



Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung

Pressemitteilung

Krupp celebrates 200th anniversary – Ceremony at Villa Hügel

Berthold Beitz: "Moral capitalism must be the basis of our business actions."

Essen, November 20, 2011. – With a ceremony at Villa Hügel in Essen in the presence of German President Christian Wulff, the Alfred Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation celebrated the 200th anniversary of the firm of Krupp on November 20. As well as the German President, the list of speakers included North Rhine-Westphalia Premier Hannelore Kraft, Lord Mayor of Essen Reinhard Pass, ThyssenKrupp AG Group Works Council Chairman Thomas Schlenz and the Supervisory Board Chairman of ThyssenKrupp AG Dr. Gerhard Cromme. Around 200 high-ranking guests from the political, business and art worlds accepted the invitation to commemorate the founding of the first cast steel factory by Friedrich Krupp in Essen in 1811. The ceremony highlighted the long and varied history of the company.

Berthold Beitz, Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, welcomed the guests. He reminded them that two centuries of Krupp had not been all success. Again and again there had been struggles for the future and deep crises. The firm had survived because of its unique philosophy. Its essence was a trust between employees and owners, unbroken to this day. This essence was reflected in the words of Alfred Krupp: "The goal of labor should be the common good."

Beitz thanked Daniel Barenboim, the internationally renowned pianist and conductor, who out of friendship to him had organized the musical elements of the anniversary celebration: "That you, dear friend Barenboim, have come here today confirms the way" of always wanting to do better.

Berthold Beitz closed his brief speech with the words: "As a man who has experienced many times and sees the present with skepticism, I give you all these words as a legacy: The 'moral capitalism' called for by former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt must be the basis of our business actions."

In his ceremonial address German President Christian Wulff said: "The industrial core of our economy has proven to be robust and stabilizing in times when other sectors – such as the internet, real estate and above all the finance industry – have seen bubbles grow and burst. But you in the steel industry create things that people can touch. That will always have a future because it is real, not virtual.

The crises since 2008, said the President, had taught many of us new humility and respect for our own tradition and history. "This tradition is not an impediment, it is the reason for our success – also today and in the future."

In her greeting Hannelore Kraft, State Premier of North Rhine-Westphalia, described the anniversary as a fitting occasion to look back on the close ties between Krupp and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. "There have been difficult times that have shaped us greatly," she said. "Together we have overcome major crises, but we have also written a great success story."

Alfred Krupp's motto – "Start small, persevere in difficulties, strive for greatness" – neatly encapsulated these developments. In Kraft's opinion his words have lost nothing of their value: "Even today they can be a valuable guide for all business people – and ultimately all individuals."

In his greeting, the Lord Mayor of Essen Reinhard Pass emphasized the significance of the anniversary for the city of Essen: "The history of the Krupp family and the company is closely interwoven with the development of our city. That's why this anniversary is just as important an event for us as it is for the ThyssenKrupp Group itself." But the name Krupp was not just a synonym for economic strength; it also stood for social responsibility.

As a symbol of the longstanding ties between the city of Essen and the Krupp foundation and company, Reinhard Pass presented Berthold Beitz with a special gift: the framed reproduction of a page from the guild book of the city of Essen dated 1587 on which the name "Arndt Krupp" is entered.

Representing ThyssenKrupp AG employees on the list of speakers at the bicentennial was Thomas Schlenz, Chairman of the Group Works Council. He highlighted Krupp's pioneering role in the area of corporate social responsibility: "Over the past 200 years, the Krupp family has defined an understanding of entrepreneurship which is still exemplary today." On behalf of the employees he could therefore say in good conscience: "We feel we are in good hands with this company. I am convinced that without the Foundation, the company would probably no longer exist."

Gerhard Cromme, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of ThyssenKrupp AG, praised the particular role of the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation under the leadership of Berthold Beitz. The Foundation had always faced up to the challenges of the time in the interests of the company and acted with great entrepreneurial foresight. How can a company survive for two centuries, asked Cromme? Central to this was the Krupp culture: "On the one side it calls for security, stability and dependability, on the other creativity, curiosity and the courage to take risks. Culture needs both a heritage and a direction. Success today needs a dependable yesterday and an optimistic tomorrow." In this culture the Foundation was a "proven guarantee of stability, security and continuity" for all employees of ThyssenKrupp – especially in times of growing uncertainty.