



**Address
by President of Iceland
Halla Tómasdóttir
on the 25th Anniversary of
the Nordic Embassies in Berlin**

**Berlin
21 October 2024**

Your Excellency President Steinmeier and Ms. Büdenbender,
Your Majesties,
President Stubb and Ms. Ines-Stubb,
Your Royal Highnesses,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

This Embassy complex is a beautiful testament to Nordic-German cooperation and courage. Modern and forward-looking, it is based on a solid and stable foundation of shared values and a vision that by working together we can go further, faster.

Beautiful buildings matter but are in themselves not enough. They are empty without us, human beings, creating connections and finding common ground.

Humanity is currently facing complex challenges. They include, but are not limited to, an existential planetary crisis, unsustainable levels of inequality, political instability, low trust, mis- and disinformation, poor mental health, rollbacks in hard-earned rights and threats to the very foundations of our democracies.

Such times call for each of us to supercharge our courage and double down on our already successful collaboration.

Perhaps this community right here with its Fellehus ought to be copied the world over – allowing us to bring our vision and values together to a world in need for both.

Iceland is proud to be part of our Nordic family of nations and appreciates the strong bond with our German hosts. Countless Icelandic artists and athletes, women and men, have made a name for themselves in Germany and I'm glad to see some of them present here today.

In Iceland, mother nature is still creating new land, most recently in a series of eruptions between our international airport and Reykjavik. Our natural wonders continue to inspire German tourists to visit, and let me emphasize that Iceland remains an intriguing – and safe – place to visit.

Gifted with abundant natural resources, Iceland had the fortune to undergo a green transition already half a century ago. Today, practically all our energy production is renewable, almost half of it coming from geothermal resources.

We are glad to share this experience with others, alongside lessons learned in closing the gender gap. Both geothermal energy and gender equality have contributed greatly to sustainable growth and social progress in Iceland. Both are key to a more peaceful world as the old power playbook is largely made possible through the so called “strong men” using dirty fuels and means.

We are partners and friends, and that is fundamental in critical times where conflict and hate are testing our resolve and resilience.

We must always speak up for the protection of human rights and the promotion of peace, and for a fair and just society that gives hope to the young and reassurance to us, who are older.

Friends, may we further strengthen our cooperation and together seek sustainable solutions for a better working world. The world and the next generation need us too.

Thank you.