

Berlin, 24.08.2010

Letter of protest concerning Thilo Sarrazin's planned appearance in the House of World Cultures, Berlin

On September 25th 2010 at 6pm, it is planned that Thilo Sarrazin will give a reading from his new book "Germany Abolishes Herself. How We Are Putting Our Country at Risk" (due to be published in German on August 30th 2010 in Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt). The reading will be part of the Berlin International Literature Festival in the House of World Cultures. To quote from the publicity text provided by the publishers: "Thilo Sarrazin (...) describes the consequences to be had in Germany's future, which result from the combination of lower birth rates, problematic immigration policies and a growing underclass. He simply refuses to accept the fact that Germany will become older and smaller, but also more stupid and increasingly dependent on state benefits".

We protest vehemently against the fact that a politician, who achieved notoriety through his racist utterances and who has now presented his theories in book form, should be given a platform of this kind in the House of World Cultures. Referring to the "aggressive and atavistic mentality", Sarrazin describes the majority of "Arabs" and "Turks" as "neither willing nor able to integrate" and separates them into the presumed categories of "productive" or "unproductive", therefore by implication desirable and undesirable members of our society. His incitement concludes in the depiction of threatening apocalyptic scenes, in which particularly Muslim migrants and their offspring are presented as a danger for the "occident" (the Western World). To quote from Sarrazin's book: "I do not want the country of my grandchildren and great-grandchildren to be predominantly Islamic, for the Turkish and Arabic languages to be freely spoken all over the country, for women to cover their heads, for the daily rhythm to be determined by the call of the muezzin. (...) Demographically, the extremely high fertility rate of Muslim migrants presents a threat to the cultural and civilising equilibrium in aging Europe."

With the planning of this event, the host - the House of World Cultures - has accepted its role in propagating such a world view and has therefore lost any kind of credibility with respect to the claim as embodied in its name.

We will not simply stand quietly and watch!

We are fully aware of our duties as citizens and want to put an end to this racist incitement which seeks to divide our society!

For this reason, we demand that the senior management of the House of World Cultures and the organisers of the International Literature Festival remove Thilo Sarrazin from the programme, instead of assisting him to disseminate his misanthropic theories! At the same time we call on all authors who have been invited to the literature festival to refuse to share the stage with a self-confessed racist!

Please sign this letter of protest till 29.08 (send a mail to info@mrbb.de), forward it to friends and colleagues and say NO to socially acceptable racists and their supporters!

For further information please contact:
Nuran Yiğit (Steering Committee)