HIGH POINTS, PROJECTS AND EVENTS IN 2009 – FAR TOO MANY TO ACKNOWLEDGE ALL OF THEM HERE. A SELECTION PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW AND INSIGHT INTO THE BROAD SPECTRUM OF KAS ACTIVITIES.
For thirty years, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has been training some of its scholarship recipients to become journalists. Its programme to support young journalists, JONA, is a proven model of success. More than 800 former scholars are now working in the media, as directors-general, editors-in-chief, agency owners and heads of communication of major companies. The KAS celebrated this success on 27 and 28 March 2009. Chancellor Angela Merkel was the keynote speaker at the anniversary celebration in Berlin. “Thanks to the support you offer young journalists, more people have dedicated themselves to the free media, this elixir of life of our society”, said Merkel. She added that the JONA programme had crucially contributed to the vitality of democracy, and that it was a clear enrichment of democracy.

The chancellor invited the nearly 400 scholars and alumni who took part in the plenary session to keep a critical eye on the renewal process made necessary by the financial crisis. For her, the goal was to assess whether the world had learned from the crisis or not. She praised how the media had written about the financial crisis, in particular because it made highly complex issues understandable and accessible to the general public. She was however preoccupied by the decline in media expertise she was seeing in Germany. Many people were forgetting to maintain a critical distance to information. In order to help them regain this expertise, she said journalists would remain in demand to select and organise information. Bloggers and citizen journalism could only complement the other media, according to Merkel. KAS Chairman Professor Bernhard Vogel reminded the public of the role and responsibility of journalism in a functioning democracy. “Democratic states need informed citizens”, said Vogel. He added that a great responsibility rested with journalists because of their role as information providers and watchdogs. Michael Thielen, secretary general of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, highlighted that convictions and independence were not mutually exclusive. “The training offered by the journalism academy is based on a bias for specific ideas”, he said, one which included support for democracy and pluralism, for a market governance system with a human face and for the European idea. “This conviction, this firm point of view sustains the independence of journalists”, said Thielen.

As Thielen thanked the staff and leaders of the journalism academy, he also assured them the training programme would remain in the vanguard. Then he sent the new generation of journalists on their way with the words of Gustav Mahler: “Tradition is the handing on of fire, not the worshipping of ashes.”

Just what this way will look like formed the topic of the ensuing panel discussion between five experienced journalists, moderated by alumni Thorsten Alsleben, who works for German television ZDF in Berlin. In the hall of mirrors of the ballroom Clärchens Ballhaus where everyone gathered in the evening, alumni and current scholars still had time to network and exchange ideas.

There were further discussion panels on the second day: Andreas Thewalt of Bild newspaper and the CDU politician Friedbert Pflüger debated how politics and the media could work with each other. Cicero Editor-in-Chief Wolfram Weimer and the online journalist Katrin Scheib discussed “The Media in a Speed Frenzy”. Many current JONA scholars had accepted the invitation to attend the discussions. They listened attentively and actively participated in the debate. At the moment a record number of 164 young men and women are part of the journalism programme, which started in the summer of 1979 with 17 journalism students.
Panels with quotes from the German constitution greet visitors to the KAS Academy.

A joyous celebration for an extraordinary anniversary: That was the Day of the KAS 2009 that took place in Berlin on 12 May 2009. The celebration centred on Germany’s Basic Law (Grundgesetz), the constitution, that had come into force sixty years ago on 23 May 1949. The first articles of the constitution, written on large panels, hung in the lobby of the KAS Academy. Historical documents informed the numerous visitors on the work of the Parliamentary Council which drafted the constitution. The guests could use a video message box to express their good wishes on the occasion of this important anniversary of the German constitution.

A large majority of Germans – 73 percent to be precise, equally shared between east and west – are proud of the German Basic Law, as a survey commissioned by the KAS in the run-up to the anniversary showed. Nearly 90 percent of Germany’s eligible voters see a success story in the Federal Republic of Germany overall. But it was to discuss much more critical developments and observations that an exciting panel discussion gathered four personalities, Professor Hans-Joachim Meyer, president of the Central Committee of German Catholics; member of the German parliament Philipp Mißfelder, chairman of the youth wing of the Christian Democratic party Junge Union; Klaus Peter Schöppner, head of the Emnid polling institute; and political scientist Professor Werner Patzelt. The general tenor of the panel was that while the approval of democracy has consistently risen in the German population since the 1950s, the values underpinning the implementation of democracy have declined. This is particularly true when looking at the issue of social justice. Professor Patzelt observed with scepticism how the constitution has increasingly turned into a “sacred cult object.” Patriotism for the constitution should, in his opinion, rather be linked to a patriotic feeling for the country itself.

In her afternoon speech, Chancellor Angela Merkel paid tribute to the Basic Law and its importance in sustaining sixty years of democracy. “We have one of the best constitutions in the world and the best Germany ever had.” However Merkel criticised how many people today take for granted the values laid down in the constitution. To ensure the protection of those values, people need to advocate for them and be aware of their own history and culture, she said. She strongly condemned any relativisation of the situation in the GDR and its communist regime. She reminded the public that “East Germany was founded on injustice”, that democratic principles there counted for nothing, and that the country’s leadership had accepted the use of lies as the main instrument to consolidate their power. For the chancellor, creating equal opportunity of education is one of the great challenges of the future. On this issue “we cannot deceive ourselves”. For her, making it possible for everyone to advance in life is absolutely necessary to ensure the future prosperity of Germany.

After her speech, Merkel and Professor Bernhard Vogel kicked off the garden party. In the magnificent evening sun, it offered the numerous guests a few entertaining hours. Besides the many information possibilities and exhibitions, guests could enjoy cabaret performances by Anka Zink, entertaining music as well as a great diversity of culinary delights and drinks, made possible by the diverse sponsors. The Day of the KAS had opened the previous day with a special event focused bringing together high school students and politics. 160 students grappled with the topic of the constitution. In 11 different workshops, they made a film, rehearsed a play, put together radio and photography reports, created advertising and image campaigns and composed a song in homage to the constitution: “Where would we be without you? Who would we be without you? What would we be without you? Thank you, Basic Law!”

The young people were unanimous in their opinion: It had been a long and exhausting day. But they also knew that it had been great fun and a worthwhile event to celebrate the constitution. Alexander, 18, summed it up pointedly in the name of all his fellow students: “The constitution brought about a stable and good democracy, for which we can be grateful.”
KAS YOUTH CONGRESS: YES, IT WAS A REVOLUTION

More than 550 pupils, police students, trainees and students from Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Hesse and Thuringia gathered in Erfurt in June 2009 on the occasion of the Youth Congress entitled “1989: The Peaceful Revolution – What Does the Victory of Freedom Mean for Us?”

“It never was; it was never true”, sang Stephan Krawczyk in his opening song. “It is incredible, how quickly the memories of East Germany fade or are even embellished”, he remarked critically. In 1985 the East German songwriter was banned from working and was later arrested and expelled. In his opening speech, KAS Chairman, Professor Bernhard Vogel, also exhorted young people to differentiate between myths and reality of the country. One thing was completely clear to him. “A state that shoots at people and builds a wall to keep them inside is a lawless state.”

Following the opening, four prominent East Germans took part in a panel discussion to debate “How Revolutionary was the Peaceful Revolution of 1989?” They were Dieter Althaus, prime minister of Thuringia, Katrin Göring-Eckardt, vice president of the German Bundestag, Joachim Gauck, former federal commissioner for the East German secret police (Stasi) Archives, and Olympic gold medalist Jens Weiβflog. All spoke movingly of their own experiences under the SED dictatorship. Althaus praised the peaceful protests of people in East Germany in 1989 and insisted: “Yes, that was a revolution.”

All panellists agreed that East Germany was a lawless state. Gauck gave strong support to this view: “What is needed is to make the knowledge that exists ours.” People should not simply believe their parents when they say, “But it was not all bad under socialism.” The conclusion of the panel was that it is dangerous to assess East Germany purely from the perspective of people’s individual lives. Althaus underlined how important it was not to focus on a “self-selected set of elements seen through rose-tinted glasses but that people acquire real knowledge of the system and take a look at the complete picture”.

The young participants had opportunity to put this advice in practice in the numerous workshops where they could discuss questions with politicians, people who had lived through the 1989 events, and historians.

INDIAN YOUTH LOOKS OPTIMISTICALLY INTO THE FUTURE

With its approximately 500 million children and young people, India is one of the countries with the youngest average population in the world, and at the same time, looking at basic demographic facts, the most densely populated country. What do youths in the Indian subcontinent think about politics, religion and family?

To underpin the analysis of this question with real data, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung commissioned for the first time in 2007/2008 a representative survey of the values and attitudes, expectations and political engagement of young Indians: “Indian Youth in a Transforming World – Attitudes and Perceptions”. The results were presented in New Delhi and Berlin in 2009.

The study revealed that young Indians distinguish themselves in international comparisons with an above-average interest in politics, a high rate of participation in political activities and substantial confidence in their democratic political system. They are at the same time conservative on family issues. 60 percent of the people surveyed believe that parents should have the final say on who the children should marry. Many young people are focused on their country and have little interest for international relations: 35 percent of them have never heard of Germany.

India’s leading social study institute, the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, represented by Professor Peter De Souza and Professor Sandeep Shastri, conducted the study. Backing the effort was the Shell Jugendstudie, a youth-focused research programme long-established in Germany and its publishers, Professors Klaus Hurrelmann and Mathias Albert of the University of Bielefeld, who also served as scientific advisors to the project. About 5,000 14- to 34-year old Indians from all regions and socio-economic backgrounds were surveyed. The results of individual interviews and observations complemented the quantitative questions.

The positive outlook of Indian youth on the future is particularly striking, as well as their thirst for knowledge and strong will to work for a better future. This dynamic will transform the Indian society. As a result academics for example expect that the caste system will lose some of its relevance.
In a conversation with ZDF television presenter Steffen Seibert, George H.W. Bush, Helmut Kohl and Mikhail Gorbachev underscored the role the courageous people of Europe played in making the Peaceful Revolution possible.

TWENTY YEARS SINCE THE FALL OF THE WALL AND REUNIFICATION

A VICTORY FOR FREEDOM

The high point of KAS activities on occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Peaceful Revolution and the fall of the wall was a gala celebration in Berlin’s Friedrichstadtpalast on 31 October 2009. With the event, titled “A Victory for Freedom”, the foundation paid tribute to the former US president George H.W. Bush, the former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and the former German chancellor Helmut Kohl. During the dramatic weeks and months of 1989/90, they helped shape the course of history. The far-sighted and decisive actions those statesmen took during those historic days that changed the world was honoured before an audience of 1,800 people. More than 260 journalists and 35 camera teams from around the world also attended.

High-ranking representatives from politics and society came to this special event in the Friedrichstadtpalast on invitation of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. Among them were German President Horst Köhler, Chancellor Angela Merkel, the president of the German Bundestag Norbert Lammert, the president of the German Constitutional Court, Hans-Jürgen Papier and several politicians who served as government ministers under Kohl. Among the representatives from abroad were former Hungarian prime minister Miklós Németh, the first freely elected Polish prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the ex-foreign minister of Poland, Władysław Bartoszewski.

In his keynote speech, Köhler paid tribute to the desire for freedom, the courage and the incredible effort by civil rights campaigners in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and other countries in Eastern Europe, whose peaceful protests and uprising led to the fundamental change of 1989. These three statesmen had recognised the sign of the times and guided the dramatic developments onto the decisive track. “I thank you in the name of the German people and, I am sure, in the name of all the people of Europe”, the president said, adding with obvious pleasure: “The presence of all of you today is a sign of hope and encouragement.”

In the panel discussion that followed, all three statesmen stressed the close personal ties that facilitated cooperation at the time. “If I was in a bad mood and called up George Bush then I usually felt better afterwards”, Kohl recalled. “And with Gorbachev, the mood just got better every time.” Both men had been a “stroke of luck” for Germany. For his part, Bush said Kohl was “one of the 20th century’s true statesmen. He was a pillar of strength.”

On the afternoon of the same day, a debate called “Confronting the Truth – The Courageous Path to Freedom” took place with former civil rights activists Professor Jan Sokol from the Czech Republic, Jan Rulewski from Poland and Wolfgang Templin from Germany. Together they discussed developments at the end of the 1980s, their contacts at the time and who influenced them.

The eventful and impressive day ended with a chamber music concert featuring young KAS fellows, who under the direction of Professor Anne-Kathrin Lindig performed works by Brahms, Debussy, Schubert and Dvořák.

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung also organised several other events in 2009 to highlight and honour different stages, developments and reasons for the Peaceful Revolution against the communist regime of East Germany, as well as the upheavals in other Eastern and Central European states. In Greifswald, Dresden and Erfurt panel discussions were held to address the role of churches in the Peaceful Revolution, to discuss how literature can be seen as a seismograph for developments in East Germany and analyse the importance for the revolution of refugees and those wanting to leave their country.
4TH BERLIN LEGAL POLICY CONFERENCE: THE STATES AND GLOBALISATION

The legal policy conference of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung that took place on 23 and 24 April 2009 was one of the exceptional events of the year 2009. Held in the form of a symposium, it was dedicated to the lifelong work of the former German president, Professor Roman Herzog, on the occasion of his 75th birthday. The conference focused on the legal consequences of a globalised world for individual states. The specific topics ranged from the economy and security to social justice and state sovereignty in the context of greater globalisation. Addressing these issues, Chancellor Angela Merkel established in her speech that "what one can clearly say is that the political structures in which we live today across the world do not match the degree of interconnectedness that exists in the world." She proposed a critical discussion of the structures and competences of the international political architecture. The contributions of other conference participants such as Martti Ahtisaari, 2008 Nobel Peace laureate and former Finnish president, former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Rodrigo de Rato y Figaredo, former director of the IMF, and Oscar Andrés Cardinal Rodríguez Maradiaga, also received great public and media attention. Since the middle of the 1990s the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has organised legal policy conferences, first in its conference centre in Cadenabbia, on Lake Como. Since 2006 the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Berlin has continued this tradition of bringing together high-level jurists working in administrations, in the judicial system or in academia to debate the legal dimensions of policy issues. Among the important figures who have accepted the foundation’s invitation are ministers, members of parliament, attorneys general, presidents, vice presidents and judges from the highest German courts or from the European Court of Justice. Further participants include exceptional academics and personalities representing the legislative, judicial and executive powers. The photo above shows some of the participants in 2009: Alexandra Baroness von Berlichingen, Professor Roman Herzog, Angela Merkel and Professor Bernhard Vogel.

THE 12 POINTS OF BERLIN FOR THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

"We have searched for and found light together" is how the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCI) describes the eventful history of the Judeo-Christian dialogue. On 9 July 2009, the festive signing of the call "A Time for Recommitment" by representatives of 22 national organisations from Australia to Uruguay, during a conference at the Academy of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, paved the way for a new era in the relationship between Christians and Jews. The "12 Points of Berlin" – named after the city where the persecution and murder of European Jews originated – call for mutual respect and the acceptance of differences. They update the 10 Points of Seelisberg that were published in 1947 in immediate reaction to the horrors of the Holocaust. They condemned anti-Semitism as a sin against God and humanity and exposed it in all its absurdity. The Berlin points are not only directed at Christians but also at Jews and they enlarge the horizon beyond the Judeo-Christian dialogue to include dialogue with Muslims. Beyond the theological questions, the Berlin points call for all believers of all faiths to work together to respond to the challenges facing humanity. They want social justice throughout the world and support intercultural and interreligious education. They call for people to take responsibility for the environment and for a more intensive dialogue with political and economic institutions. Rabbi Henry Brandt spoke of a "revolution" in the relationship between Jews and Christians in the last decades. Achievements must be protected against the recent problems, he said. Elaborating on the appeal, Bishop Heinrich Mussinghoff said common social projects must clearly express the stance of the communities.

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The four-day conference showed that the memory of the Shoah has created a sensitivity that helps people understand how easily freedom and democracy are endangered, and provided ideas on how mutual understanding can help improve the situation.
International development cooperation is increasingly under scrutiny at the beginning of the 21st century. The fast pace of change, the growing regional and sectoral integration as well as fairly deficient results of development policy call for new ideas and innovative concepts. With Professor Peter Molt, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has had a man at its side who was given the responsibility to develop international projects by Konrad Adenauer himself at the beginning of the 1960s, and who has remained part of the team ever since. In November 2009 the foundation dedicated a symposium to him on the occasion of his 80th birthday titled “Rethinking Development Policy”.

“All his life he has always wanted to do his part to make the world a better one”, said Professor Bernhard Vogel, the chairman of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and a long-time colleague and friend of Peter Molt, summing up Molt’s work in his laudatory speech. Vogel specifically thanked Molt for his many years of work in Rwanda. Rightly people there call him “The man who does good things”. Professor Theodor Hanf of the University of Freiburg, Arnold Vaatz and Christian Ruck, both deputy chairmen of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group in the German Bundestag, and the former deputy head of division at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Klemens van de Sand, discussed then what it would take to put such ‘good things’ into action. The experts spoke in favour of supporting democracy and human rights while at the same time warning against losing sight of fighting poverty.

Molt took advantage of the opportunity to disabuse people of the misconception that states can be treated like machines. “One cannot simply adjust a few screws when things aren’t working, believing that will get the engine running again”, he said. In fact, the opposite was true. “Democracy can only come from within a country.” Alluding to Afghanistan, he said it was essential to provide stability on site. Molt said he backed a values-oriented development policy and called on actors in development policy to not be “discouraged despite all the difficulties”.

In June 2009, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung became the first German political foundation to open an office in the Gulf Region. The KAS aims to make “a concrete contribution to peace, tolerance and international understanding” in a region of steadily growing geo-strategic importance, said the deputy chairman of the KAS and president of the German Bundestag, Professor Norbert Lammert, at the ceremony marking the opening of the Abu Dhabi office.

Lammert presented the new regional programme Gulf-States of the KAS at the event “Values and Interests: Challenges for International Relations”, which also took place in June in Abu Dhabi at the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR). In his address, he underscored that tangible interests have proved insufficient in shaping the relations within the international community and called for an ever-greater awareness of one’s own values and orientations. Only by jointly assessing values and interests as two sides of the same coin could one achieve a balanced relationship between the different countries and cultures, the president of the German Bundestag said.

The ECSSR and the KAS signed an agreement that promotes cooperation on foreign and security policy, as well as regional integration and fundamental governance issues. The agreement aims to deepen the political dialogue between Europe and the states in the region that are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. During the ceremonial signing of the agreement, the deputy chairman of the KAS, Gerhard Wahlers, stressed that the Gulf Region could no longer be reduced to its oil and gas resources, but that it plays a prominent role in fundamental political issues, in particular in the face of current foreign and security policy challenges. As those states increasingly open themselves to issues such as good governance, the proper institutional framework, regional integration and closer relationship with Europe, they “offer pioneering starting points for the foundation’s work in the region”.

A “MAN WHO DOES GOOD THINGS” –
THE KAS HONOURS PETER MOLT

IN SUPPORT OF PEACE:
THE KAS OPENS AN OFFICE IN ABU DHABI
HOMAGE TO VOLKER SCHLÖNDORFF –
THE KAS HONOURS THE GREAT FILMMAKER

He raised one arm triumphantly in the air as if he was clutching an Oscar trophy. But Volker Schlöndorff already has one of those. On 15 January 2009 he held up the bust of Adenauer, which he had received at the festive event. German Minister of State Bernd Neumann paid tribute to him as “one of the leading lights in German cinema”. The president of the German Bundestag, Professor Norbert Lammert, greeted some 500 attendees, who celebrated Schlöndorff and his work – which set new standards particularly in transforming works of literature into films. At the ceremony, actor Ulrich Matthes read from Robert Musil’s novel “The Confusions of Young Törless”, which the director made into the film “Young Törless” in 1966. Bibiana Beglau read from Schlöndorff’s recent biography “Light, Shadows and Movement”.

CONNECTING PEOPLE!
ONLINE PORTAL FOR KAS ALUMNI

On 21 May 2009 KASconnect, the new social media network for KAS alumni, went online after just six months of intense planning and preparations. The government of the state of Baden-Württemberg held a reception for the more than 400 participants of the annual conference of KAS alumni in Stuttgart, where the chairman of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Professor Bernhard Vogel, along with the prime minister of Baden-Württemberg Günther Oettinger and alumni spokesman Markus Zeitzen, officially inaugurated the site and hoped for its success. As social media networks continue to grow in popularity, the alumni now have KASconnect, a state of the art medium which will both facilitate cooperation and give a boost to the foundation itself.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: AN ASSAULT ON HUMAN DIGNITY

“Modern-day slavery – A Global Problem and an Assault on Human Dignity” was the pressing issue at a panel discussion organised by the KAS addressed on 22 April 2009. Human trafficking is the fastest growing kind of crime, one that endangers freedom, democracy and the rule of law, even in Europe. Combating it is one of the biggest challenges of our time in the field of human rights. Member of German Bundestag and CDU human rights expert Erika Steinbach discussed the topic with Cambodian national Somaly Mam. The activist was herself sold into sexual slavery as a child, and is one of the best-known people in the world fighting against the trafficking of women. In an urgent appeal, she called for the public in the West not to deny the problem and to address the issue in a robust manner.

HOMER’S DESCENDANTS – A GREEK CULTURAL SOIREE DELIGHTS VISITORS

It was standing room only when nearly 600 guests crowded into the Forum of the KAS Academy in Berlin on 25 February 2009. The former minister of state Hildegard Müller greeted the guests, who were diplomats or representatives from cultural institutions and the media with a tribute to Greek cultural history. The Greek Ambassador Tassos Kriekoukis thanked everyone for the successful cooperation, and said that he hoped to build on this exceptional success. The cultural programme included a reading by bestselling author Petros Markaris, who read selections from his biography “Repeat Offender” (Wiederholungstäter), a concert by the singer Nena Venetsanou, whose performance charmed the audience, and an exhibit of contemporary art from Greece. Guests then celebrated late into the night, feasting on a buffet with Greek specialities.