

존경하는 외무성 유럽 2 국 부국장 [REDACTED] 선생,  
손님 여러분 안녕하십니까!

조선민주주의인민공화국 주재  
도이칠란드대사로서 나는 나의 부인 [REDACTED]와  
함께 대사주택정원의 이 아름다운 저녁에  
당신들을 환영하는 것을 기쁘게 생각합니다.

When I arrived in the DPRK 14 months ago, everybody was busy preparing for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on September 9, 1948, and I had the privilege of participating in the ensuing events.

In 2019, we in Germany look back in a similar manner to 70 years of postwar German statehood. This, of course, comprises both the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, which were both founded in 1949.

When speaking of the relations between Germany and the DPRK, therefore, it means looking at the history of the relations between our countries for the whole period after 1949, which in its first part naturally meant mostly the relations between the former GDR and the DPRK.

I would like to refer, at this moment, to a meeting which I had during my last trip to Germany. There, I met Helga Picht, who in 1986 had become the first holder of the chair of Korean Studies at the Humboldt University in former East Berlin. And although the tradition of Korean Studies in Germany goes much further back in history, Helga Picht thus became the first full professor for Korean Studies in both East and West Germany. She is today, so to speak, the grand old dame of Korean Studies in all of Germany. And since she kept visiting and working in the DPRK for many decades, and since she was the interpreter of many conversations between decision makers in both the DPRK and the GDR, including President Kim

Il Sung and Erich Honecker, she represents in an extraordinary way this part of the relations between our two countries.

I enjoyed this meeting very much, because it filled my conviction with new life that even the grandest politics will remain unsuccessful if they are not backed up by individuals, by humans. Fortunately, you still can meet the persons who filled our relations with life at that time, and I had the pleasure of meeting some of them both in Germany and here. I always was touched and impressed by the commitment of these men and women. They were the trailblazers for our relations with the DPRK, and today they share the common heritage of these relations.

There is another conviction of mine which was strengthened during our conversation with Helga Picht. This conviction is based on the experience of living in a divided nation that we share, and on the deep desire on both sides of the border that the two parts of the nation may come together again.

Now, it is not for us Germans to make recommendations on how this may be achieved. There are many important differences between the two cases, and they may not be belittled.

But there is nevertheless one experience that we made in Germany which I hope that we will be able to share with the Korean people: Whatever the terms under which, in future, the two parts of the Korean nation may decide on coming together, I do wish that this will come about, as it did in Germany, in a peaceful manner. Without one single shot fired, and without any casualties.

It is with this wish in mind that I now request all of you to raise together with me your glasses and drink with me in remembrance of the 70 years of history that we share between Germany and the DPRK, along with the wish that the aspirations of the people of our host country come true.