



Grußwort Außenminister Guido Westerwelles zum 2. ASEM-Treffen der Gouverneure und Bürgermeister ("2nd ASEM MGM")

Grußwort Außenminister Guido Westerwelles zum 2. ASEM-Treffen der Gouverneure und Bürgermeister ("2nd ASEM MGM") -- es gilt das gesprochene Wort! -- Ladies and Gentlemen, It gives me great pleasure to welcome you here in Berlin today on behalf of the German Government. I wish to thank our guests, the Governors, Mayors and representatives of many of the ASEM capital or major cities, for coming to Berlin and for participating in this conference. I would also like to thank Governing Mayor Wowereit and the Berlin Senate for organizing this meeting. A global shift is taking place. New powerhouses are emerging in Asia, Latin America and in other parts of the world. The so-called NICs (Newly Industrialized Countries) today own more currency reserves than industrialized countries. They are driving the global economy. These emerging economies are also new political players in tackling global challenges. Who would know more about the global shift than the countries in Asia? Asia itself is a centre of power that serves as a reference for others. Asia is home to 60 per cent of the worlds population. 1,8 billion people are younger than 24 years old. The Asian countries contribute to nearly a third of the worlds GDP. The per-capita-income in the newly industrialising countries in Asia has tripled since 1999. The middle class is growing by 15 million people per year in China alone. In the year 2000 Vietnam counted 200.000 internet users. Last year the number had risen to over 30 million. While Japan is the only Asian country amongst the G8, there are already six Asian countries in the G20 format. Economic strength generates political clout. This in turn means a greater share of responsibility for the world. The Federal Foreign Offices strategy paper on enhancing relations with the new global players was adopted by the Federal Government this spring. We want to enhance our relations with these states for our mutual benefit and in line with our shared responsibility for global issues. Climate change, food prices, natural resources and the stability of the financial markets are pressing issues in a world of seven billion people. We all realize that these are issues which can only be addressed at a global level. New global challenges and new partners require new forms of cooperation. Anyone who wants to shape globalization needs strong partners. Germany wants to forge new partnerships. This is the spirit of our new globalization policy. In only 2 weeks from now, Heads of State and Government will be gathering in Vientiane, Laos, for the 9th ASEM summit. Pressing global concerns, such as sustainable development or climate change, are on our agenda in Vientiane. But in a globalized world, transnational cooperation can no longer be limited to nation-states. Cities are at the very heart of the fundamental structural changes our world is experiencing. If we wish to understand our world today, we have to look at urban dynamics, urban challenges and urban opportunities. Cooperation between major urban centers in Europe and Asia adds an invaluable layer to finding solutions for global problems. More than half of the global population lives in cities. By 2030, this number will have grown to two thirds. In other words, every 3 weeks the worlds urban population increases by a number equivalent to the population of Berlin. Living in a highly urbanized region ourselves, we have accumulated great experience and expertise in shaping urban processes. German architects, city planners and administrative practitioners possess advanced skills in urban and regional planning. We offer solutions for transport and human security. We are focused on the efficient management of the supply of energy and water. We have experience in the recycling and disposal of waste. We have developed easily-available medical services, and ensure that working conditions, housing and schooling are all sustainable. In short, we have solutions of how to organize the day-to-day life of a relatively large and dense population. And we want to make our skills available to our partners - in Asia and elsewhere. I am convinced: Megacities represent a challenge, but they are an even greater opportunity, an opportunity for more cooperation between Asia and Europe, economic and political. Former Governor of Jakarta, Dr. Fauzi Bowo, deserves appreciation for initiating the "ASEM Goes Local forum in 2009. I hope that this format, initiated in Jakarta and continued today in Berlin, will continue to thrive in the future. This meeting represents one more excellent example for how Asia and Europe can realize great synergies through cooperation and mutual learning. In this spirit, I wish you fruitful discussions and a successful conference. Thank you for your attention. Kontakt: Auswärtiges Amt - Internetredaktion - Werderscher Markt 1, 10117 Berlin - Postanschrift: 11013 Berlin - Telefon: 03018-17-0 - Bürgerservice: 03018-17-2000 - Telefax: 03018-17-3402 - Webseite: www.auswaertiges-amt.de - eMail: poststelle@auswaertiges-amt.de  src="http://www.pressrelations.de/new/pmcounter.cfm?n_pintr_511276" width="1" height="1"/>

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