



**Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier
in a video message for the celebration of Henry Kissinger's
100th birthday
on 20 June 2023
in Fürth**

Dear Henry, my warmest good wishes go to you and your well-wishers in Fürth. I am delighted that you are celebrating your hundredth birthday in the country and city of your birth. And I am greatly moved by the fact that the city of Fürth is organising a birthday party for you, and that you have travelled all the way across the Atlantic for it. This shows your profound affection for your homeland, which, in the unmistakably Franconian tones of your American English, you have never denied.

This abiding love of your homeland is by no means something to be taken for granted. After all, it was Nazi Germany's criminal policy of persecution and extermination that caused you to leave the country back then. All the more reason, then, why it is not only the people of Fürth and Franconia who are pleased about your visit today: our whole country is happy!

In the United States, which gave you refuge and opportunities, you built up an incomparable career, both in academia and in politics. You became one of the most influential architects of global politics. Not only in the years when you bore direct political responsibility, but also in the many decades after you left government office, when you remained active in your country's foreign policy and in international policy.

Your wise, pragmatic view of the world, your historical scholarship and political far-sightedness, your experience and your knowledge again and again inspired many people to seek your advice. Including me.

Particularly in these difficult, dangerous times, our friendship with the United States is of vital importance to Germany. This celebration is also an expression of your resolute commitment to our transatlantic partnership. Both personally and on behalf of my fellow Germans, I

would like to express my sincere appreciation and my gratitude for this commitment.

The very special combination of scholarship and political reason which you embody is one of a kind. You have surely met all the major statesmen and stateswomen of your lifetime; you have witnessed important historical events, not infrequently helping to shape them.

There is one very special event of which, thanks to your advanced age, you are probably one of the last living eye-witnesses. Namely the day on which your beloved home team, Spielvereinigung Fürth, last became German football champions. I don't know whether you consciously experienced that day, aged just six as you were at the time, but as a huge, huge fan of the team, you are bound to remember it.

With that reminder and with my very best wishes, I send my greetings to you and to all guests celebrating with you in Fürth. Have a wonderful, unforgettable time together.

See you soon, Henry!