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German Near and Middle East Gala Event 2019 *Focus United Arab Emirates*



Burj Khalifa, Dubai

The German Near and Middle East Gala Event 2019 marked the latest high-level gathering in a long line of successful gala events organised by NUMOV / the German Near and Middle East Association.

Bringing together representatives from politics, business and diplomacy from Germany and the countries of the Near and Middle East has been the principle goal of these events since they were first held – and again high-ranking speak-

ers, guests and delegations held up the German Near and Middle East Gala Event's great reputation. In addition to the evening's key note speakers, NUMOV also welcomed delegations from the DEIK / Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey, from the Erbil Chamber of Commerce and from Iraq at large.

H.E. Mohammed Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz Al Shehhi, Dp. Minister of Economy of the United Arab Emirates, stressed in his speech not

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only how long Germany and the UAE have had bilateral relations, but also how deep these are in various fields. Germany, as H.E. Mohammed Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz Al Shehhi pointed out, has been an instrumental partner to the UAE in its path to modernisation and diversification. The strong degree of cooperation is – in addition to other key projects – currently on display in the UAE's efforts to ensure the success of the Expo 2020 in Dubai, set to open its gates in October of next year.

Even further reaching, however, are the UAE's mid- to long-term plans, cast into its Vision 2021 and the Centennial 2071, respectively. These impressive strategies will tackle some questions that are of particular importance to the UAE. Yet maybe more importantly, many of them will also contribute to finding solutions to global issues, such as making the areas of energy, water and waste more efficient and sustainable or positioning the country for new technological advances.

In a similar vein, **H.E. Thomas Bareiß**, Dp. Minister in the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, stressed that the UAE is – also from the German view – an important partner in the region. He congratulated the UAE on its impressive development and how it strives to take the lead in areas that will be of crucial importance in the decades to come, such as artificial intelligence. The UAE's efforts to get a head start in those sectors were well received by H.E. Thomas Bareiß, seen as promise that the bilateral relations will continue to strengthen and expand into new fields in the future. Indeed Germany's economic relations with the

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UAE have grown tighter in the recent past. Germany is the primary European exporter of the UAE, accounting for around 7% of the UAE's imports in 2017, amounting an estimated EUR 8.3bn in 2018, consisting largely of automotive and parts, machinery and chemical products. What's more, German foreign direct investment in the UAE has shown continuous growth, with the stock reaching almost EUR 5.5bn in 2017.

Achim Post, Member of the German Bundestag, Secretary General of the European Social Democrats, Dp. Head of the SPD Fraction in the German Bundestag and Member of the Board of NUMOV alluded to the rich tradition of trade and partnership between the countries of the Near and Middle East and Europe in his speech, and especially Germany, in which he considers NUMOV instrumental. **Georg Weber**, Member of the Board of WILO SE, stressed how the relations between Germany and the Near and Middle East have weathered changes and transitions over the years and decades. WILO SE itself, as Georg Weber pointed out, is no stranger to the UAE. In fact, not only does the portfolio of WILO SE in energy-efficient and sustainable water management match the UAE's plans to become a leader in the field, but WILO SE has also laid roots in the country. A new representation was opened at Dubai earlier this year.

The German Near and Middle East Gala Event 2019 was a demonstrable success in that it brought together high-ranking representatives from politics and business from Germany and the countries of the Near and Middle East, engaging in fruitful discussion about a myriad of topics. ●

