

Welcome remarks by
German Consul General Rolf Schütte
at the opening of the DAAD/HBS conference
„On the Road to Bali: Strengthening Transatlantic Climate Cooperation“
San Francisco, November 16, 2007-11-05

Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is a great honor for me to address you at the beginning of a conference which is co-sponsored by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS). Both organizations play a prominent role in fostering Transatlantic ties in general and German-American cooperation in particular. Organizing a conference here in California, on the rim of the Pacific, on strengthening Transatlantic climate cooperation in my view clearly shows three things:

- 1. That the traditional agenda of Transatlantic, of German-American cooperation has been extended to encompass new issues, global challenges that few people even thought about a few years ago,**
- 2. That Transatlantic cooperation is not restricted to government and other players in Europe and on the American East Coast, but that states such as California play a most important role in the efforts to solve global problems,**
- 3. That non-governmental players such as the DAAD and the HBS can make a most valuable contribution in tackling these issues.**

When looking at the title of the conference to be opened today it reminds me of the title of the speech German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier gave here in San Francisco a few weeks ago. He spoke on „Energy, Climate, Security – A New Transatlantic Agenda for the 21st Century“. In his speech, Minister Steinmeier underlined that the United

States and Europe can be pioneers in solving the global energy and environmental challenges through political, technological and therefore also economic measures.

When the Minister held talks in Sacramento with Governor Schwarzenegger, Speaker Nunez and other high-ranking Californian politicians the question of how Europe and the US, Germany and California can cooperate in solving the global challenge of global warming they also laid the foundation for an initiative that is called ICAP – International Carbon Action Partnership. The initiative by Germany, California and the United Kingdom now encompasses several European governments, the EU Commission, the Portuguese EU Presidency as well as several US state governments and Canadian provinces. Its purpose is to link up emissions trading schemes in different parts of the globe.

It cannot come as a surprise that Germany and California are the driving forces behind this initiative. Both are pioneers of a forward-looking energy, environment and climate-protection policy – Germany in Europe, California in the US. Both are most attuned to the threat of global warming. A recent poll found that Californians are more likely than other Americans to not only see global warming as a threat, but to also back efforts to address it through government regulations, tax incentives and other efforts by industry and individuals. Both Germans and Californians are pioneers in the development and use of renewable energies. Germany is proud that its companies are by now the world's technological leaders in the wind, hydro, solar and biomass energy fields. About ¼ of the solar cells installed in the world has been produced in Germany. German wind plant producers also dominate the market with 28% of global production. The share of renewables in the production of electricity in Germany has grown

rapidly in recent years and now constitutes 14 %. With 235.000 employees the renewable energies sector is also an important and rapidly growing factor in our economy as a whole. In California, 22,000 people are employed by green-tech companies. 9 in 10 Californians believe that their state could be a leader in new technologies to address global warming.

Thus, the themes of the panels of this conference are most appropriate for identifying concrete options for an ever closer cooperation between us in fighting global climate change, not least through an increased use of renewable energies.

I wish you good and fruitful discussions.

Thank you for your attention.