

Begrüßung zur OSCE Konferenz

6. April 2016, Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin

Dear Ms Leendertse,

Dear Dr. Erler,

Dear Professor Sandschneider,

Dear Sascha Suhrke,

Dear participants,

A warm welcome to „the future of the OSCE“, our twofold conference of which the first part starts this morning here in Berlin in the Foreign Office. By the way you sit in a very special room: This hall used to be the cashiers hall of the Reichsbank of Germany as this was the location of the headquarter of the German Reichsbank up until the end of the 2nd WW. After 1949 this part of the city belonged to East Germany and in 1959 it became the headquarter of the Central Committee of the SED the Socialist Unity Party of East Germany, the Central Committee convened here to rule not just the Communist Party but to rule the country. You sit now where the most influential communists used to sit up until 1990.

My name is Michael Göring, I am the CEO of the ZEIT-Stiftung which is located in Hamburg roughly two hours north of here for those of you who are not so familiar with German Geography. The ZEIT-Stiftung is one of the bigger charitable not-for-profit organizations in Germany and was established by Dr. Gerd Bucerius. Therefore the long name ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius. Bucerius was the publisher of the weekly paper DIE ZEIT which is one of the most prestigious German weeklies which many of you will know. Our founder, Gerd Bucerius, died

twenty years ago and left his whole fortune to the Foundation which I have been the CEO of for nineteen years.

You may wonder. Why the ZEIT-Stiftung has planned to do something on the OSCE forty years after the Helsinki conference and why we have invited you?

Well, some fifteen years ago our board decided not only to set up our own Law School and our own Arts Forum in the city of Hamburg, but also that we would start young leaders programs in the field of global governance. Since then we have organized the annual Bucerius Summer School on Global Governance in Hamburg and Berlin and similar international debating fora like the Asian Forum on Global Governance together with our Indian partner ORF in New Delhi or the Latin American Forum in Rio de Janeiro with our Brazilian Partner Fundação Getulio Vargas. Our international commitment does not even stop here: The ZEIT-Stiftung has established its own institute on contemporary German history and politics at the University of Haifa, we run the American Friends of Bucerius in New York and eleven years ago we started the German Historical Institute in Moscow. As we as a private foundation run so many international projects, platforms and programs you may not wonder/that we cooperate closely with the German Foreign Office. Thus, last year, we met with German Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier and very quickly came to the conclusion that we should offer a special program for this year as we believe in the great importance of the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe. And you know this year 2016 is the year of the German chairmanship of the OSCE.

We decided again in favour of a young leaders program as we believe in the future of the OSCE which will be your future. But the future must be shaped – and there must be actors to build up the future of the OSCE. This shaping process to make the OSCE fit for the next forty years cannot be left to well established politicians sixty years and older. It must, in contrast, be, constructed, reconstructed developed by young people with high potential from all fields of civil society, from business, academia, politics, administration, media, NGOs. Charitable foundations such as the ZEIT-Stiftung have the great advantage to be non-partisan, not to be affiliated with any given political party of denomination of ideology, instead: to be neutral, an open space for discussion and ideas.

And that is why we have invited you. Please use this open space! Do not refrain to express your opinion, your ideas, your fears, your hopes. These coming two days and the other three days in fall in Vienna are work in progress! We depend on your critical mind. The idea of the OSCE is worth it, today as much as 1975.

Conflict prevention, crises management, human rights, dignity of the individual, international security – all there OSCE goals deserve that we spend lots of thoughts on them, deserve our talents and deserve our commitment.

I cannot be with you all the time, but I try to be here as often as possible and I wish you a great conference with many possibilities to make friends and to build up a stable network.

Thank you for coming and all the best.