
German diplomat named head of European university

By Editor

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BERLIN, July 10, 2008 (AFP) - German diplomat Gunter Pleuger, a former ambassador to the United Nations, has been named head of the Viadrina European University on Germany's border with Poland, the university said Thursday.

'Mr Pleuger will take up his duties in October,' a university spokeswoman said.

Pleuger, 67, was a foreign ministry state secretary in the government of Social Democrat chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and served as Germany's ambassador to the United Nations from 2002 to 2006.

He will replace Berlin academic Gesine Schwan, who has been nominated as the Social Democrats' candidate for Germany's presidential election in May 2009. She is challenging the conservative incumbent Horst Koehler.

Schwan has headed the elite private university in Frankfurt-an-der-Oder, which is attended by 4,600 students from more than 70 countries, for nine years.

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