

Open letter to Prof. Kunst, President of Humboldt University

Revision of the Dismissal of Dr. Andrej Holm

Dear Mrs. Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr. Sabine Kunst,

as President of the Humboldt-University of Berlin (HU) you had the responsibility to evaluate the questionnaire, concerned with the political activities of HU staffmembers in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), particularly the one filled out in 2005 by Dr. Andrej Holm. The final decision regarding the possible legal consequences on his employment was yours. On 18th January 2017 you publicly declared the decision of the executive committee of Humboldt University to dismiss Dr. Andrej Holm from his position as lecturer at the Institute of Social Sciences (ISW).

Your decision is based on alleged "malicious fraud". This claim is based on inconsistent declarations in the CVs handed to the university by Andrej Holm in 2005/ 2011 and 2017. Additionally you referred to the Stasi (Intelligence Services of the former German Democratic Republic) documents as well as a 2007 taz-interview. However, in your argumentation you could not prove that the inconsistencies in Andrej Holm's CV were intentional, rather than due to Andrej's incomplete access to his Stasi files and, as he states, incomplete recollection after 15 years.

Fact is, that the inconsistent declarations about whether he had been a "full-time officer" for the Stasi can be explained by Andrej Holm's lack of access to his Stasi files. It was only after being appointed Secretary of State for Housing in the Berlin Senate of 2017, that Andrej Holm realised that he had actually been registered as "in training to be a career officer" by the Stasi. Your persistent criticism of Andrej Holm for not having distanced himself from his explanation for the inconsistent declarations is thus unreasonable. Thus, your determination of the necessity of his dismissal is equally wrong.

Additionally, you base the necessity of your decision on the potential loss of integrity Humboldt University could face. You chose not to continue Holm's employment as you felt unable to defend it in the face of possible criticism. However, the university could have easily presented excellent reasons to support keeping Dr. Holm at the HU: Andrej Holm has spoken out openly about his past in the Stasi the relationship of trust between Andrej Holm and the university was not weakened to that extent that a dismissal was inevitable according to your own words, even having had the official status of Stasi cadet officer would not have prevented his employment in 2005 the majority of his colleagues continue to put their trust in Andrej Holm

Our demand ist that you reverse your decision to dismiss Andrej Holm from his position as lecturer.

Best regards,