

Hermann Albers, Präsident Bundesverband WindEnergie, anlässlich der GWS Eröffnungsfeier, 24.09.2018, Rathaus der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg

Dear ladies and gentlemen,
dear Ministers, members of parliament, Senators
dear friends and supporters of wind energy - within Germany and worldwide,

in the name of BWE and VDMA, I am delighted to welcome you to this year's Global Wind Summit, the most important and biggest wind energy fair and conference worldwide. As German industry associations, BWE and VDMA are proud partners of the WindEnergy Hamburg and the WindEurope Conference in Germany, the motherland of the "Energiewende" and a long-standing pioneer in wind energy. The Summit is an extraordinary opportunity for our industry – onshore and offshore - to demonstrate, how far we have come in the past years. As longstanding partners of Hamburg Messe and Congress and WindEurope, BWE and VDMA encourage you to seize this opportunity and to use the upcoming days for knowledge exchange, networking and new business.

But allow me to reflect on current developments in our sector. Due to a rushed transition from guaranteed feed-in tariffs to a tender scheme, the German wind industry, market leader in Europe, has been put to test. Political misdirection will create an expansion gap for 2019 and 2020. Even though this gap has been acknowledged by the new government in its coalition agreement, the industry and stakeholders such as major federal states and communities are yet to wait for adequate counter-measures.

Ladies and gentlemen, the German wind industry is still on the rise. About 20 years ago, the first feed-in tariffs for wind energy projects were agreed. Back then, wind energy was a niche technology and largely ignored by the traditional energy producers. 20 years later wind energy is the second biggest energy source in Germany, it is mainstream – an incredible success story. On the way, we have achieved unforeseen cost reductions while constantly generating innovations and increasing efficiency. We have positioned wind energy from Europe as the global benchmark for quality.

We are on the forefront of digitalizing processes. We use a large data volumes to accelerate the integration of wind energy into the sectors mobility, heating and industry. Even Offshore wind technologies are now demanded all over the world. Therefore, we are exporting our technology to the globally expanding markets for green-tech and renewable energies.

Ladies and gentlemen, the German and European wind industry is not hiding behind empty phrases. Digitalisation and sector coupling have often been labelled "buzzwords", as they are headlining numerous conferences and wind energy symposia. But let me tell you: In Germany, we do not see the two terms as mere buzzwords. We are constantly working to fill them with live. Already today, our members are experimenting with power to gas applications,

successfully installing quick chargers to electrify the mobility sector or using digital solutions within service and maintenance processes. And we are not done yet: We are ready and willing to take over more responsibility for the overall energy system.

Ladies and gentlemen, the German wind industry is strong and offers innovative solutions.

Physically or digitally integrated solutions in combination with storage technologies and digital solutions for flexible energy demand are on the rise. On the North Sea Island Borkum, with 5.200 inhabitants the most literal insular solution one could think of, Germany is currently testing new energy storage and energy management systems.¹ Borkum is becoming a virtual power plant with digital and smart regulation of energy production and demand.

Ladies and gentlemen, the German wind industry has been a pioneer for renewable energy production and we want to continue pioneering. With a 36%-share of renewable energies in total electricity generation, Germany is increasingly becoming a pioneer for the management and the system integration of renewable energies. The Global Wind Summit 2018 is our shining window to the world. Here our companies present their innovative potential and technological solutions to an international audience. I wish all of you informative and constructive conversations and an interesting week in Hamburg.

¹ https://www.industr.com/de/die-nordseeinsel-borkum-als-testlabor-fuer-die-energiewende-2345628?sc_ref_id=1595607104&sc_usergroup=1221&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=E40&utm_campaign=2018-36-248