



## **Toast**

**by Federal President Joachim Gauck  
at the luncheon in Ireland's Oireachtas  
at the invitation of the President of the Houses  
of the Oireachtas  
on 14 July 2015  
in Dublin**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for this warm welcome.

For me, continuing the policies of previous German Governments and Presidents is a matter of course. As one of the biggest countries of both Europe and the European Union, we interact with our partners in a respectful and amicable manner. We do so out of conviction as well as out of reason. A large, economically strong Germany adopts a different stance in Europe to that of the Germany of 70 years ago.

At this unusual time, characterised by the crisis in Greece, I come to your country with great veneration, respect and indeed gratitude – gratitude for the role that Ireland has played in these times of crisis.

We will work hard to ensure that we preserve the political reality that you yourself described: "We belong together, and we will not let go of one another." If the will exists on all sides then we will find a solution. At any rate, German policy signals – as far as I understand the Federal Chancellor and the Foreign Minister – that we belong with those who believe in the unity of Europe. We represent a Europe different to the Europe of 70 years ago. That is the result of our history, but also of Germany's political and economic development over recent decades.

This large country remains an advocate of an increasingly unified Europe. To date, no German Government has desired a different path. And we do not consider any political movement in Germany to be in a position to blow us off this fundamental course. We belong together – Ireland with its own particular experiences, and we in the middle of Europe with ours. We will not let go of one another.

Let me invite you now to join me in a toast and to drink to us staying together in order to shape democracy, freedom, the rule of law and success for all the citizens of Europe. For we will not let go of Europe either. We believe in cohesion.