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Check against delivery!

**Remarks by Gerald Böse, President and Chief Executive Officer,
on the Koelnmesse Annual Press Conference
on 29 May 2019, 11:00 a.m., Großer Sitzungssaal of the Administration Building
(Messehochhaus)**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me join in welcoming you to Koelnmesse!

Power meets potentials - read it on the cover of the current Annual Report. What does that mean?

For us this means: We offer our customers analogue and digital platforms for their business. We bring business communities together. We create the conditions for encounters that bring our customers' business forwards. And we have been doing this for 95 years!

Because for all the digitalisation initiatives and innovative event formats that naturally and logically shape today's trade fair sector, it is the encounters, and more importantly the quality of these encounters, that make our trade fairs so successful. Koelnmesse is the meeting place for types and characters, decision-makers and doers, innovators and investors, visionaries and realists.

It is therefore not without reason that we have placed the theme of 'encounters' at the heart of this year's Annual Report, presenting them on the introductory pages as they trace our strategic fields of action. Featuring some of our employees as models.

Our figures demonstrate that we have been quite successful in creating the right setting for encounters: 2018 - Ms Reker has already mentioned this, but I would like to repeat this positive message - is the best even-numbered trade fair year in our history. In 2018, the Koelnmesse consolidated companies generated more than 337 million euro in sales. At more than 53 million euro, our profit is unexpectedly high for an even-numbered trade fair year, even if special effects from the reversal of rental provisions are taken into account. In total, some 2.4 million visitors and more than 38,000 exhibiting companies participated in the entire Koelnmesse portfolio in Germany and abroad in 2018.

These figures are not a matter of course. Ten years prior to this, in 2008, we generated just under 200 million euro but suffered a loss of 11.4 million euro. Since 2008, our sales have increased by around 6 percent per year on average, and our results by 11 percent. We have confirmed our firm position among the top ten of the international trade fair sector. Our growth is sustainable. We generate profits on a permanent basis. If we manage to realise our current plans, I will be able to announce sales in excess of 400 million euro from this podium in one year's time. My colleague Herbert Marner will provide you with more details about the figures in a moment.

The fact that we have such encouraging news for you today is the result of many, many successful encounters. We have created the right setting for these encounters at our trade fair grounds in Cologne, at our locations worldwide and, increasingly, in the digital space as well.

To us, one thing is clear: encounters are set to remain a central element of trade fairs in the future. And yet the trade fair industry is also undergoing a transformation that, like digitalisation, means permanent change.

Mergers of large international trade fair organisers, or the permanent development of even larger, more modern trade fair grounds, in the Asian region in particular, are just a few very striking examples of the changes currently under way. So for us it is important to stick to what we know works, but to devote at least the same level of energy to improving what works, while at the same time setting out on completely new paths.

We are on the move in five dimensions in particular:

First: Vision meets world

Koelnmesse meets world - every single day. Not just here at our location in Cologne, but in all relevant growth markets worldwide. With 12 subsidiaries and joint ventures as well as representative offices in more than 100 countries, we are well positioned internationally. In South America, we are the Number One German trade fair company; in Colombia, we broadened our presence further in 2018 by adding a new subsidiary.

In 2018, we organised 28 events outside of Germany, some of them the leading industry platforms for their respective regions. We were able to generate 36.8 million euro in foreign sales. And at least just as important: we have created special encounters with a level of quality that will provide us with lasting benefits. All over the world, the focus of our international activities remains on continuing the strong industry competencies we have developed here in Cologne.

So with this in mind, I am pleased to announce a new international event for 2020: In October 2020, in Singapore, the gaming sector will meet for the first time at gamescom asia. That is where we are establishing an annual platform for game developers and game publications with an Asian orientation. We are convinced that Asia, the fastest growing gaming market in the world, is the ideal location in which to build a satellite event for gamescom.

And our focus remains on Asia: with the new name 'THAIFEX - Anuga Asia', we are living up to the established status of this trade fair as the largest and regionally leading trade fair for food and drink in Southeast Asia. This is how THAIFEX in Bangkok has more than proven itself as a satellite event of the Anuga trade fair based in Cologne.

An important project that has reached significant milestones in 2018 and will keep us busy, particularly beginning in October 2020, is the Expo in Dubai. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economics and Energy, we are organising the German Pavilion, called CAMPUS GERMANY, making us a participant in three of the four major world exhibitions of this century to date. It is always an experience to be on location in Dubai, where we can experience the progress of our 4,600-m² grounds. We performed the first symbolic groundbreaking ceremony locally just a few weeks ago there. I know I speak on behalf of everyone involved when I say that the anticipation of nearly six months of trade fair experience in Dubai is huge. We look forward to numerous exciting, international and inspiring encounters.

Second: Confidence meets future

If encounters are going to succeed, the context has to be right, too, and that means the physical setting. We asked ourselves: what will it take for organisers, exhibitors and visitors to find the ideal setting for encounters at Koelnmesse in future? Our answer: Koelnmesse 3.0.

What this project means for us and for Cologne as a trade fair location is probably best understood in moving images: *[Image film: Koelnmesse 3.0]*

With this, the most extensive future project of all time for our trade fairs, we are completely on schedule and have come a step closer to our goal: we are creating the most appealing, sustainable inner-city exhibition centre in the world, thus underscoring the position of Koelnmesse amongst the global players in the trade fair industry. In a moment, Mr Marner will tell us more about the individual measures we have planned.

As you know, ladies and gentlemen, Koelnmesse is situated in the environmental zone, and without special exemptions, the threat of a ban on diesel vehicles would threaten our very existence. In view of the ruling by the Higher Regional Court for North Rhine-Westphalia last autumn, we share the view of the district government that proactive steps must be taken to counteract a general driving ban.

Koelnmesse has undertaken a number of measures to reduce emissions. Because we take our contribution to clean air seriously. We will approach you with details of our plans in this regard in the near future.

Digitalisation of traffic management is central to this effort. We were approved to receive 1.7 million euro in funding from the German federal government in 2018. We will match this amount on top of that. By the end of 2020, in coordination with the city of Cologne, for example, we will not only be able to further optimise and better manage our visitor and truck traffic, which will reduce congestion and waiting time, but we will also produce fewer emissions as a result.

So we are thinking ahead about the future not just on our premises but beyond them as well. After all, we have to stay accessible.

Third: Mission meets player

Accessibility and buildings are essential, but the content is of course just as important. And that content consists of our trade fairs. Encounters are communication. Koelnmesse stages communication.

The decisive part of this is: a trade fair must always be able to appeal to new target groups without losing sight of the old ones. We succeeded in doing this in 2018 at our location in Cologne with premieres such as THE TIRE COLOGNE and in Bad Salzuflen with ZOW, a trade fair for suppliers for the furniture industry and interior design. All in all, the figures for our 25 own and 22 guest events and three special events at the Cologne location all add up in 2018.

In terms of the three key parameters for trade fairs (exhibitors, visitors and stand space), in 2018 a large share of Koelnmesse's own programme developed at a rate higher than the industry average identified by AUMA - Association of the German Trade Fair Industry. But our successes are no reason to rest.

If we want to continue to achieve results like these, we are going to need to be creative and orient our efforts around the needs of the industries and our target groups.

Koelnmesse is creating new event formats for 2019 and 2020, such as CCXP COLOGNE - Comic Con Experience and this creates new meeting places. We are eagerly awaiting their launch in June.

DMEXCO is being expanded with new formats this year and will feature a Future Park. That is how this event can keep its finger on the pulse of digital innovation.

We have also decided not to host photokina on its new schedule until 2020. This is a reflection of our customers' wishes.

But not everything we are doing is new. Stability is important, too.

This is evidenced by anniversaries in the current 2019 financial year, such as the 50th edition of COLOGNE FINE ART & DESIGN - which on the one hand has long been on the market but on the other will also set new accents by strengthening the theme of design.

In this regard, I would like to single out the 100th anniversary of Anuga in October. This provides us with an occasion to look to the future: we present ground-breaking solutions in food, along with ideas and products that inspire. Visitors and exhibitors can already look forward to top innovations in the industry and extraordinary ideas in the new start-up areas.

In early 2020, we will celebrate 50 years of ISM, the international trade fair for sweets and snacks, with a special anniversary edition.

No matter whether pure trade fair, special event or conference + exhibition - we organise everything just the way exhibitors and visitors need.

Fourth: Virtual meets reality

Of course we are working to develop not only our trade fairs but our digital future as well. For us, the virtual and the digital are less and less vision and more and more reality. For Koelnmesse, digitalisation has long since been more than a mere nice-to-have; it is a central guide to our future success. The trade fair of tomorrow has different requirements. Digitalisation gives us the opportunity to meet them.

We will invest a total of more than 50 million euro in digital technologies, infrastructure and processes between now and 2022. Our objective: to play in the same international league alongside the leaders for digitalisation within the trade fair industry. This will permit us to continue to enable and promote encounters in the future - analogue, digital, in Cologne and all over the world.

One example of the things the digital transformation includes for us specifically is that

- We are investing heavily in digital infrastructure throughout our trade fair grounds. From mid-2020 onwards, our exhibitors and visitors will have access to a high-performance Internet connection and Wi-Fi coverage. This equips us to meet today's requirements, and tomorrow's as well.

- We are equipping our grounds with a digital information and guidance system. Our digital signage system, which combines the topics of routing, infotainment and digital advertising, has been in successful use in the northern section of the trade fair grounds since gamescom 2018. We are working with our strategic partner, Samsung SDS, to equip additional areas and have already identified exciting new joint projects that will digitally transport Cologne to a whole new level as a location for trade fairs. This project acts as a role model in the trade fair world, incidentally, and several trade fair companies have already looked at the system on site.
- We offer our customers an improved, more end-to-end customer experience along with digital services. This takes the form of online trade fair registration for our exhibitors, for instance, or digital lead tracking, which enables an exhibitor to derive even more from its participation in a trade fair.

In addition, of course, we are also exploring future-oriented digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, 5G or tracking systems. We cannot yet foresee where these - and certainly other digital topics still unknown to us today - will lead us. There is one thing we do know, however: We rely on state-of-the-art technologies. We intend not to chase the latest trends but rather play a leading role in the trade fair sector.

Fifth: Innovator meets incube8

The effort to shape the future of Koelnmesse does not end with digital topics. We are also rethinking our core competence of business matching: facilitating business contacts at our events.

One path that we have pursued with great success for more than a year is incube8. incube8 is our innovation, event and start-up campus on the 8th floor of Messehochhaus 2, located on the other side of Deutz-Mülheimer-Straße. In incube8, we bring traditional companies from within our trade fair sectors together with start-ups, innovators and young creative professionals - Old Economy meets New Economy. A win-win situation for both sides: These firms benefit from the inspiration they glean from the digital and start-up scene; at the same time, newcomers can place their expertise and innovative strengths on display, laying the groundwork for possible joint projects or partnerships.

Most recently, for instance, at the Smart Furniture Makeathon. For two days, start-ups, young designers and creative minds from the furnishings sector worked to develop new ideas for the smart product world of a furniture supplier. Last week, they presented the best ideas to come out of that effort at their own special show at interzum, the world's leading trade fair for furniture production and interior design.

The topic of start-ups is becoming increasingly important at other trade fairs as well. Hardly any of our events can now make do without a start-up area.

Personal encounters will always remain at the heart of the trade fair business. But not exclusively! Because parallel to the ongoing development of our core business, we want to successfully carry the principle of the marketplace into the digital age. We want to offer our customers the right meeting and matchmaking platform for their business not just once a year, but 365 days a year. What this might look like has been demonstrated since 2017 in ambista, our online business network for the furniture and furnishings sector.

As you can see: encounters are more than just a buzzword to us. They are at the heart of the work we do. All this only works with a strong team with a burning desire for 'doing trade fairs' and 'making encounters possible'. That is what we have! We now have some 850 employees working for Koelnmesse today, which is about 200 more than ten years ago. And at least to judge by our regular satisfaction surveys and external rankings, this is something that they are delighted to do!

The Executive Board wants to extend its special thanks to this dedicated team - who, I am certain, will make 2019 another year for special encounters!

Thank you for your attention.