

HEIDEMARIE WIECZOREK-ZEUL



**Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development
(1998-2009)**

Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul has spent 40 years in political offices: as the first woman to head the Young Socialists, for the SPD in the European Parliament and later as Development Minister under Chancellor Schröder and Chancellor Merkel. In the course of her long political career, she never shied away from conflict, and her assertiveness commands the respect of her political companions. For many, she is therefore a role model.

She has been a member of the SPD since 1965, and from 1974 to 1977 she was Federal Chairperson of the Young Socialists. She was the first woman to hold this position and gained a reputation as an assertive politician. In 1979, she was elected to the European Parliament, where she was Deputy Chair of the Foreign Trade Committee. From 1987 to 2013, she was a member of the Bundestag, until 1998 she was the European policy spokesperson of the SPD parliamentary group and from 1993 to 2005 she was the deputy federal chairperson of the SPD.

In 1998, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul was appointed Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development in the federal government led by Chancellor Schröder; she also retained it in the Grand Coalition subsequently led by Chancellor Merkel from 2005 to 2009.

In 2009, Wieczorek-Zeul left her ministerial post, in which she set clear accents on international poverty reduction.

In 2009, she was a member of the UN Commission of the General Assembly on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System and subsequently a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the German Bundestag, responsible for global issues, until 2013.

Heidemarie Wieczorek Zeul remains committed to social issues. She is a member of the Sustainability Chamber of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), she does support work for the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis and works together with Peter Eigen on the Garment Industries Transparency Initiative (GITI) to improve the working conditions of female textile workers worldwide.