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**Remarks by Henriette Reker, Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board,
on the Koelnmesse Annual Press Conference
on 20 May 2020, 11:00 a.m., Konrad-Adenauer-Saal in Koelnmesse Congress Centre North**

In my role as Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board, it is a great pleasure for me to welcome you again this year to Koelnmesse's Annual Press Conference.

I would like to thank all the members of the Supervisory Board, the Executive Board and all Koelnmesse staff for their flexibility and the huge amount of personal responsibility that you are all demonstrating in these challenging times.

Today, we will take a look back over Koelnmesse's success in the past financial year. A look back that will seem almost unreal to us now, in view of the current restrictions we are seeing due to the corona pandemic.

So many industries are currently fighting for survival - the self-employed, medium-sized businesses and even large corporations. Employees everywhere are affected, and entire families are fearing for their livelihoods. The current situation is also impacting on Koelnmesse - after all, its business is all about bringing people from all over the world together for its events.

But even in this time of crisis, you, Koelnmesse employees, keep a cool head. I know that the Supervisory Board and the Executive Board take their responsibility towards their staff seriously and are currently doing everything possible to guarantee that people can keep their jobs.

At the same time, the Executive Board and the Supervisory Board are jointly making important strategic decisions to keep Koelnmesse on track economically. Koelnmesse and the City of Cologne feel a strong sense of partnership, especially now, because one thing is for sure: Cologne is an international city. People of over 182 different nationalities live in Cologne and it is part of our 2000 year history to welcome visitors from all over the world to our city. And that is precisely why we need a strong Koelnmesse. It will play an important role in strengthening trade and friendship ties after the corona pandemic has passed. Once the national restrictions have been lifted, we can all look forward to contact with people from all over the world. When Cologne has the whole world as its guest again - then we will feel whole again.

Let's now take a look back: In 2019, Koelnmesse was able to continue its magnificent growth. It had a strong year with record sales. And it continued to invest: in digitalization, in its events, in the exhibition center and in the internationalization of its business.

In recent years, Koelnmesse has managed itself wisely and has not rested on its laurels. Its strong economic position now gives it the financial leeway to cope with the first weeks of the crisis under its own resources. Thanks to investments already made in digital transformation, employees can work remotely from home. This means that all of them are currently building their expertise by expanding the trade fair experience onto the Internet. This is a good basis for the upcoming events, above all the purely digital planned gamescom 2020!

The fact that Koelnmesse is weathering the crisis so well is also the result of a number of strategically correct decisions by the Executive Board and the Supervisory Board. Koelnmesse and its teams are rising to the new challenges in the current situation with flexibility and tremendous motivation. I see their commitment as in keeping with the title of today's annual report "New Role Models".

The pandemic and its consequences will change many things - also in the trade fair business. But one thing is clear: digital trade fairs cannot and should not replace a real-life visit, because personal contact is still what a trade fair is all about, at its core. In 2019, half of the overnight guests in our city were congress or trade fair participants. These spend money outside the exhibition grounds and are important customers - for hotel operators, taxi drivers, waiters, and so on.

2020 will go down as an unusual year in the trade fair statistics. However, despite the changes of plan, some things will remain constant: along with the Supervisory Board, I expressly support Koelnmesse's strategic will to further strengthen its competitiveness by sticking to the planned investments. The investment programme Koelnmesse 3.0 is continuing and I am particularly looking forward to the opening of the new Hall 1plus at the beginning of next year.

Koelnmesse is and will remain an integral part of the city of Cologne. As Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board and Mayor of the City of Cologne, I stand firmly side by side with Koelnmesse. More than ever, executive and supervisory boards are called on to make strategically wise decisions. Koelnmesse has already proven that it can emerge from a crisis stronger than before. The 2008 financial crisis hit Koelnmesse hard. But with many right decisions and outstanding commitment, it was able to follow this difficult time with a period of exceptional growth. And this is why I am confident about the future even under the current circumstances. Continue to be role models, Mr Böse, Mr Frese and Mr Marner, and, above all, all of you employees!