in jeopardy the future of a very important Austrian research centre.

Signers

- Dr. Franz-Lothar Altmann, Deutsches Institut für Internationale Politik und Sicherheit Berlin
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Angelo Ara, Università degli Studi di Pavia
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Aleida Assmann, Universität Konstanz
- Doz. Dr. Rainer Bauböck, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
- Dr. Peter Biegelbauer, Institut für Höhere Studien Wien
- ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dieter A. Binder, Universität Graz
- Mag. Dr. Barbara Boisits, Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Graz
- PD Dr. habil. Christoph Boyer, Max-Planck-Institut Frankfurt/M.
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Thomas Bremer, Universität Münster
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Moritz Csáky, Universität Graz | Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Maria Deppermann, Universität Innsbruck
- em. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Margret Dietrich, Wien
- Dr. Elisabeth Großegger, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
- Dr. Anna Grusková, Akademie für Musische und dramatische Künste Bratislava
- Dr. Vlastimil Hála, Tschechische Akademie der Wissenschaften
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Max Haller, Universität Graz
- Doz. Dr. Waltraud Heindl, Universität Wien
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Miroslav Hroch, Karlsuniversität Prag
- Dr. Tatiana Ivantysynová, Slowakische Akademie der Wissenschaften Bratislava
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Rudolf Jaworski, Universität Kiel
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Reinhard Jöhler, Universität Tübingen
- Mag. Zsolt K. Horváth, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Budapest
- Mag. Amália Kerekes, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Budapest
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Helmut Kramer, Universität Wien
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Jacques Le Rider, École pratique des hautes études (Sorbonne) Paris
- Mag. Csongor Lőrincz, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Budapest
- Univ.-Ass. Mag. Dr. Josef Melchior, Universität Wien
- ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Florian Menz, Universität Wien
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Michael Metzeltin, Universität Wien
- Rektor Univ.-Prof. Dr. Hans Moser, Universität Innsbruck
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Müller-Funk, University of Birmingham | Universität Wien
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Victor Neumann, West University of Timisoara
- Dr. Gerda Neyer, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften | Max Planck Institut Rostock
- David Oberhuber, Berlin
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Anton Pelinka, Universität Innsbruck
- Dr. Robert Pichler, Universität Graz
- Dr. Tibor Pichler, Slowakische Akademie der Wissenschaften
- Dr. Mark Pittaway, Open University Milton Keynes
- Dr. Lucjan Puchalski, Universität Breslau
- Dr. Ursula Prutsch, Universität Wien
- Mag. Ursula Reber, Wien
- Mag. Gabriele Reinharter, OIIP – Austrian Institute for International Affairs
- Dr. Clemens Ruthner, Österreich-Zentrum Universität Antwerpen
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Edith Saurer, Universität Wien
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gerald Stieg, Universität Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle
- Dr. Monika Stromberger, Universität Graz

- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Holm Sundhaussen, Freie Universität Berlin
- ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Cornelia Szabó-Knotik, Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien
- Mag. Karin Taylor, Universität Graz
- ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Bernhard Tschofen, Universität Wien
- ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Karl Vocelka, Universität Wien
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Alois Woldan, Universität Passau
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ruth Wodak, Universität Wien | Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Klaus Zeyringer, Université Catholique de l'Ouest, Angers

