

Translation

Speech

by Minister of State Gernot Erler

at the opening of the international conference

"Climate Change as a Security Threat – Strategies for Policy-Makers,
Science and Business"

Concert Hall, Freiburg, 6 November 2008

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to cordially welcome you to the opening of the international conference "Climate Change as a Security Threat – Strategies for Policy-Makers, Science and Business" here in Freiburg. I'm pleased that so many of you accepted our invitation.

I would first of all like to welcome those seated up here on the stage who are opening this conference today. Dr Rajendra Pachuri, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Director-General of the Energy and Resources Institute in New Delhi and 2007 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, has travelled furthest, namely from India. Welcome to Freiburg, Mr Pachauri! We're delighted you've come all the way from India to Freiburg and look forward to your lead-in presentation. I would also like to welcome Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs and Deputy Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. Thanks to an initiative launched by the German Foreign Minister, German foreign policy is now taking a close look at energy and climate change as part of an extended security concept, and I'm pleased that Freiburg has now become another milestone in this new foreign policy, which is aimed at creating a global community of shared responsibility. That brings me to the third person on the stage, Dr Dieter Salomon, Mayor of Freiburg. He's not a guest but, rather, the host as well as the Federal Foreign Office's partner in organizing this conference. Thank you very much for our good working partnership and for the hospitality we have received here in the Freiburg Concert Hall.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have a seemingly endless list of important participants in this conference and of distinguished guests of honour, but I hope you'll forgive me for not welcoming everyone individually. I can only name a few who represent many. Let me begin with the keynote speakers and panellists at this conference. Altogether there are 17 from eight different countries: in addition to Germany, Bangladesh, China, Denmark, India, Nigeria, the UK and the US. You're all very welcome and we're delighted you've all come to Freiburg.

I would like to welcome Kerstin Andreae, my colleague from the Bundestag, as well as many other deputies at federal, Land and municipal level who all registered for this conference. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Funde and all members of the Diplomatic Corps. We're pleased that Vice-Rector Professor Schanz and the former Rector Professor Jäger are representing Freiburg University and that many of the city's notabilities are here today, including the honorary citizen Dr Rolf Böhme, former mayor, and Dr Eugen Martin. I bid you all a heartfelt welcome! Renate Buchen, Gerolf Staschull and Atai Keller, all of them leaders of groups on the city council, are accompanied today by a large number of councillors. I would like to welcome the many associations and authorities present, not least Johannes Burger, Secretary of the Freiburg Chamber of Crafts and Trades, and Police Chief Heiner Amman. I cordially welcome Dr Christian Hodeige, publisher of the Badische Zeitung, as a representative of the media and press, and Georg Salvamoser, founder of the Freiburg Solar-Fabrik, as a representative of the business community.

Most of all, however, ladies and gentlemen in this packed house, I would like to say to you: it's great that you're all here today. We've received registration forms from no less than 30 different countries; this morning we had a total of 1,318 registrations, including entire school classes and study groups, for example Class 10a from Rotteck Grammar School or the seminar course from Marie Curie Grammar School in Kirchzarten, as well as master study panels from Freiburg University on environmental governance, forest ecology and management. Welcome! That there is so much interest gives us great satisfaction.

It also shows, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, that it was right to take this conference to Freiburg, a city with a long tradition in ecological thinking and action, a city which is home to institutions such as the Eco-Institute, the ICLEI, the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems and the Centre for Renewable Energy. I began preparing this conference during the summer of last year together with these four organizations, and I would like to take this opportunity to say what a pleasure it has been to work with them. I would also like to point out that there are other institutions of this kind in Freiburg. They all have their own stalls in the foyer to my

right and I hope, ladies and gentlemen, that you will find time during the breaks to look at what they have to offer.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Freiburg conference should not be just another conference on climate change. Naturally, it will begin by yet again highlighting the dangers and potential risks posed by climate change. But it has a very specific aim, namely to draw up concrete responses: what can politics do to counter the concrete dangers posed by climate change? What can science and technology do and which courses of action are available to us in the worst hit communities? And because we don't want to merely analyze but also seek answers to these questions, many members of the Federal Foreign Office are here. They are not only responsible for organization but will also try to take back with them any constructive ideas which emerge here and turn them into concrete policies.

The very framework for this conference proves the earnestness and credibility of our quest. I can tell you that you are, as it were, taking part in an environmentally-friendly work of art. All emissions generated by the conference, for example due to travel to and from the conference, accommodation, catering, etc. will be offset by climate measures elsewhere. To this end, we decided to buy certificates from the company First Climate for the construction of a wind farm project in the Indian state of Maharashtra. And yesterday evening, ladies and gentlemen, this hall was sold out for a very lovely benefit concert by the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, whose takings will go to the initiative "Lighting Up Hope and Communities in Rural Nicaragua". This initiative supports the use of solar energy in rural Nicaragua in Totogalpa, a region some 200 km from Freiburg's twin city Wiwilí. At the close of the conference tomorrow, I will hand over the cheque, which – we already know – will amount to more than 30,000 euro to the organization which runs the benefit project, SEED. The benefit concert and the conference's climate neutrality were made possible by a generous donation from Deutsche Telekom, to which I would like to express my sincere thanks, in particular Dr Ignacio Campino, who will also play an active role in this conference as a panellist. I would also like to thank Adelphi Research, which was responsible for the management of the conference.

Finally, I would like to extend a warm welcome once more to all participants from the various countries, from Freiburg and the region. And now I would like to hand over to Dr Dieter Salomon, Mayor of the city of Freiburg. Thank you very much for your attention!

Translation

Closing speech
by Minister of State Gernot Erler
at the international conference
"Climate Change as a Security Threat – Strategies for Policy-Makers,
Science and Business"
Concert Hall, Freiburg, 7 November 2008

Ladies and gentlemen,

The international conference "Climate Change as a Security Threat – Strategies for Policy-Makers, Science and Business" is now coming to a close, and you have just heard that I have the lovely task of summing up this conference in five minutes. Nothing is impossible but this is a difficult job. There are a few points to which I would like to draw your attention:

First of all, we all agree on the risks facing the world. Scientists have described the dangers: the drinking water shortage on the one hand, the melting Poles and rising sea levels on the other, the droughts which lead to even more food shortages and the growing number of storms which we are ill-equipped to deal with.

Second, we also agree that these are all man-made problems and risks. Therefore, we're not talking about fate here and that means that the response must come from humankind. And it is not enough to simply look to politicians, even though German foreign policy, as you saw yesterday, is now addressing these issues and recognizes their urgency. Rather, we need society, common efforts, the expertise of environmental organizations, as well as sophisticated alliances, coalitions, networks in order to find common answers. For, to come back to the presentation by Nobel Prize Winner Rajendra Pachauri, we don't have much time left, seven years at most, to make a difference. And Professor Messner from the German Advisory Council on Global Change showed us, impressively I believe, that disasters will multiply if we don't act quickly enough.

My third point is technology: I believe we were shown once again this morning that much has already been done and that even more is possible. I found it striking that Professor Eicke

Weber, a member of the scientific community, was more optimistic than many politicians when he told us what he believes he himself, indeed what the scientific community, can achieve even though there are, of course, still many unresolved problems. But what matters is that this technology is used within the right political framework. Leading the way is a rewarding, indeed an important task, also for a country like Germany. Naturally, we are proud that, as we have heard, today 71 states around the world are using renewable energy and that, in common with the German Renewable Energy Sources Act, 52 of them have introduced feed-in regulations, which have proved to be such an incentive. However, we have also learned today that it is not enough to merely lead the way, and that there is a danger that harmful processes will be moved to the Third World, thus allowing us to wash our hands of responsibility. The term "carbon leakage" springs to mind. In this context, the example of decentralized procedures, such as in Grameen Shakti in Bangladesh, is particularly encouraging. We hope that this example will be followed in many regions of the world as a decentralized approach which deserves to be supported. Perhaps the most concrete insight we gained at this conference in this connection was that it is especially important to effectively deploy the enabling technologies developed by us in other countries besides Bangladesh via development workers in the field of energy.

The fourth point is the special responsibility of municipalities. Cities account for 50 per cent of the world population and 70 per cent of energy consumption – so where else should we start? I was truly fascinated to hear that an approach is working here which otherwise seldom works in politics, namely an exchange of ideas, experiences, creativity among equal partners. We don't stand a chance if, for example, we tell the Chinese that they shouldn't under any circumstances follow the same road to prosperity that we have been travelling along for more than 150 years. Rather, there must be a dialogue among equals. The same rights must be recognized. The exchange of experiences, ideas and creativity among equal partners – that is an opportunity for cities working together. And I'm pleased that we have ICLEI here in Freiburg, who have made this their motto.

My fifth point is that there is of course one big question which we have also discussed here: how can we achieve a political breakthrough? We are – with regard to the international financial system – in a stressful situation which is increasingly threatening to become a global economic crisis. On the other hand, we have recently demonstrated our capability to take action. Within days, packages worth hundreds of billions of dollars or euro were mobilized in an effort to avert this crisis. The question is, what does this mean for the challenge posed by climate change. Basically, we need the same capability, the same scope of action and within a

few years. And that brings us to the central issue: are we really able to accept the current climate situation as a challenge and to move forward into a new innovation revolution? I think, especially as we are currently witnessing the failure of existing systems, we are certainly also capable of such an epochal breakthrough when it comes to climate change.

And in this connection I would like to remind you of what Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said here at the outset. He stressed that it is not enough for Europe to be a world leader in climate protection. Rather, we need a second engine, namely the United States of America, the world's largest economic and political power, which consumes the most energy. The Minister was extending his hand and sending a message to the newly elected US President Barack Obama that leadership would perhaps mean concluding a Green New Deal with us.

And, ladies and gentlemen, for me this is about incorporating an experience from traditional security policy into this new security policy, which is linked to the challenges of climate change. What were our experiences with traditional security policy? They show that we will not forever be able to repair conflicts internationally when the damage has been done through interventions, perhaps even with military interventions. We can't do that, indeed it is beyond us. And the same applies to climate change. We need a global preventive policy on climate change and that means moving towards a global community of shared responsibility. Of course, this is only possible if the biggest players, the Americans, the Chinese, the Indians, the Latin Americans are involved. An active, a proactive climate policy: that is the peace policy of our age.

Ladies and gentlemen,

That was my attempt to sum up what has been said during this conference in five minutes. I left out very many important aspects which we heard here. But in this respect, too, I have good news for you. Here in Freiburg there is a Centre for Renewable Energy which offers a master's course in renewable energy management. Representatives of this course are here and they were given the not so easy task of drafting a summary in English of each panel discussion by this evening, and subsequently elaborating a summary of the entire conference from that. This summary, as well as all talks and charts given or shown and released for publication here will be put on the conference website <http://www.freiburg-konferenz.de> from next week. You will therefore have something which not only reminds you of the conference but which will perhaps also provide a working basis for further efforts.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It was announced that there was still a small event to come. First of all, I would like to come back to the fact that we tried here to show the way forward with a practical example and made this conference climate neutral. I'm proud to be able to show you a small certificate. We have calculated that this conference, including travel, accommodation etc. produced 148,000 tonnes of CO₂. We have offset this by buying certificates for a wind farm in the Indian state of Maharashtra. So, you can say with a clear conscience that you took part in this conference without harming the environment.

But we have something else for you. We decided to mark the opening of this conference the day before yesterday with a benefit concert by the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra whose proceeds will be going to a climate protection project. I would like to take this opportunity to once more warmly thank Deutsche Telekom and its representative Dr Ignacio Campino for sponsoring this wonderful concert so generously, thus making it possible to make available a substantial sum for the climate protection project Lighting up Hope and Communities in Rural Nicaragua.

And now I would like to ask Dr Helen Marquard, Secretary General of the London-based organization SEED, which selected the project within the framework of its annual competition for the best sustainable business idea, to come on stage. I would ask you, Ms Marquard, to say a few words about SEED and about the sponsored project. Please take the floor.

[Speech Dr Marquard]

Thank you, Ms Marquard. I believe you've convinced us that the solar project in Totogalpa was the right choice. Incidentally, we also opted for this project because Totogalpa is only about 200 km from Freiburg's twin city Wiwilí, with which Freiburg has close links. Ms Marquard, I would now like to hand over to you a symbolic cheque for 35,000 euro from the proceeds from the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra concert on 5 November.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to conclude by expressing my thanks. First of all, I'd like to sincerely thank our sponsor, Deutsche Telekom, once more for making the benefit concert and the promotion of the solar project in Nicaragua possible. I'd like to thank the city of Freiburg and its employees for our good working partnership in preparing and holding the

conference. I'd like to sincerely thank my team from the Federal Foreign Office for not only preparing this conference but also making it a success. In particular, I want to thank my aide Annette Walter, without whom this would not have been possible. I'd also like to sincerely thank Adelphi Research which helped organize this conference so capably. I think everyone has done a great job. I'd also like to look up to our professional interpreters who I believe ensured that everyone who doesn't speak English so well could participate in and benefit from this conference. Thank you so much for your great work. I'd like to thank all keynote speakers as well as all panellists who contributed to this conference. Above all, however, I'd like to thank you for coming here in such large and impressive numbers during the last day and a half and for ensuring that this was an event full of lively debate.

Finally, I'd like to ask the moderator Petra Pinzler to come back on stage. Petra Pinzler, you've just praised the audience. That's right, a moderator has to do that. But I feel that we have to thank you for the fact that the conference wasn't a tiring series of individual presentations but, rather, that a lively dialogue developed, that it was interesting and that this spirit came across during the conference. We owe that first and foremost to you and we therefore don't want to let you leave without a small present. I mentioned the wonderful concert by the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra the day before yesterday. I would like to present you with a full version of "The Seasons" by Haydn performed by the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra. And these are the last flowers available in Freiburg which grew outside rather than in a greenhouse. That, too, is fitting for this conference. Thank you once again for your great work!