



**Speech by German Ambassador Andreas Michaelis  
at the Reception for the Frigate BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG**

May 23, 2024, Washington, DC

Sehr geehrter Flottillenadmiral Schulz!

Vice Admiral Perry,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Generals and Admirals,  
Honored Guests, Friends,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Männer und Frauen der Deutschen Marine,  
lieber Herr Matheis!

Almost a year ago to the day, I had the pleasure of having a very good conversation with the head of the German Navy, Vice Admiral Kaack, at the Foreign Office. Back then, I promised that I would gladly welcome his men and women from the German Navy if they were to travel across the pond. It is therefore a personal pleasure to stand here onboard the BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG and keep my promise.

We Europeans tend to look at a world map where we are always at the center. Thus, the American continent has had, for the most part, only one coast from a European perspective. The West Coast felt too far away and what lay beyond it, the Pacific Ocean, was almost intangible. Our foreign and security policy was basically set up in a similar way: our opposite coast was clear; everything beyond it was vast and uncertain.

Times have changed, ladies and gentlemen. Here in the U.S., one looks at a map that regularly shows the American continent in the middle of it all, and it immediately becomes clear: the United States has two coasts that it has to take care of. And our (Atlantic) side is not necessarily more important from a U.S. perspective. Let me make one thing very clear: we are aware of this in Berlin and in Rostock (the headquarters of our Naval Command). And that is exactly why we not only issued Indo-Pacific guidelines in 2021, but are also putting them into action: to the positive astonishment of many, we are doing exactly what we previously announced.

And that is exactly why you, Admiral Schulz, have set off with your 450 men and women to engage in exercises (and celebrate) with our allies and friends on both coasts of the American continent, before traveling further westward to the Pacific Ocean. Your journey will lead you to San Diego and Hawaii, where you will take part in the RIMPAC exercises – a first for the German Navy. And as I said before, we have understood. And that is why a detachment from the German Air Force will also take part in RIMPAC. Joint and Combined is the key to success.

Admiral Schulz, men and women of BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG and FRANKFURT AM MAIN: I envy you and your upcoming trip around the world. I envy the experiences you are about to have.

We will provide you and your crews with the best possible support from Washington and in all other U.S. ports where you will stop. I wish you a fantastic time here in New York and in the United States. But above all, may you return safely to your home port and to your families.

Fair winds and following seas. *Auf Wiedersehen!*