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Check against delivery!

Remarks by Chief Operating Officer Katharina C. Hamma
at the Koelnmesse Annual Press Conference
at 11:00 a.m. on 13 July 2017 in the Großer Sitzungssaal of the Administration Building
(Messehochhaus)

- 25 events for which Koelnmesse is responsible and 21 guest events in Cologne
- 27 trade fairs for which Koelnmesse is responsible outside Germany
- More than 35,500 exhibiting companies and over 2.3 million visitors
- New field of expertise encompassing digital themes

A total of 73 events, including 25 trade fairs in Cologne for which Koelnmesse is responsible; 27 trade fairs held abroad; and 20 guest events and a special event that were held at the exhibition halls here in Cologne. In 2016 we welcomed a large number of guests – over 35,500 exhibiting companies from 102 countries and more than 2.3 million visitors from 190 countries, ranging from trade visitors to end consumers – here in Cologne and at our international events all over the globe. We are navigating a successful course with our trade fair programme, and we will continue to do so in the future.

Closely linked with these positive figures is the strategic direction and further development of our existing trade fair formats and our establishment of new events in line with our sustainable business development. As part of this business development, we created our third area of expertise, “Digital Media, Entertainment and Mobility”, at the beginning of 2017. The rapid growth of our digitally oriented trade fairs gamescom and dmexco, as well as the establishment of new event formats such as DIGILITY, testify to the high strategic priority that Koelnmesse is assigning to this new area of expertise. For example, in its second year of existence DIGILITY 2017 significantly increased its visitor figures, and its themes and exhibitors have attracted the interest of high-calibre visitors such as Andreas Pinkwart, the State Minister for Economic Affairs of North Rhine-Westphalia. Starting in 2018, photokina will be an annual event, and from 2019 on we will pull its date forward to the month of May. Most importantly, we have also restructured this trade fair’s content. Today communication is increasingly taking place through pictures, and as a result we will place the theme of imaging in the foreground more often from now on.

I would now like to present some of the past year’s highlights, with special emphasis on those events for which Koelnmesse is responsible here at the exhibition grounds in Cologne.

At ORGATEC last October, we showcased our successful realignment of a well-established trade fair. We welcomed 671 companies and 56,000 visitors to this event. Four years after its realignment, ORGATEC thus successfully asserted its position as a trendsetter and the leading global trade fair for modern working environments. Another sign that we’re on the right track was the return of leading technology companies such as Microsoft and Samsung. They were once again represented at ORGATEC after many years, and their presence once again emphasized the “TEC” component of ORGATEC.

In autumn 2016 our youngest trade fair, veganfach, was launched with great success. It’s the only trade fair in Germany where only vegan products are presented, not only in the area of food but also in the fields of interior design, cosmetics and tourism. Here we have created a lifestyle event

that appeals to end users and trade visitors alike. In the up-and-coming vegan market, our event instantly became the biggest and most international vegan trade fair in Europe. We immediately attracted over 1,000 buyers from the trade, including all of the big brand names. We will build on this success at the next veganfach, which will be held in November 2017.

Nonetheless, in spite of all our success, we are increasingly being confronted by external circumstances that we cannot influence directly. I'm referring primarily to the effects of political developments abroad, as well as the urgent necessity of dealing with the security issues inherent in the organization of major events.

Unstable economic conditions in many regions all over the world are leading to a decrease of visitors in the trade fair business. I'd like to mention two countries that exemplify this trend: Russia and Turkey. At the moment, many potential visitors and exhibitors from Turkey are hesitating to register for our trade fairs. That also applies to Russia, even though the visitor numbers from that country are already starting to rebound. With regard to the UK, the consequences of Brexit won't be clear for a long time. At our leading global trade fair for baby and children's outfitting, Kind + Jugend, we came to the painful realization that the British government's refusal to grant promotional funding is having a negative effect on the number of exhibitors from the UK.

As event organizers, we are also facing great challenges in the area of security. Koelnmesse takes its customers' concerns very seriously. We are taking the necessary measures to make our events as secure as possible for all participants, and we are working closely with the authorities in charge of security. Our guests are giving us positive feedback in this regard, and they accept potentially longer waiting times due to spot checks of participants' bags.

In conclusion, I'd like to take a look at the highlights we have had so far in the current fiscal year 2017.

In addition to staging new events, we continually take ambitious new approaches to events that are already well-established and successful. One good example of that is the International Dental Show IDS. This year it posted fantastic results, including a 5 per cent increase of exhibitors compared to the previous event, 6 per cent more stand space, and 155,000 trade visitors from all over the world, representing an increase of 12 per cent. The biggest increases were in the category of visitors from abroad. This shows that IDS occupies a very special position as a leading global trade fair in the health sector. The huge popularity of IDS in the dental sector has become as strong as that of gamescom in the games and entertainment sector.

Last April, ART COLOGNE once again hosted approximately 200 renowned gallery owners, who showcased more than 2,000 high-quality works in our trade fair halls. We welcomed about 52,000 visitors and also made quite a few headlines. Our decision to change the sequence of days to Wednesday through Saturday in order to avoid overlapping with the Gallery Weekend Berlin was widely reported by the media. This shows that we have continuously been a top player in the competition between art fairs since 1967 – and that we are a crucial step ahead of the others. I'd like to take this opportunity to mention that we will be organizing ART Berlin in September 2017 together with the abc art fair in order to further expand our position in the art sector.

This year's interzum, the world's leading trade fair for furniture production and interior design, was a tremendous hit. Thanks to a 19 per cent increase of visitors, it reached a whole new level. In a conservative sector such as the furniture supplying industry, such strong growth is a further example of our successful realignment of already well-established trade fairs.