



Your Excellencies, Mr Genscher, dear clients and partners,
dear MC network agencies, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my great pleasure to welcome Hans-Dietrich Genscher,
the former long-serving German Minister of Foreign Affairs,
to the Museum of Communication here in central Berlin.

[Pause for applause]



Mr Genscher, you were a member of the German government for 22 years, and for 18 of those years you were Minister of Foreign Affairs, playing a decisive role in shaping German, European and global politics. We also have to thank you for German reunification and for the overcoming of the division of Europe. Forty years ago, when you were Minister of the Interior, the Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper had determined that you have “a good nose for future issues”. Your ability to successfully gage the winds of change was also put to good use in your role as Minister of Foreign Affairs, overcoming resistance in particularly clever ways in order to implement your policies. And so it comes as no surprise to me that among your impressive collection of medals and awards, there is one called “Das Goldene Schlitzohr” – “The Golden Fox.”

[Pause for applause]



Furthermore it is my pleasure to welcome the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work - in short EU-OSHA – as our special guest tonight.

EU-OSHA was set up in 1996 by the European Union and located in Bilbao, Spain, EU-OSHA is the main EU reference point for safety and health at work. Their aim is to be the central provider of information on occupational safety and health and to ensure that this is relevant to every user, regardless of size of enterprise or sector of activity.



Mr Genscher, ladies and gentlemen,

Towering over the main entrance to this building, which we all came through earlier, is a 6-metre-high sculpture. It is called “Titans Embracing the Globe” and at the time the original was made, in 1895, it alluded to the world-embracing relevance of the postal service and telecommunications. The Postal Services Museum became the Museum of Communication, and communication, with its digital tools, now spans the globe in a way that no one could have imagined at the time. MEDIA CONSULTA is part of this global communication – so this meeting of our worldwide network is being held in exactly the right place.



Dear guests,

There was one thing that Mao Tse-Tung said that was right – and that was, “He who rests on his laurels has them in the wrong place.” For the past 17 years, since our inception, we have adhered to that insight. After a period of development in Cologne and Berlin, we went on to pursue a strategy for expanding our network throughout Europe. MC today is the only agency network in the world with a presence in all 27 European Union Member States as well as in the candidate countries, and we are the market leaders in political communication not only in Germany, but also in Europe. In Germany, our clients include the German government, federal ministries, the German Parliament and various German state governments, to name but a few.

At the European level, we organise important campaigns for the European Union, targeting for, amongst others, climate protection, the introduction of the euro and EU enlargement.



At the same time we also have to respond to globalisation – by setting our sights on North and South America, Asia, Africa and Australia. Today, MC is represented in 56 countries, including all the key global business centres. We have ranked in 12th place among worldwide networks in a study by the US trade journal “Advertising Age”, showing it to be by far the largest German agency network.

This road towards globalisation was also necessary because we want to add more internationally operating brands, such as Vodafone, VISA, Generali and Dunlop, to our current client portfolio; and clients with global accounts expect us to maintain offices in Moscow, New York, Shanghai, Seoul or São Paulo, as well as in Europe.



Coordination and quality management are of the essence in such a widely-distributed network. Our network meetings are an important tool for discussions with our network partners. The executives and account directors of our MC network agencies are now gathered together in Berlin for one such meeting. This is where we exchange experiences related to our successful projects and offer our clients the opportunity to speak directly with representatives from our foreign network agencies.

These meetings are one of MC's unique features, one of our USPs, as we say in our industry. It is something that other networks do not offer.



Our meetings are also an opportunity for us to coordinate our value-oriented business policy and our Corporate Social Responsibility. MEDIA CONSULTA has always refused any contracts that go against these values. These include contracts related to advertising or promotional material for the tobacco industry or for companies or products that are harmful to the environment. This means giving up lucrative contracts, but we strive, particularly in the area of public affairs, to gain accounts that are in line with our values – for example, those related to environmental and climate protection, health education, the fight against discrimination, helping Third World countries, and supporting education and science. These values hold for all our network partners around the world.



Sticking to these basic principles is not enough for us, however. We do more – both abroad as well as within our own company. In New York in April 2008 I signed MEDIA CONSULTA's membership in the Global Compact. This is the United Nations' initiative towards strengthening worldwide corporate social responsibility. This was the topic of discussion two years ago at a UN World Congress, which we were pleased to organise in accordance with our values. And it was evidently a success: the United Nations has asked MEDIA CONSULTA to organise the next Congress due to be held in New York in June this year.



We also provide help in the form of hard cash. In partnership with UNICEF and the Nelson Mandela Foundation, we have been participating in the “Schools for Africa” campaign since 2007. Every year our MC Network funds the building of a school and pays for the teachers’ salaries, the textbooks, and a daily hot meal for the pupils.

At the same time, we aim to make our values a reality within our own company. MC only uses recycled paper and has begun introducing renovations to save on energy. We balance out any environmentally harmful CO₂ emissions that we produce by supporting reforestation projects. We believe that corporate social responsibility also includes helping employees to strike a balance between family and career.

MC therefore guarantees our employees’ children a place in Kindergarten, and contributes towards childcare costs every year.



Ladies and gentlemen, dear guests,

You know the strict rule of public relations work: “Do something good, and then talk about it.” Let me, therefore, tell you a little bit about the MC Academy, which I am particularly proud of. It is the first continuous education and advanced training programme that has been established Europe-wide for the entire MC network. More than 50 continuous education opportunities cover all areas of modern communication, from language and online courses to integrated campaigns, throughout the year.



Because this project has been so successful, we would like to open up the Academy to our clients, while naturally offering additional courses. We would also like to use one of our competences, politics, to bring together board members and top politicians in small gatherings.



As you can see, our areas of business reach far beyond Germany. We no longer see ourselves only as a German agency, but rather as an international one. 15 languages are spoken in our head office in Berlin alone. Almost half of our international customer service representatives have foreign passports. We now can even compete successfully with local players in foreign markets. For example, in France we just won the tender from the Quai d'Orsay, the French Foreign Ministry, for the publicising of the Year of France in Russia, against French agencies – at this stage I also would like to welcome the French Ambassador. But we will not forget where our roots are. The “Made in Germany” concept remains our mark of quality. All of our campaigns must meet this standard, regardless of the country they are being organised in.



Our international focus, as well as our integrated communication, have brought us safely through the economic and financial crisis. With the help of these unique structural features, MEDIA CONSULTA was able to more than balance out losses from a few business clients with new turnover in other countries and in other communications areas. As such, last year our sales increased by 15 per cent, and we created 25 additional jobs in Berlin alone. And I am sure that we will see double-digit increases this year as well.

We have not done all of this on our own. Without our clients, we would be nothing. I would like to thank you for your trust. My thanks also go to our MC network agencies worldwide and our employees. Your expertise and commitment have contributed greatly to our success.

I would like to propose a toast to our continued cooperation. Here's to you!



Dear guests,

I would like to thank Mr Genscher for his agreeing to present to us his views on the future role of Europe 20 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain, in a discussion with Dr Günther Nonnenmacher, co-editor of the Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper. I now invite these two gentlemen to the stage.



[Nach dem Einspieler]

Bilder, die uns immer wieder bewegen... Herr Genscher, Sie haben einmal gesagt: Das Leben hat mir nichts geschenkt, aber viel gegeben. Ich kann nur hinzufügen, Sie, Herr Genscher, haben uns allen viel gegeben.

[Pause für Beifall]

Herr Dr. Nonnenmacher, ich bitte Sie das Wort zu übernehmen.



[Nach der Gesprächsrunde]

Herr Genscher, Herr Nonnenmacher, ganz herzlichen Dank für das spannende Gespräch. Herr Genscher, Ihre optimistische Einschätzung der künftigen Rolle Europas in einer neuen globalen Ordnung hat uns die Zuversicht vermittelt, dass wir auch künftige Herausforderungen bestehen werden, in Europa und der Welt.