

Press release 01/2001

8 June 2001

National Ethics Council inaugurated

The National Ethics Council was inaugurated today (8 June 2001).

Professor Dr. Spiros Simitis (University of Frankfurt am Main) was elected Chair, with Professor Dr. Eckhard Nagel (University of Bayreuth and Augsburg Hospital) and Professor Dr. Regine Kollek (University of Hamburg) as his Deputies.

The National Ethics Council will adopt its Rules of Procedure and work programme at its next meeting on 6 July 2001.

In view of the present situation the National Ethics Council has discussed issues relating to the import of pluripotent embryonic stem cells. It is requesting the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the central public funding organization for academic research in Germany, to postpone until December the decision it was due to take on the matter on 4 July 2001 owing to the particular importance of the specific case. The National Ethics Council will express its opinion by then. However, it considers itself unable to reach a final position on the fundamental issues involved in such a short time.