

## **Fifty Years after the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Are German-Israeli Relations Still “Special”?**

Cosmos Club  
Warne Ballroom  
2121 Massachusetts Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20006

**Monday, June 29, 2015**

### **Agenda**

Seventy years after the end of World War II and the Holocaust, the depth of German-Israeli friendship is deemed miraculous. Israeli government leaders consider Germany Israel’s second best friend after the United States and a recent opinion survey sponsored by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation has revealed highly positive Israeli attitudes toward Germany and Germans.

The German perspective is somewhat more nuanced. Chancellor Merkel has vigorously continued a tenet of postwar German chancellors by viewing Israel’s security and well-being a central part of Germany’s *Staatsräson*—a principal state interest. German public opinion toward Israel is more critical, particularly concerning Israeli policies regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, such criticism also evokes significant demonstrations of solidarity with Israel on the part of other segments of German society.

This conference will assess the robustness of the German-Israeli “special relationship” today in light of two realities: domestic, regional, and global challenges and generational change. It will also offer comparisons with the U.S.-Israeli “special relationship” that is undergoing significant change.

12:30 – 1:00pm      **Light Buffet Luncheon and Check-In**

1:00 – 1:15pm      **Welcoming Remarks**  
Lily Gardner Feldman, AICGS  
Lars Hänsel, Konrad Adenauer Foundation

1:15 – 2:00pm **Opening Speech and Q&A**  
Ambassador Harald Kindermann

2:15 – 3:45pm **Panel I: The Political, Security, and Societal Relationships between Germany and Israel**

- How deep and intense are political and security/intelligence ties between Germany and Israel?
- What are the guiding principles of political and security/intelligence cooperation?
- What is the nature and history of the bilateral institutions through which these relations are channeled?
- What is the role of individual German and Israeli leaders as handmaidens of the “special relationship”?
- How do German political and societal elites view Israel and the German-Israeli relationship today?
- How do Israelis view Germany’s commitment to Israel’s security, Germany’s Middle East policy, and Germany as an international actor?

*Speakers:* Mitchell Barak, KEEVOON Global Research  
Nora Müller, Körber Stiftung  
Shlomo Shpiro, Bar-Ilan University

*Moderator:* Lars Hänsel, Konrad Adenauer Foundation

3:45 – 4:00pm **Coffee Break**



Konrad  
Adenauer  
Stiftung



American Institute  
for Contemporary  
German Studies  
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

4:00 – 5:30pm

**Panel II: The Domestic, Regional, and International Contexts and Challenges**

- How do the current expressions of anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish sentiment in Germany and other parts of Europe affect the German-Israeli relationship?
- What is the two-way relationship between German-Israeli ties and the EU's policies toward Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in both political and economic terms?
- From the perspective of Israel and the United States, is the U.S.-Israeli relationship undergoing significant change?
- How does the U.S. assess the German-Israeli “special relationship,” as a complement to the U.S.-Israeli “special relationship,” or as a competitor?
- How does Israel assess the German-Israeli “special relationship,” as a complement to the U.S.-Israeli “special relationship,” or as a competitor?

*Speakers:* Eric Fusfield, B'nai B'rith International  
Michael Borchard, Konrad Adenauer Foundation – Israel  
Jeffrey Herf, University of Maryland

*Moderator:* Lily Gardner Feldman, AICGS

5:30 – 6:30pm

**Light Buffet Dinner**

1965 - 2015

50 שנה  
ליחסים הדיפלומטיים  
ישראל-גרמניה

50 Jahre  
Diplomatische Beziehungen  
Deutschland-Israel



6:30 – 7:00pm

**Welcoming Remarks:** Lars Hänsel, Konrad Adenauer Foundation

**Remarks:** Peter Wittig, Ambassador of Germany to the United States  
Ilan Sztulman, Head of Public Diplomacy at the Embassy of Israel

7:30 – 9:00pm

**Civil Society, Youth, and the Future of the German-Israeli “Special Relationship”**

With their long history of engagement in German-Israeli ties, how do organizations that engage young people in this partnership view contemporary and future challenges? What are the consequences now and in the future of the passing of the “witness generation”? What are the institutional, societal, and educational tools needed to continue Germany’s “culture of remembrance” seventy years after the end of the Holocaust?

**Panelists:** Hadas Cohen, Israeli Political Scientist, Author and Germany Close Up Alumna

Lily Gardner Feldman, AICGS

Katharina von Münster, former Israel Program Director and now U.S. Communications Director of Action Reconciliation Service for Peace

**Moderator:** Dagmar Pruin, Executive Director of Action Reconciliation Service for Peace and Germany Close Up



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