

Greeting address of the rector

UN-conference

"Conversion - Opportunities for Development and Environment"

23. February 1992, 18.30 Uhr

Hotel SCANDIC CROWN, Dortmund

honorable Guests

Dear delegates of the UN-conference, dear guests

I welcome you in Dortmund

I'm very glad that so many scientists, so many industrial leaders and so many politicians have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and their activities in this UN-conference, which is going to start officially tomorrow. I am delighted that we are able to host the UN-conference, the first conference jointly organised by the state of North-Rhine-Westphalia and the United Nations, in Dortmund. In the Ruhr-area we have taken the necessary-restructuring-process as an opportunity to give a new economic future to this region.

The times in which scientific, political, economic and ecologic work was limited to the national level belongs surely to the past. It is unrealistic to continue a thought-process which does not include a global approach to problems. Conversion can't be kept back by border and in this way we have to find international solutions and answers.

Borders and walls are falling overnight, many former borders will be reestablished within a few days; these are some of the most important events we have recently witnessed in Eastern Europe. But in the most parts of our world the situation is different. Here borders and walls only exist - if they do at all - in the minds of the people. I believe and hope that this conference is going to help to remove some of these imaginary boundaries for the whole world.

Our world will have to be considered as what it is in reality: As an entity - as an interdependent economic, ecological and cultural area of many nations, who want to live in peace. And thus it is logical and consequent to discuss at this conference the actual questions of the conversion with qualified persons from all over the world. Of course I know this will require a high degree of sensitivity on the part of political and economic leaders.

Dear guests

I am convinced that within the coming decades the development of our world will be marked by exceptional progress in many quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Interdependent spin-off effects of these changes will reach far into all spheres of living. The world of the future, for example in thirty years, in which we and our children shall live, has not yet reached a concrete shape. This is still a vision at the most. But in order to bring this vision into line with reality, we'll have to combine the scientific, technical and political findings with the vision and bind the two together. The problems in the field of conversion and their solutions must be seen at an international level. Military dimensions have shown this in the past, especially in our century. The actual questions will have to be considered in union with all partners all over the world. This is why I am pleased that more than two hundred seventy delegates have found their way to Dortmund.

The city of Dortmund is an excellent location for this conference. Here was the so-called heart of the German Arms Forge (Rüstungsschmiede) during the last two world wars. I am sure that the Germans learned in the last forty years and today we are a peaceful country in the international community.

Today we find companies and institutions in the ruhr area who are working in the high-tech sector. One example is ~~is~~ our University ^{HK} of Dortmund, where in several departments our scientists focus their research on the problems of technical and economic solutions and environmental protection - so they are famous for their work in Germany and in the so-called scientific community. In this respect this conference is an excellent activity for our politicians, the industrial leaders in the region and our scientists taking place in an international context.

The staff of this symposium is interdisciplinary and international so that all relevant problems of today and of the future can be discussed. As an economist I am convinced that we need "high-technology" and "high-economy" to get the highest standard of "high-ecology" in our civilisation. That is the main road on which we have to go in the future. ~~The results of scientific work as part of a policy have to be implemented mainly by means of private investment.~~

Dear guests

In recent years the University of Dortmund has followed the patterns of the structural and economic changes in our region. Since 1985 our institution has experienced ^{one} the highest growth rates among the universities of North Rhine-Westphalia. This applies to new students as well as to the total university attendance. In both cases we are by far the number one. This is quite a success but it also implies great responsibilities towards our students.

Therefore this conference will play an important role in our academic life, as we try to integrate the results of the various speeches and discussions into the training and education of our students.

This is an excellent investment in the future, since qualified and well trained students all over the world are always requested, particularly in the case of economic structural change.

The organisation of this conference in this short time was ^{not} easy. Therefore I may thank my colleague ~~Mr.~~ Hans-Jürgen Karpe and his team from our university and many other persons who have been responsible for all the planning and the organisation. ~~Without their support~~ this conference would not take place today.

↓ Without his idea and promotion also during the Gulf war and in spite of the civil war in Yugoslavia

I may thank also

I may thank
 But ~~there were~~ also many private and public sponsors, ^{at first} ~~for example~~
 the government of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Initiativkreis
 Ruhrgebiet, the city of Dortmund ^{and} or the German Foundation of
 Environment. [This informal reception is sponsored by the HÖVELS
 housebrewery and the food-company VRERIKSEN, both from Dortmund.]
 Thank you very much.

I would be very happy if you enjoy all days in Dortmund ^(and mainly)
 if you could find a well-going way for the future. Nevertheless I
 know that we have to go step by step. Every day you can see the
 political consequences - to this regard this conference can
 initiate confidence-building measures. The transformation of the
 industry from military oriented to civilian oriented production |
 for example constructing tractors instead of tanks is only one
 among the important actions to be taken. Others will have to
 follow. Also the scientific sector has to contribute all what is
 possible. Research in the field of ABC-weapons does not
 necessarily have to be useful for the military. Employed in
 civilian context the results of this research are more useful for
 mankind as a whole. In this context the future of scientists,
 formerly employed in the atomic weapons industry, is being
 discussed at the moment. There are still many questions left to be
 answered. The worldwide political changes do force us to answer
 them in the very near future.

In the past
Far too much money is being invested in arms technology and research. We do not accept this at our university. This conviction has already been demonstrated through modified conditions integrated in our research contracts with the private sector. Our private partners have to guarantee that the results of our research will not be used for military purposes.

I wish all the participants a pleasant and successful time. I am convinced that your discussions will have a long-term impact upon us.

Now I wish that you acquire a good taste for the canapées and for our famous german beer. Perhaps you know that Dortmund is europes beer-town number one.) ~~But there is no accounting for tastes.~~

Thank you very much.

As economist I know, that there is a difference between production and consumption.

We are the number one in production. But nevertheless you should taste it today.

INFORMELLER EMPFANG

23. Februar 1992, 18.30 Uhr

Hotel Scandic Crown, Lobby

Der Rektor der Universität Dortmund,
Prof. Dr. Detlef Müller-Böling,
lädt alle Teilnehmer der UN-Konferenz
zu einem informellen Empfang ein.

INFORMAL RECEPTION

23rd February 1992, 6.30 p.m.

Hotel Scandic Crown, Lobby-lounge

The Rector of the University of Dortmund,
Prof. Dr. Detlef Müller-Böling,
invites all delegates to an informal reception
on the occasion of the UN-conference.