

Kassel, July 16, 2022

**Statement of the Supervisory Board**

At the meeting of the Supervisory Board of documenta und Museum Fridericianum gGmbH on Friday, July 15, 2022, unanimous decisions were made by the Supervisory Board and the Shareholders' Meeting against the background of the antisemitism allegations against documenta fifteen and with a view to the future of documenta. In this regard, the Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Lord Mayor Christian Geselle, and the Hessian Minister for Science and the Arts, Angela Dorn, as Deputy Chairman of the Supervisory Board, declared on behalf of both bodies:

1. The Supervisory Board, the shareholders, and General Manager Dr. Sabine Schormann mutually agreed to terminate her managing director service contract immediately. Initially, an interim successor will be sought.
2. The Supervisory Board expresses its deep consternation that clearly antisemitic motifs were to be seen on the opening weekend of documenta fifteen. The presentation of the banner "People's Justice" by the artists' collective Taring Padi with its antisemitic imagery was a clear transgression of boundaries and documenta was thus considerably damaged. In the opinion of the Supervisory Board, it is essential to clear up this incident promptly, to draw conclusions based on scientific findings for dealing with antisemitic incidents in the cultural and art context, and to avert further damage to documenta. A great deal of trust has been lost as a result of the hanging of the banner and also in the course of crisis management in recent weeks. The Supervisory Board considers it essential that everything possible has to be done to regain this trust.
3. The Supervisory Board regards the combat against antisemitism and group-focused enmity in the field of the arts as part of a broader effort in the whole of society. The Supervisory Board reaffirms its expectation that indications of possible antisemitic imagery and the promotion of antisemitism related to the state of Israel be followed up upon while safeguarding the fundamental right to artistic freedom. The Supervisory Board recommends to the shareholders of documenta to enter a process of consultation with scholars from the fields of contemporary antisemitism, German and global contexts, postcolonial studies and the arts. They should take an initial stock of the procedures, structures and reception of and around documenta fifteen, recommend ways of drawing lessons and identify the issues at stake in need of further academic research. Besides this, they will advise

in case further antisemitic imagery should come up. The Supervisory Board deems productive an involvement of the artistic direction in the process of consultation and aims to design it conjointly. The Supervisory Board suggests that the finding committee, which has an advisory function vis-à-vis documenta fifteen, should also participate in the process. The Shareholders' Meeting has agreed to this.

4. The Supervisory Board recommends that the Shareholders' Meeting conduct an organizational review of documenta und Museum Fridericianum gGmbH, subjecting both the structures, including competencies and responsibilities, and the processes to scrutiny. This should be done in benchmarking with other important art exhibitions and with the help of external experts in order to generate proposals for the further development of documenta und Museum Fridericianum gGmbH as soon as possible after documenta fifteen. This too was decided by the Shareholders' Meeting.

5. The City of Kassel and the State of Hesse are united by the common goal of coming to terms with the misconduct in the area of antisemitism and structural deficits, and of doing everything in their power to ensure that documenta retains its unique status as an exhibition of contemporary art in the future. The Supervisory Board advocates that documenta fifteen, as the first documenta curated from the perspective of the so-called "global south" with over 1,500 participating artists, also be valued in its entirety and uniqueness. Precisely because documenta becomes a hub for artists and culture enthusiasts from all over the world every five years, and precisely because it has always been and remains a place of encounter and critical discourse, the Supervisory Board is working together with all those involved to protect documenta in Kassel.

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