

**Grußwort der Oberbürgermeisterin Dr. h.c. Petra Roth anlässlich der Eröffnung des Internationalen Symposiums Metropolen im internationalen Wettbewerb. IHK Frankfurt am Main, 11. Juni 2010**

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Dear colleagues from the Frankfurt sister cities, Ladies and Gentlemen.

In his introduction Dr. Müller showed us the picture of metropolitan areas in a global world in which individual cities have to struggle ever more to succeed in the general competition for growth, wealth and prosperity. But, what are the necessary consequences?

In my opinion, the consequence is that we – the municipalities of the region – have to improve on the cooperation and the organization of our collaboration. And in Europe we must build on the opportunities offered by the Treaty of Lisbon. For the first time the contract determines the local self-government within the European Framework and strengthens our legal position substantially.

The vital point is: Cooperation needs content. Each player must bring something in which is useful to the community. Such impulses coming from individual cities and administrative districts of the region are very important. And these impulses should not only come from the local governments. They are also needed from local businesses – investments, innovations, creation of new jobs and so on. Success will come as a result of the combined efforts of both, local economy and local government.

The Frankfurt-Rhein-Main-Region already belongs to the strongest agglomerations of Europe. We have good data to show this: 5.5 million people, 365,000 companies, 2.8 million jobs and a Gross Domestic Product of 200 billion Euro. The challenge is to keep this outstanding position in the years to come. Today, Frankfurt is the region's undisputed center of gravity. In the space of less than 2 % of the regional area live 12 % of its population. 15 % of its companies are concentrated here, attracting 22 % of the regional workforce, who generate more than a quarter of the region's gross domestic product.

This socio-economic "weight" demands that Frankfurt takes responsibility for the region, that it should naturally take leadership and do this without overly dominating anything or anybody. We see Frankfurt as one of the major cities in Europe, playing an important role in the European integration, open-minded and international, a city of culture and a high quality of life and a city with a modern and very strong economy. There are several reasons why Frankfurt qualifies as a player in the league of "World Cities".

Frankfurt is the financial centre of Germany; a pre-dominant trade fair and congress centre; a major transportation node and distribution centre, thus providing excellent accessibility. Frankfurt is the backbone for 85 % of Germany's and 35 % of Europe's internet traffic, at the forefront of biotech research and technology, and has a very high concentration of advanced business to business services in the fields of finance, accountancy, information technologies, law and advertising.

Frankfurt's way to develop, and in this way to contribute to the competitiveness of the whole area, is to invest into fields making Frankfurt a strong and attractive city. The most important element of strength is providing a highly developed, richly faceted infrastructure for traffic and telecommunication, for social and educational and cultural affairs, for sports, and so on! The aim is to attract people to come and stay in Frankfurt,

to live and work, and to invest here.

Following this approach, over the past 3 or 4 decades Frankfurt has invested billions and billions of Euros. The return on investment has been even bigger in terms of growth, jobs, prosperity and people. From this, both Frankfurt and the region have benefited as a location. Frankfurt can not do without the region, but the region can't do without a strong and competitive core city as well.

Frankfurt functions as the brand name for a "city-and-regional concept" that can keep up with the standards of the best world cities. The charm of our city's relatively small size and small distances within the region is that we do not have the disadvantages of the vast mega-cities, and that we can still offer the internationality of a world city and metropolitan region.

What is to be done, what measures can be taken to promote the regional cooperation in the Frankfurt Rhein Main area? And what can we do to strengthen the area for the global competition? Two years ago a "council of the region" was being formed and an "Agenda 2016" has been set.

This agenda proposes the creation of a "House of the Region" to host the council's political decision makers when they meet, and to provide the council's administration with more planning and coordinating authority than they have today; to set up a representative European Office in Brussels; sharing the education and training of nursery personnel within the region; to coordinate local environmental efforts in developing a concept to make the Frankfurt-Rhein-Main-Region the "Green Region" of Europe; a set of proposed measures for a system of revenue sharing and horizontal fiscal transfer.

I am firmly convinced that today's topics and discussion points will give us a lot of ideas for complete our Agenda 2016. And I am optimistic that we will be able to find pioneering and sustainable solutions for some of our problems. For today's conference participants and all of us I now look forward to hearing very interesting best practice examples, useful proposals and fruitful discussions.