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Minor Interpellation submitted by the Members of the Bundestag Ulle Schauws, Özcan Mutlu, Claudia Roth, further Members and the Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group

Bundestag printed paper No 18-4903 of 6 May 2015

Title: German colonial history in Namibia

Dear President Lammert,

Please find attached the answer of the Federal Government to the aforementioned Minor Interpellation.

Yours sincerely,

Answer of the Federal Government to the Minor Interpellation submitted by the Members of the Bundestag Ulle Schauws, Özcan Mutlu, Claudia Roth, Dr Frithjof Schmidt, Uwe Kekertitz, Tabea Rössner, Annalena Baerbock, Marieluise Beck (Bremen), Dr Franziska Brantner, Agnieszka Brugger, Tom Koenigs, Dr Tobias Lindner, Omid Nouripour, Cem Özdemir, Manuel Sarrazin, Jürgen Trittin, Doris Wagner, Katja Dörner, Kai Gehring, Elisabeth Scharfenberg, Beate Walter-Rosenheimer and the Alliance 90/The Greens parliamentary group

– Bundestag printed paper No 18-4903 of 6 May 2015 –

German colonial history in Namibia

Preliminary remarks by the questioners

In 1883, Adolf Lüderitz, a Bremen merchant, bought extensive lands around the bay of Agra Pequena (Lüderitz Bay) from a Nama chief, Joseph Fredericks. Lüderitz wanted to establish a German colony in south-west Africa. In 1884, Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck proclaimed the German protectorate of South-West Africa. In 1889, the first German protection force (Schutztruppe) was sent to South-West Africa. In the years that followed, more and more German traders and farmers poured into the colony, the settlement of German South-West Africa gathered pace, and the first conflicts broke out. The natives had to fear increasingly for their pastures and their access to water.

The year 1904 saw the outbreak of the Herero rebellion, which rapidly spread across the entire Herero territory. General Lothar von Trotha, who had been appointed commander-in-chief of the German forces, aimed to exterminate the Herero people once and for all. At the Battle of Waterberg, fought in August 1904, von Trotha's forces encircled thousands of Hereros and drove them into the desert. Three quarters of the Herero people perished as a result of that that action. Convinced that a similar fate lay in store for them, the Nama people then also rebelled against the Germans and waged a bitter guerrilla war against colonial rule.

From then until 1907, another 20,000 to 30,000 people from the Herero alone were murdered. The Herero and Nama were all deprived of the right to own land and livestock, while their native areas and any possessions they may have had were confiscated. Men, women and children were driven into concentration camps, where thousands died a wretched death from climatic conditions, starvation and exhaustion. Survivors were 'resettled' in reservations. After 1907, the Nama and Herero communities were, to all intents and purposes, destroyed. In the view of historians and by modern standards, this was the first genocide of the 20th century. This crime was recognised as genocide through the

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted in 1948.

On 14 August 2004, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, who was the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development at that time, made a speech in Okakara, Namibia, during the ceremonies commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Herero revolt. In that speech she acknowledged her country's historically rooted political responsibility, its moral and ethical responsibility and the guilt incurred by the Germans at that time and stated that the anniversary year of 2004 should become a year of reconciliation.

During the Bundestag debate of 1 March 2012 on recognising the German colonial crimes in the former German South-West Africa as genocide and making reparations, the former minister had to note that, in the intervening years, the Federal Government had missed the opportunity to act on the reconciliation initiative she had called for, and to provide for sustained financial development cooperation with Namibia. She observed, moreover, that the Namibian delegation visiting in September 2011 for the restitution of the remains of their abducted ancestors had been treated with such utter insensitivity and short-sightedness by the Federal Government that it had seriously strained relations between the two countries.

The crimes of colonialism are one of the darkest chapters in German history, a chapter that still receives too little consideration in our remembrance culture and is in danger of being forgotten. The lack of attention paid to this issue is reflected not least in the fact that our schools devote almost no time to examining the history of colonialism. Democratic Germany, however, has a moral obligation to engage in proper analysis of its colonial past.

We ask the Federal Government:

- 1. To what extent does the Federal Government agree with the assessment of historians and of former federal minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul that the acts of violence carried out in the years from 1904 to 1908 may be regarded as a war of extermination against the Herero and Nama peoples and hence as genocide (www.sueddeutsche.de of 2 May 2015 - 'Dieser Schritt ist unvermeidlich'; www.windhuk.diplo.de of 14 August 2004)?*

The Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and his Namibian counterpart, Mrs Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, began a process of dialogue at their meeting in Berlin on 2 June 2014. This process includes, for the first time, the quest for a common position and common language with regard to the horrific colonial war of 1904-1908. The dialogue also takes account of the state of the public debates in Germany and Namibia. Talks have made good progress, but they have not yet been completed. Both sides would like to take the necessary steps together, because they cannot come to terms with their divided history and achieve reconciliation unless they pursue those goals jointly.

2. *What specific measures has the Federal Government taken to remind people in Germany of the acts of colonial violence committed by the so-called 'protection force' in the former German colonies?*
3. *Have any specific special measures been taken to remind people of the particular war crimes and violations of human rights committed by the German colonial power against the Herero and Nama peoples?*

Questions 2 and 3 are answered together.

The Federal Government advocates open discussion of Germany's colonial past and fitting efforts to address the acts of violence that occurred in that context. In the framework of its support programmes, such as the Federal Foreign Office's Cultural Preservation and *Aktion Afrika* programmes, the Small Cultural Funds allocated to German embassies, the TURN Fund of the Federal Cultural Foundation and the programmes of the Goethe-Institut, the Federal Government endeavours to support, at home and abroad, projects and other activities relating to Germany's colonial history. Individual projects are subject to the application procedure for the relevant programme.

The following are some examples of activities that have been supported in recent times under the foreign cultural and education policy:

- As part of the Festival of African Literature staged by the Bayreuth International Graduate School for African Studies of the University of Bayreuth from 26 to 28 June 2014 under the motto "*Literatures of/and Memory – 1884, 1904, 1914*" and supported from the *Aktion Afrika* budget of the Federal Foreign Office, a panel discussion on 28 June was devoted to the colonial war of 1904-1908 in German South-West Africa. A staged reading with a talk on the subject of African voices of resistance against German colonialism took place on the same day.
- The German premiere of the film *Waterberg to Waterberg – In the Footsteps of Samuel Maharero*, directed by Andrew Botelle, took place in the Hackesche Höfe cinema in Berlin on 25 March 2015 as part of a season of contemporary African films screened by the *AfricAvenir* association; the film season likewise received funding from the *Aktion Afrika* budget. *Waterberg to Waterberg* deals with the life of Samuel Maharero, one of the leaders of the Herero resistance against the German colonial administration in the country that is now Namibia. Besides the Waterberg hostilities and the flight of the Herero people through the Kalihari Sandveld, the present-day Omaheke region, the main focal point is Maharero's subsequent exile in territories that now belong to Botswana and South Africa.
- The Cultural Preservation Programme of the Federal Foreign Office supported the restoration of Memorial Park Cemetery in the Kramersdorf district of Swakopmund,

Namibia, in 2008. Memorial Park Cemetery is conceived as a place of remembrance and reconciliation. A new enclosure symbolically unites the graves of the mostly nameless victims of German colonial rule with those of the minority white population, the two parts of the cemetery having previously been separated by a wall.

- The Small Cultural Fund of the Federal Foreign Office supported the publication in 2014 of the children's book *Jahohora and First Day*, written by Mari Serebrov, adopted daughter of the late Paramount Chief Kuaima Riruako. The book has appeared in Otjiherero, English and German and recounts the creation myth of the Herero people in a way that children can understand.
- From 2001 to 2011, the Federal Government supported the National Archive of the Republic of Namibia in the framework of bilateral development cooperation, contributing some 1.3 million euros to the establishment of a documentation centre for research into the history of Namibian resistance and the liberation struggle. As a result of this project, material on the anti-colonial resistance has been preserved and supplemented by research findings, and this documentation is being used for the purposes of political education and public-relations activity. The project is a tangible contribution to an open exploration of Germany's colonial past in Namibia.

The Federal Government does not possess a full catalogue of all measures relating to Germany's colonial history.

For further information, please see the replies to question 1 and questions 15 to 17.

4. *In what form does the Federal Government acknowledge Germany's historically rooted political responsibility and its moral and ethical responsibility for the wrongs committed against the Herero and Nama peoples from 1904 to 1908?*

Like the Bundestag, the Federal Government has repeatedly acknowledged the special responsibility of the Federal Republic of Germany towards the Republic of Namibia and all of its citizens, including the Herero, Nama, Damara and San communities, which suffered most under the colonial rule of the German Empire over South-West Africa in the period from 1884 to 1915. Conscious of Germany's historically rooted responsibility, the Federal Government had, since the 1970s, been an active advocate of Namibian independence, which was finally achieved in 1990, since when it has been engaged in establishing a comprehensive bilateral partnership with the young Namibian state. The Federal Government and the Namibian Government agree that official German-Namibian cooperation should also serve to support the internal reconciliation process within Namibia.

5. *Why is it that, in the official written translation of the speech delivered in English by former federal minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul in Namibia in 2004, the statement*

“The atrocities, the murders, the crimes committed at that time are today termed genocide” was, in the view of the questioners, incompletely and inaccurately rendered in German with the conditional tense, to the effect that “The atrocities were what would nowadays be termed genocide”?

At that time a German and an English version of the speech were prepared. The German was the original version, and the Language Service of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development translated it into English. The written English text read, “The atrocities committed at that time would today be termed genocide”.

6. *In the period since the Federal Minister made that “apology speech” in Namibia in 2004, what action has the Federal Government taken to seek forgiveness from the victims and their descendants?*

The Federal Government shares the view that the political and military decision-makers who were responsible for the violent excesses that took place during the colonial rule of the German Empire over South-West Africa incurred a heavy burden of guilt. This historical legacy has weighed on the relations between our peoples to this day. At the same time, both sides have repeatedly reaffirmed their desire to confront and overcome the past politically. The Federal Government will continue, together with its Namibian partners, to seek ways of jointly fostering the process of forgiveness and reconciliation. For further information, please see the replies to questions 1 and 4 above.

7. *What is the position of the Federal Government on the official support given by the Namibian Parliament in 2006 to the Herero and Nama demands for restorative justice and for German reparation payments outside the framework of development cooperation?*

The Federal Government does not see any basis in international law for Namibian reparation claims against the Federal Republic of Germany, regardless of which Namibian institutions or interest groups make such claims.

8. *What action has been taken since 2004 to continue developing ‘partnership at all levels’ between Namibia and Germany?*

Partnership between Germany and Namibia includes diplomatic relations, the foreign cultural and education policy, particularly intensive development cooperation, trade promotion, scientific and technological cooperation, measures forming part of the Federal Government’s International Climate Initiative, course-based training in the framework of military training assistance and projects under the Federal Government’s equipment-aid programme for foreign armed forces. It is not possible in the present context to provide an inventory of all activities

and individual projects in which the Federal Government has been involved since 2004. Another characteristic feature of German-Namibian relations is a close-knit network of cooperation between local authorities, between churches, between organisations from civil society and between private individuals.

9. *What is the state of progress on the reconciliation initiative announced by Ms Wieczorek-Zeul in 2004 (www.ag-friedensforschung.de of 13 August 2004 – ‘Bundesentwicklungsministerin Wieczorek-Zeul in Namibia – Ihre Rede und ein Kommentar’)?*

Following her visit to Namibia in 2004, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development at that time, announced two political moves. The first was a doubling of contributions to development cooperation within five years, and the second was a special initiative to support national reconciliation in Namibia.

A total of 31 million euros in additional funding under financial cooperation was made available for the special initiative. These resources are intended for measures of community development in the areas inhabited by the Herero, Nama, Damara and San communities, which endured particular tribulation under German colonial rule. The measures are intended to improve living conditions in those areas and can have economic, social and cultural objectives. They benefit all people in the territories in question, thereby supporting the Namibian policy of national reconciliation. They comprise a total of almost 200 individual measures, including, for example, the rehabilitation and development of the education infrastructure, such as school classrooms and playing fields, and the construction of local cultural centres.

The special initiative is explicitly focused on a future-oriented development process. It combines elements of poverty reduction and local-level participation with the aims of encounter and mutual understanding. The building work, for example, has been put out to local tender with a view to boosting small and medium-sized businesses.

Implementation is the sole responsibility of the National Planning Commission of the Republic of Namibia. It is expected that all of the funds will have been disbursed by the end of 2015. From June to August 2015, an evaluation of the special initiative will be conducted by Namibian assessors commissioned by the Namibian Government; this evaluation will be funded from the programme budget. Thereafter, the Namibian and German Governments intend to analyse the findings of the evaluation jointly.

10. *Has the budget for development cooperation with Namibia now been doubled, as announced under former Federal Minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul (www.spdfraktion.de of 21 March 2012 – ‘Versöhnungsinitiative mit Namibia muss vorangetrieben werden’)? If not, why not?*

The amount of the funding pledges made by the Federal Government within the scope of official bilateral development cooperation with the Republic of Namibia in recent years is shown in the following table:

Year of intergovernmental development negotiations	Financial cooperation in €m.	Technical cooperation in €m.
2001	15	9
2003	16	7
2005/06	52	8
2007	55.1	12
2009	143	17
2011	93	34.8
2013	108	43.4

The next intergovernmental development negotiations with the Republic of Namibia are expected to take place in Berlin in the second half of 2015.

11. *To what extent have development cooperation funds been used to support development in areas that are now populated by descendants of the peoples who suffered most from German expropriations and repression?*

In the view of the Federal Government, development cooperation should, in principle, benefit the entire Republic of Namibia and all of its citizens. Specific measures implemented under the special initiative in the main settlement areas of the Herero, Nama, Damara and San communities are described in the reply to question 9 above.

12. *Have funds been made available for development cooperation in other countries that were once colonies of the German Empire as compensation for the colonial era? Please provide a breakdown by countries, years and allocated amounts.*

No other countries have received the type of funding described in the question. The special initiative outlined in the reply to question 9 above is unique to the Republic of Namibia.

13. *What specific action has the Federal Government taken to support the repurchase, as envisaged in land-reform legislation, of land snatched by German settlers from the Herero, Nama and other peoples?*

Even after 25 years of independence, Namibia is still confronted with problems arising from inequitable land distribution. Of the total area of agriculturally productive land, 52% is used as commercial land. The Namibian Government is pursuing a two-pronged approach to redistribute land to members of previously disadvantaged populations. In some cases, abandoned farms are sold to new owners from formerly disadvantaged populations; to this end, the latter can take up government development loans. In other cases, the Namibian Government buys farms and divides them up into leaseholds comprising between 1,000 and 3,000 hectares.

The Federal Government assists the Namibian Government in the establishment of land-registry offices and in the definition of usage rights for particular land holdings. In addition, new farmers receive training and are familiarised with adapted land-use methods

14. Have the Herero and Nama peoples, who suffered most from German colonialism, been involved in shaping the reconciliation initiative? If so, in what way?

The cooperating agency on the Namibian side is the National Planning Commission. The senior staff of that authority introduced the special initiative to the public in the local areas at the start of the programme. As part of the implementation process, the Federal Government and the Namibian Governments appointed a project management team, a consortium of consultancy firms, to define the support criteria, develop the selection and participation criteria and closely monitor the implementation. The individual local communities proposed the measures outlined in the reply to question 9 above, which are based on their respective needs, to the National Planning Commission.

15. Does the Federal Government intend to ensure that the newly created Goethe-Institut in Windhoek understands and carries out the examination of the massacre as part of an obligation under German cultural policy to promote reconciliation between the German-speaking minority and the once-colonised majority of the population?

Under the framework contract of 2004, which remains in force, the Goethe-Institut, a registered association, is to perform its contractually assigned tasks of promoting knowledge of the German language, cultivating international cultural cooperation and conveying a comprehensive image of Germany by disseminating information on German cultural, social and political life in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Federal Foreign Office but on its own responsibility. The Secretary-General of the Goethe-Institut organisation, Mr Johannes Ebert, held talks with the Namibian Government in Windhoek on 28 and 29 January 2015 at which he explicitly emphasised that critical examination of Germany's colonial past and the aim of reconciliation would play a particularly important part in the work of the Goethe-Institut in Namibia. The Federal Government emphatically welcomes that statement.

16. *How could the work of the Goethe-Institut in Windhoek be reinforced and financially underpinned?*

The parliamentary approval of additional budgetary resources to provide institutional support for the Goethe-Institut organisation in the 2015 budgetary year made it possible to achieve the long-standing aim of converting the existing Goethe Centre in Windhoek – which, under the Federal Budget Code, could only be supported from project funds – into a proper Goethe-Institut forming an established part of the global Goethe-Institut network.

17. *In what way is the Federal Government contributing to the reinforcement of a post-colonial remembrance culture and to more widespread knowledge among the public and in schools and universities of colonialism and the racism that is associated with it?*

The Federal Government emphasises the importance of an appropriate culture of remembrance and commemoration of the colonial era in Germany and of the associated consequences for political, cultural and economic developments in the globalised world. It actively promotes a post-colonial discussion among the German public and in German places of learning. Alongside the internal debate in Germany, however, the partly divergent remembrance cultures in the former German colonial territories should also be acknowledged, since agreement on the value and importance of a common history can only be achieved in open dialogue between the relevant societies.

The federally funded *Deutsches Historisches Museum* Foundation in Berlin provides information on the history of German colonialism through its permanent exhibition and through the Living Museum Online (LeMO) gateway that it administers jointly with the federally funded *Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* Foundation and the Federal Archives. The *Deutsches Historisches Museum* Foundation plans to put on a special exhibition devoted to German colonial history from October 2016. The Federal Foreign Office intends to award grants for residencies of several months' duration for two African scholars to assist the competent academic advisory board in developing the blueprint for the exhibition.

In 2014 the Festival of African Literature of Bayreuth University's International Graduate School for African Studies was held from 26 to 28 June 2014 under the motto "*Literatures of/and Memory – 1884, 1904, 1914*". Supported from the *Aktion Afrika* budget of the Federal Foreign Office, the festival focused on historical continuity and changes at those three key dates, representing the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, the colonial war of 1904-08 in what is now Namibia and the First World War of 1914-18.

At the end of 2014 and the start of 2015, funds from the *Aktion Afrika* budget of the Federal Foreign Office were also used to support a series of events held in the Naunynstrasse Ballroom in Berlin and entitled *We are tomorrow – visions and memories at the 1884 Berlin Conference*,

which looked back 130 years to the period of the Berlin West Africa Conference from November 1884 to February 1885 and analysed the long-term effects of the conference on African societies and the African diaspora. Besides literary readings, dance and theatre performances and film screenings, the *We are tomorrow* programme also featured tours of Berlin's colonial heritage.

For further information, please see the reply to questions 2 and 3 above.

18. *What initiatives and measures has the Federal Government taken, or does it intend to take, to work with the federal states to ensure that school curricula and textbooks focus more sharply on the subject of Germany's colonial history and the wrongs that arose from it?*

The Federal Government welcomes initiatives that contribute to critical examination of Germany's colonial history in school lessons. Responsibility for curricula and the content of textbooks, however, lies exclusively with the *Länder*, which coordinate their actions autonomously in forums such as the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany.

19. *To what extent is the Federal Government supporting moves within municipalities to replace street names and monuments dedicated to perpetrators of colonial crimes with names and monuments dedicated to victims of colonialism and leading figures in colonial resistance movements, as in the case of the African Quarter in the Mitte district of Berlin?*

The Federal Government welcomes the critical reassessment of the history of German colonialism in Africa that is happening at many levels and in many places. It is willing in principle to do everything within its power to support the creation of places of remembrance and commemoration. Street names and monuments are, in principle, a matter for municipalities or, in the federal capital of Berlin, the city boroughs.

20. *Does the Federal Government know whether any foundations at federal level are supporting and financing critical re-examination of Germany's colonial past?*

The *Deutsches Historisches Museum* Foundation and the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation are examples of federally funded or part-funded foundations whose activities include critical re-examination of Germany's colonial past. The Federal Government does not possess a full inventory of relevant foundation activities in the Federal Republic of Germany.

- 21. *What undertakings would the Federal Government give if a foundation were to be founded for this purpose?***

The Federal Government does not comment on hypothetical situations.

- 22. *Has any consideration been given within the Federal Government to initiating the creation of a foundation for the examination of Germany's colonial past? If so, what conclusion has the Federal Government reached? If not, why not?***

The Federal Government welcomes the fact that decentralised examination of Germany's colonial past is already being carried out in numerous museums and collections, in academic institutions and also through many of the initiatives and organisations that make up civil society, some of which receive support from the public budget. At the present time, the Federal Government has not given any specific consideration to the idea of concentrating these diverse activities in one foundation.

- 23. *Has any consideration been given within the Federal Government to appointing an independent German-Namibian historians' commission to examine the history of German colonisation?***

The Federal Government has suggested to the Namibian Government that specific joint projects be launched as a means of further promoting a common culture of remembrance and commemoration. More detailed discussion and appraisal of potential measures is one of the subjects of current talks. In this context, please see the reply to question 1 above.

- 24. *What is the Federal Government's position on the establishment of a documentation and meeting centre in the German capital to commemorate the victims of the colonialism that emanated from Berlin?***

At the present time the Federal Government is not aware of any specific plans to establish a documentation and meeting centre in our capital city to commemorate the colonialism that emanated from Berlin. In principle, the Federal Government is receptive to any such initiatives.

For further information, please see the reply to question 29 below.

- 25. *How many and which objects obtained as a result of colonial misdeeds and from earlier illegal digs have been identified among the extensive collections of the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation – National Museums in Berlin – since 1990, and how many of them have been returned to their societies or countries of origin?***

To the knowledge of the Federal Government, the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation has constantly striven to identify and investigate the provenance of the objects in its collections and has intensified these efforts in recent years. This includes dialogue between all parties, including representatives of the societies of origin where these are identifiable. In the period since 1990, no objects have been returned by the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation to societies of origin in the territory of former German colonies.

26. *How will the Federal Government proceed in the case of collections of objects that are recorded in SMB-Digital, the database of the National Museums in Berlin, under the heading of 'Kriegsbeute' (spoils of war)?*

To the knowledge of the Federal Government, no collections of objects are labelled as spoils of war in the SMB-Digital database. The database, in fact, includes historical file archives. In these historical documents the word '*Kriegsbeute*' is used as an index headword, and it was taken over as a search term when the files were digitised for the database. It is one of the tasks of the provenance researchers at the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation to reconcile the content of these historical acquisitions files with the actual objects in the collections and to assess their content in the light of other documentation and knowledge. This identification and assessment process has not yet been completed.

27. *What specific action does the Federal Government intend to take in order to ensure that objects obtained as a result of colonial misdeeds and from earlier illegal digs are identified without delay and offered back to the societies or countries of origin where appropriate? How will it prevail upon other administrators of museum collections in Germany to do likewise?*

The Federal Government welcomes the fact that many museums and collections in Germany now engage actively in research into the provenance of objects dating from the colonial era and seek creative solutions as part of a critical reappraisal of this historical heritage. This may entail involving societies of origin in the work of museums, staging joint exhibition projects with African partner institutions, lending objects to African museums on a temporary or permanent basis and certainly returning objects too. The Federal Government advocates the return of cultural assets acquired in a colonial context if their repatriation is requested by the states of origin and the objects originally came to be in German collections or museums as a result of illegal acts. At the same time, it should be noted that there is no clarity yet, even among experts, as to what should be regarded as wrongful acquisition.

28. *To the knowledge of the Federal Government, in what form will the findings of the provenance research for the Humboldt Forum be published and made accessible to the societies of origin? What will happen to objects if their legitimate acquisition cannot be demonstrated? Are the data relating to these objects to be published too?*

To the knowledge of the Federal Government, the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation seeks maximum transparency in the publication of the findings of its provenance research, not only specifically for objects destined for future display in the Humboldt Forum but as a general contribution to international research into the colonial era. This is currently demonstrated by the publicising of individual items that has already occurred and by the historical archive documents in the SMB-Digital database. Because of the high number of objects and the very fragmentary data situation in some cases, the research requires plenty of time and resources.

29. *In the view of the Federal Government, what role should the exhibition concept and cultural programme of the Humboldt Forum play in the interpretation of Germany's colonial history, and what ideas have already been put forward?*

One important task of the Humboldt Forum will be to deal appropriately with ethnological collections and historical art collections in the light of post-colonial discussions and to interact effectively with its partners from the realms of research, libraries and events featuring various *genres*. Interpretation of the German colonial era is an elementary component of the exhibition concept for those exhibits in the collections that relate to former German colonial territories, especially those in the African collections. In the study collection that will form part of the exhibition in the Humboldt Forum, the history of the collection will be highlighted as a theme in its own right. This will include a comprehensive treatment of the links between the genesis of the collection and colonialism.

In the Humboldt Forum, great importance will be attached to diversity of perspective, which will be a guiding principle. The aim is to consider exhibits, collections and facts from various perspectives and so include the viewpoints of countries and communities of origin in a way that is appropriate and understandable. The various layers of meaning will be laid bare, and that process will be made comprehensible to the public in the exhibition. With this approach to the treatment of the material dimension of culture, the Humboldt Forum will be fully in tune with the contemporary research debate and modern museum presentation practice in every thematic area, including colonialism.

On several occasions, most recently at an event in the Kenyan National Museum in Nairobi on 22 February 2015 in the company of Professor Hermann Parzinger, President of the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation, Professor Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, President of the Goethe-Institut organisation, Dr Geoffrey Mwachala, Director (Research and Collection) of the National Museums of Kenya and other participants, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, referred to the need for the Humboldt Forum to develop its strategic approach together with partners from other parts of the world, and especially Africa. The Federal Foreign Office will continue to press vigorously for such cooperation.

30. *How will the Federal Government guarantee transparent provenance research for the residual human remains from the Luschan skull collection in the Ethnological Museum of Berlin (formerly the Royal Museum of Ethnology) of the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation- National Museums in Berlin?*

To the knowledge of the Federal Government, the Prussian Cultural Property Foundation will establish a long-term provenance-research project with third-party funding at the Museum for Prehistory and Early History of the National Museums in Berlin, to which the remaining part of Felix von Luschan's skull collection, known as the S collection, has recently been moved. There will be regular reports on the project through publications and accompanying colloquiums and workshops. An international advisory board with experts from France, Austria, Britain, the United States and several African countries as well as from Germany. The Museum for Prehistory and Early History answers all questions relating to the aforementioned collection transparently and as fully as the current state of research permits.

31. *When will the next repatriation take place of human remains from Namibia that were taken away to Germany during the colonial era for anthropological race research?*

To the knowledge of the Federal Government, the Embassy of the Republic of Namibia currently possesses scientific reports on the provenance of about 20 skulls in three German collections and, in one case, in private ownership, which can be repatriated to Namibia at any time. At least five other institutions have also expressed willingness to participate in the present repatriation process and have already initiated the requisite provenance research. The Federal Government remains willing to support any future repatriation to Namibia of human remains that were removed in a colonial context. A date for the next repatriation has not yet been agreed.

32. *How will the Federal Government ensure that this handover takes place in an appropriate and dignified setting in the presence of representatives of victims' associations and descendants of those who died?*

The Federal Government is coordinating the next steps with the Namibian Government. Both sides attach importance to an appropriate and dignified setting. The composition of the Namibian delegation that travels to Germany as part of the repatriation process and any events that take place in Namibia as part of that process are a matter for the Namibian side. The provenance research may provide indications as to which communities are affected by a planned repatriation in individual cases.

33. *What is the Federal Government doing to press for the repatriation of human remains which were taken unlawfully from South-West Africa and other former colonies and which are now held in the Rudolf Virchow collection of the private Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory?*

The Federal Government is supporting the current dialogue between the Embassy of the Republic of Namibia and the Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory (BGAEU) by liaising with both sides. The BGAEU has assured the Embassy of the Republic of Namibia that it has already begun the necessary provenance research. The Federal Government welcomes the increasingly constructive and cooperative attitude of the BGAEU and is confident that, on completion of the present provenance research, the Society will follow the example of the other relevant institutions and declare its willingness to return those parts of the Rudolf Virchow collection that may be assumed with a sufficient degree of probability to have come from what was then South-West Africa.

34. *To the knowledge of the Federal Government, does the collection built up by Felix von Luschan contain the remains that are listed in the SMB-Digital database of five persons from Cameroon (pp. 397-398 and 828-830), of 17 persons from Togo (pp. 462-463, 710-718 and 765-770) and of 36 persons from what is now Tanzania (pp. 260-277, 279-281, 490-497, 776-778 and 844-847)? If so, are these being offered to the communities or countries of origin for restitution, as required by the ICOM Code of Ethics and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?*

To the knowledge of the Federal Government, some of the human remains referred to in the question are in the custody of the Museum for Prehistory and Early History in Berlin, some are still in the Charité University Clinic in Berlin, and the whereabouts of the others are unknown. The human remains transferred from the Charité collection to the responsibility of the Museum for Prehistory and Early History are to be subjected to scientific examination with a view to identifying their provenance as part of the comprehensive project referred to in the reply to question 30. Whether the Code of Ethics for Museums of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples will prove to be pertinent, and what consequences that might have, cannot be foreseen at the present time.