THE BERLIN STATEMENT:

SCIENCE IN SUPPORT OF SOVEREIGNTY

Joint statement by U15 Canada and German U15, Berlin, 8 November 2026

Meeting in Berlin on the occasion of the 2026 Falling Walls Science Summit, where Canada is the Partner Country, U15 Canada and German U15 renew the strategic partnership they established in August 2023. Our countries mark 75 years of diplomatic relations and 55 years of formal scientific and technological cooperation, a solid basis for deepening our partnership at a moment of strategic consequence.

The international order has entered a period of profound change. Canada and Germany are responding by strengthening partnerships with trusted countries, grounded in trust, openness and shared values. Science and research are central to these efforts. They develop talent and generate the knowledge and technologies that underpin our shared resilience and prosperity.

Research-intensive universities play a distinctive role in this ecosystem. They combine frontier research across disciplines with advanced research infrastructures, the education of highly qualified talent, international networks and the capacity to translate new knowledge into societal and economic benefit.

As the collective voices of leading research universities in Canada and Germany, we reaffirm our commitment to open and responsible international research collaboration, including the mobility of researchers and the exchange of knowledge, ideas and talent among trusted partners. This requires institutional autonomy, academic freedom and open discourse. They are the preconditions for long-term, curiosity-driven and high-risk research in free and democratic societies. We commit to protecting and upholding these freedoms.

At the same time, openness and security must advance together. We remain committed to the free exchange of ideas with trusted partners while maintaining robust research security policies and practices that protect sensitive research and enable secure international collaboration.

Canada's association to Pillar II of Horizon Europe has already established a strong foundation for closer ties between Canadian, German and European researchers. Building on this progress will require sustained political commitment, deeper connections between our research programs and greater opportunities for researchers and students in both countries. As such, we call on our governments and the European Union to pursue the following priorities:

- **Secure Canada's timely and seamless association to a well-funded successor to Horizon Europe.** A mechanism for rapid re-association will help to sustain momentum, provide certainty for researchers and enable Canadian and German institutions to develop ambitious, long-term partnerships. The new framework program should be well-funded to provide the resources needed to support scientific excellence at scale, enable meaningful participation by international partners and deliver long-term, high-impact research.

- **Create stronger and more reciprocal connections between Canadian and European research programs.** This should include broader Canadian access to Pillar I initiatives, such as the European Research Council, which supports world-class frontier research, and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, which strengthen connections among researchers and institutions. It should also include joint calls, coordinated funding mechanisms and other initiatives that enable Canadian and German researchers to build partnerships around shared priorities.

- **Expand two-way student and researcher mobility between Canada and Germany.** Exploring Canadian participation in Erasmus+, complemented by strengthened mobility opportunities in both countries, would deepen institutional and people-to-people ties and help cultivate the next generation of international research partnerships.

At this consequential moment, partnerships between the member universities of U15 Canada and German U15 are more important than ever. Our research-intensive universities can bring together the critical mass of expertise, talent and infrastructure needed to tackle challenges that no institution or country can address alone. Through open and secure scientific collaboration, leading research universities can contribute to a more secure, resilient and prosperous future for both countries. U15 Canada and German U15 affirm our commitment to this shared ambition.

For German U15

Michael Hoch, Chair, German U15

For U15 Canada

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