



Freie Universität Berlin, Der Präsident
Kaiserswerther Straße 16-18, 14195 Berlin

To Ilia State University
Rector Prof. Dr. Nino Doborjginidze
3/5 Cholokashvili Avenue
0162 Tbilisi
Georgia

Dear Rector Prof. Dr. Nino Doborjginidze,

Thank you very much for reaching out to Freie Universität Berlin. Thanks to my colleagues who are actively cooperating with Ilia State University—our most important partner in Georgia—and to my colleagues in the International Office, we are closely following the recent developments in all spheres of education in Georgia.

From the perspective of Freie Universität Berlin, a university whose founding principles are academic freedom and institutional autonomy, we are deeply concerned about the impact the announced reforms will have on Georgia in general and on Ilia State University in particular.

Let me assure you of our full institutional solidarity and of our wish to intensify our bilateral cooperation in research and education by offering top-notch educational programs and training. As you know, we are about to launch a double-degree program in regional studies, and we have recently expanded our initiatives in history, political science, and biodiversity to train young researchers and foster joint projects. All of these endeavors are now endangered; their loss would not only be felt by the Georgian higher-education landscape but also by us, as we work to integrate Georgia more closely into the European scientific community.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any other way by which we can support Ilia State University. Your institution is a “lighthouse”—a modern-university project in Georgia that has an impact which extends throughout the wider region and deserves the best possible support.

With solidarity and warm, personal greetings,

Prof. Günter M. Ziegler

President