

PRESS RELEASE

Bertelsmann Hands Over Forged ‘Hitler Diaries’ to German Federal Archives

- **Digital use to be possible in future under Federal Archives Act**

Gütersloh, December 14, 2023 – The international media, services and education group Bertelsmann has handed over the forged “Hitler diaries” to the Federal Archives. The diaries, whose publication in “Stern” magazine in 1983 triggered one of the biggest media scandals in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany, are now housed at the Koblenz site (shelfmark ZSG 167 *Gefälschte Hitler-Tagebücher*). Following an archival inventory, they will be digitized and made available in digital form in accordance with the Federal Archives Act.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe said: “The handover of the forged ‘Hitler Diaries’ to the Federal Archives ensures that they will be archived properly. It also opens up the possibility for a transparent, scholarly, and independent handling of the forged diaries.”

Michael Hollmann, President of the Federal Archives, said: “In the 1980s, the forged ‘Hitler diaries’ had the dangerous potential to trivialize the brutal crimes of National Socialism. It is good that the evidence of this difficult chapter of post-war history in the Federal Republic of Germany can now be secured in the Federal Archives and identified as forgeries in the context of the authentic sources. For the Federal Archives, which was involved in uncovering the forgery, this brings the matter full circle.”

A collection of 52 notebooks has now been handed over to the Federal Archives. Two notebooks are on display at the House of the History of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bonn, three at the Hamburg Police Museum, and one at the Fondation Cartier in Paris.

The archive material will be made available to users in the form of digital copies. The Federal Archives will make an entry in the database of the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) to clear the rights. Public access may only be granted after a six-month objection period for potential rights holders has expired. The Federal Archives will then make the digitized material available to users for online use via its invenio application.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company with 85.000 employees, that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the entertainment group RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato Group, Bertelsmann Marketing Services, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company generated revenues of €20.2 billion in the 2022 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world. Bertelsmann aspires to achieve climate neutrality by 2030.

www.bertelsmann.com

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