



DAY OF GERMAN UNITY



Message from Holger Michael, Ambassador of Germany to Bangladesh

ON 3 October 1990 the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic peacefully reunified to a single state. This year we commemorate the twentieth anniversary of this historic moment which laid the foundation for a united and stable Germany at the heart of a growing community of strong friends and partners.

For more than 40 years Germany has been divided against the free will of its people. The reunification resulted from the resilient hopes and tireless efforts of many in East and West. Fortunately, unification led to more than the disappearance of the Inner German Border.

On this joyful occasion we celebrate more than simply our own fortune: This moment also marked the beginning of an unprecedented era in European history. Hostility has been replaced by friendship, and step by step we have been able to overcome the entrenched divides of the Cold War era across Europe. With the Treaty of Lisbon which came into

force on 1 December 2009, we have again entered a new chapter in our joint strive for peace and prosperity.

While we hope that we will meet upcoming challenges in a successful and responsible manner, on this day of commemoration we also remember those who helped us along our way. We think of all people across Europe who shared our deep hope for a better future. Equally, we are grateful for the trust that our partners placed in a fully sovereign Germany committed to common values. By signing the "Two Plus Four Treaties" France, Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union gave us the relics of the post-war order and renewed their confidence in a peaceful Germany at the heart of Europe.

Ever since we have been trying to maintain our commitments both domestically and in our relations with our partners throughout the world. It is a pleasure to be able to say that Germany now is stable and responsible democracy firmly established in the community of the

European Union. But let us not take anything for granted. What has been achieved, has only been possible as a result of continuous efforts. The same can be said about the many good relations we share with our partners. Our mutual belief in the strength of democracy, freedom and human rights certainly is at the heart of our friendship with Bangladesh. But it is because our friendship is truly lived and expanded year after year that it can truly flourish.

Bangladesh and Germany share many views on international topics such as climate change, importance of regional integration, development and others. We look back on a string of political exchanges between our Parliaments and Governments. As a testimony of the latter I wish to recall the recent successful visit of H.E. Foreign Minister Dipu Moni to Germany, when official talks on ministerial level were complemented by a strong push for cultural, scientific and economic relations.

While Germany is firmly convinced that Bangladesh has the potential to advance to a middle income country, we continue to acknowledge the significant challenges that it faces along this way. Ever since the independence of Bangladesh, we have been a reliable development partner with contributions amounting to more than 4.4 billion Euro in bilateral and multilateral aid. Since 1978 bilateral contributions have exclusively been grants. The successful signing of the Joint Cooperation Strategy between Bangladesh and its development partners in June 2010 marked an important milestone in our joint efforts to support Bangladesh in overcoming the obstacles to a better future. We rejoice the excellent response with which the good work of the GTZ as the German Development Partner is received.

Regarding our strong trade relations with Bangladesh, we are proud to say that our trade volume increased by as much as 16% in the past year. This is certainly an exceptional trend given the

state of the global economy and it is an extremely positive sign for Bangladesh. While Bangladesh exports to Germany significantly grew in volume again, we are also pleased about a significant rise in German exports to Bangladesh. New areas of mutually beneficial business relations such as shipbuilding emerge. With German companies increasingly investing in socially and environmentally sustainable projects in Bangladesh, we are delighted to see a combination of social imperatives and economic logics which will promote the mutual benefit of our already fruitful economic relations.

Our cultural relations continue to grow as academic and cultural exchanges continue to flourish: Another three Bangladeshi schools have successfully joined the Goethe Institute's renowned "Schools: Partners for the Future" (PASCH) programme. Furthermore, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation have been hosting for the first time seminars and workshops with Bangladeshi and foreign Alumni in Dhaka and Mymensingh. We are also delighted about the partnership that Bangladesh Betar and Deutsche Welle (DW) signed in Dhaka on 9 March 2010. It allows Deutsche Welle to broadcast their popular Bengali Radio Programs twice a day on FM. The new programme can be received between 8:00 am and 8:30 am as well as 8:00 pm and 8:30 pm.

I would like to end by stressing that the Bangladeshi people can be assured of our continued commitment as a sincere friend across all levels of our excellent relationship. This has been proven in our relations so far and I am very much looking forward to deepening those during the forthcoming years. Let me extend my cordial greeting to the people of Bangladesh as well as to all the German residents here!

Message from Guido Westerwelle, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Germany

Germany--a reliable partner worldwide

THE images that will forever be linked with the unification of Germany are evocative: a euphoric nation, jubilant masses at the Brandenburg Gate, people in each others' arms, laughing and crying for joy at the same time. The crowd shouting "We are the people!" The whole world witnessed the power that courage can unleash and how people's desire to be free can topple a dictatorship. The political unification of the two German states followed a year later, on 3 October 1990.

The twentieth anniversary of German Unity gives us an opportunity to look back and to be thankful--that the path to a unified Germany turned out to be so unexpectedly straightforward and was travelled so fast. We are grateful to our Western and Eastern partners for this. Indeed we will never forget the support and sympathy they demonstrated during our unification process.

Germany promised that, in return for unity in freedom, it would be solidly integrated into Europe and the international community. We will keep that promise. Over the years, together with our partners, we have achieved a great deal in Europe. Today 500 million Europeans from 27 countries live in a common judicial area in peace and freedom. The European Union is a unique, successful reconciliation and peace project.

20 years after German Unity, it remains our task to make the world a more peaceful and pleasant place in which to live. German foreign policy is peace policy. We are facing numerous challenges that we in our globalized world can only tackle together. Disarmament, climate change, energy supply and demographic development are only a few of the major issues Europe and the world must address in the future.

German unification taught us that the seemingly impossible can happen after all if you have the courage and the willingness to take the right decisions. Germany will be a reliable partner in this endeavour.

BGCCCI-- the business gateway to Germany and Europe

SAIFUL ISLAM

ON behalf of the members of BGCCI I would like convey my warm felicitations for the German National Day and the 20th anniversary of German Unity. We hope that the harmonious relationship between our two countries will continue to prosper in the years to come.

Bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Germany is on a solid growth path and has reached USD 3.2 billion in the year 2009. Last year, in spite of the world recession, exports to Germany increased by 15.6% and imports from Germany registered a growth of 12%.

Germany is our 2nd largest export destination & largest export market in Europe. Since both, Germany and Bangladesh are showing healthy growth, we can expect to have more bilateral trade in the years to come.

The strong dynamism in our trade relations is also reflected in the strong growth of this chamber. Over the period of last year 100 new members joined BGCCI, one third of which are based in Germany. Today with 200 members BGCCI is proud to be the biggest, bilateral European chamber in Bangladesh.

BGCCCI is putting particular emphasis on promoting German investments and joint ventures in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh right now is in a favorable position to receive more FDI: the country is enjoying social, political and macro-economic stability, which is also reflected in Standard & Poor's rating of BB. As yet, Bangladesh has a number of untapped resources, the most precious of which is its human resource. This is the ideal time for Germany to turn its attention towards Bangladesh.

BGCCCI is helping those who take a new look at Bangladesh as an investment destination with their first steps. BGCCI offers professional market-research, matchmaking, mediation and marketing services.

BGCCCI is currently supporting a couple of German companies e.g. HeidelbergCement, Draexelmaier, Pulcra Chemicals etc. with their plans to invest over 20 million US-Dollars in Bangladesh.

Now that the world economy is starting to stabilize and FDI may pick up again, we may see a tough competition among the prospective investment destinations. Bangladesh needs to brace itself for this scenario and continue to improve its framework conditions for FDI. Not only in terms of physical infrastructure (energy and transport) but also in terms of administrative and legal aspects.

Taking into account the challenging social and environmental conditions in Bangladesh, with widespread poverty, overburdened public services in education and health and a precarious natural environment, BGCCI is promoting socially responsible business as an investment in the country's as well as the company's future. On 28th October 2010 BGCCI will hold a

Conference on Global Social Responsibility. Keynote speakers will be the CEOs from two large German companies TUEV SUEW and OTTO Group Germany. We are very happy that Nobel laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus will explain his view on Social Business. TOP-Managers from Bangladesh and Germany will attend this high level conference e.g. from TÜV SÜD, METRO Group, PICARD, HEIDELBERG CEMENT and BASF.

Once again I would like to wish everybody a happy German National Day. On behalf of my members and colleagues at BGCCI I hope this auspicious day brings joy to both our nations.

Mr. Saiful Islam is president, BGCCI.

Further information: Executive Director Dipl.-Ök. Daniel Seidl, info@bgcci.com or www.bgcci.com

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BGCCCI Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce & Industry

The 200 Members of the Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce and Industry - the biggest, bilateral European Chamber - sent their best wishes on the occasion of 20 years of German Unity and the German National Day

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