

**Greeting by the German Federal Foreign Minister, Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier,
at the opening celebration of the Rainbow Project in Mispe Aviv, Israel.**

The rainbow is a powerful symbol, understood all over the world by old and young alike. It is a symbol that crosses the boundaries of religion, culture and society, and that stands for mutual acceptance and solidarity.

Sixteen years have already passed since the first rainbow was erected in Soweto by young, dedicated volunteers from South Africa and Germany, not just as a plaything, but also as a symbol for dialogue and a place for inquisitive encounters.

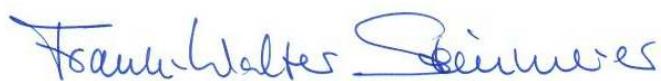
Today, the rainbow comes to Israel, where it is needed now more than ever. It is precisely now, as the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians not only unsettles but threatens daily, that supporting the rainbow is a strong signal of peaceful understanding and co-operation, accompanied with genuine concern for each other, and a wish on both sides to get to know and understand each other better.

For this reason I wish to express my thanks, not only for your commitment to building the rainbow, but also for the perseverance you have shown over the last few years of planning and preparation. It is both impressive and encouraging that you have clearly decided to turn these meticulously-prepared plans into reality in a time of acute crisis. By building this rainbow at this precise moment, you have sent an important message that dialogue and tolerance can lead to a lasting, peaceful co-existence, if and when we set our efforts in that direction.

I am delighted that above all the younger generation is showing commitment to projects such as this. It is a striking demonstration of your desire to design and change things, and to take on the responsibility of how our global society should look in the future. Your attitude is also a sign that will be understood across all borders.

I wish the Rainbow Project every success, and the attentive interest of our Israeli and Palestinian friends.

Berlin, 24.07.2014



Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier

Foreign Minister