**Symposium stars Stein am Rhein 2014 - Tischrede des Regierungspräsidenten**

**Hotel Chloschterhof, Stein am Rhein, Montag, 15. September 2014 19:00 Uhr**

Dear Claudia Eimer, Mayor City of Stein am Rhein

Dear Exekutive Chairman of the stars Foundation, Dr. Toni Schoenenberger,

Dear leaders and CEOs

Dear participants of the stars symposium,

Dear guests,

First of all, let me deliver my most important message to you from the government of the Canton of Schaffhausen. In the name of the governing council I would like to say to you, that it is a very great honor to have you all here in Stein am Rhein, Canton Schaffhausen, at the boarder of the river Rhine.

We are very proud, yes even excited, to have the stars Symposium every year with us in Stein am Rhein, here in the Canton Schaffhausen and I am also very pleased and honored that the stars Staff have asked me to say a few words here tonight at this occasion as a Dinner Speech.

Actually, with great interest, I have studied your program. You heard about the two thousand thirty challenges and choices, China - Shaping Tomorrow, Africa - Promise and Reality, Competing Values, Systems and Ideologies in a Globalized World, Shaping the Future and Global Leadership. What a great and wonderful program!

So, for me as the minister of education, I think it is also quite interesting that the stars symposium program is mainly based on modern teaching and learning strategies and includes presentations, plenary discussion, project work, team tasks, workshops, and many more.

Certainly you will learn in Stein am Rhein a considerable number of facts and skills about the world and leadership, but most importantly, you will learn the value of knowledge and how to obtain it and this, as you know, will be a continuing process for the rest of your lives. By attending the stars symposium, you have chosen the path of enhancing your experience in learning. And if I may say so, ladies and gentlemen, you have made a very good choice!!

Let me also say a few words about **Leadership** and **Diversity**.

**First**, **leadership**: As you continue your working life or move onto other professional paths or even may completely change to another career, I ask you that you always - now and in the future – think about how you can take up this responsibility as leaders. I ask you to reflect upon what kind of leader you want to be, with the inherent expectation that you will indeed be a leader in whatever you do. I am talking about working with others to make a contribution - to make a difference! Leadership is certainly always maintaining your focus on what is important, staying true to your values and understanding that **how** you achieve your objectives and goals is just as important as the result itself. And most important, the style of your personal leadership is your personal choice! Not everyone can be a charismatic leader or enjoys to speak in front of a large group of people, but, however, in the end, leadership is about invoking positive behaviors and actions of those around you in a constructive manner.

**Secondly**, **Diversity**: As a member of the stars Symposium Crew, you had the chance to meet and know a number of people from all around the globe. You have learned to be tolerant of the manners and beliefs of those from other cultures and you have learned to be tolerant of ideas that may not exactly match your own. This can be quite testing, if there are conflicts with your core values, but on the whole, it has more to do with us all embracing the diversity of culture and hence, thought to be actually a good thing. It is important for you to have opinions and, as well, to keep an open mind to the opinions of others.

Let me also say a few words about **Schaffhausen**, the so called “little paradise” at the border of the river Rhine.

Today, we are proud to say that Schaffhausen is an international business location. It is actually the achievement of many parties involved that so many international and well-known companies have chosen to have its locations right here in Schaffhausen. But we all have to work very hard in order to keep Schaffhausen such an attractive location and to become even more competitive especially on an international level.

Schaffhausen was mainly known as a location with traditional industrial production sites, then there was a structural change and Schaffhausen became a business location for sophisticated high tech firms and innovative service and production companies.

**And it is still ongoing!**

In order to create more jobs and to keep this very positive development process going, we need both, such as established companies of all sizes and as well as new, innovative companies from abroad. The main goal is to open up and diversify the whole area, that the local economy is no longer dependent on a few sectors and companies as it was until the nineties.

I am not only the Minister of Education but also the Minister of culture and sports! Here in Schaffhausen we have a very rich cultural agenda bursting with all sorts of cultural activities and attractions. We have some very interesting museums, every two years we celebrate the International Johann Sebastian Bach Festival, in May we have the opportunity to spend wonderful days with fabulous Jazz music at the Schaffhauser Jazz Festival, then during the summer month of August we have the fantastic "Stars in Town" Music Festival with popular music in the very heart of Downtown Schaffhausen with famous musicians from all over the world.

Next to the targets set on business development, the Canton of Schaffhausen also wants to become more and more an attraction for young families. Young families with kids appreciate the beautiful and unspoilt nature in our region and the excellent and safe schools.

Schaffhausen is definitely a very attractive place for living. Currently, we can observe an enormous boom and hype in the local real estate market and interesting building projects pop up everywhere, which clearly are the result of a strong demand in new residential and office buildings.

A strong focus is also put to a closer and better connection to the economic area of Zurich. At this point we started last year with the rail service from Schaffhausen to Zurich on a regularly base of every half hour.

Well, Schaffhausen, is located in the center **and** heart of Europe. With 40 Minutes, we are also very close to the airport of Zurich, which is an important flying Hub for most of the international airlines

We all here in our area hope very much that you will return to your countries, in which you live and work, with a good impression and fond memories of our beautiful “little paradise” - Schaffhausen - at the border of the Rhine.

I wish you only the very best for now but also for all your hopes and achievements in the future – **young leaders of the world!**

*Addition:*

Now, we are already in the middle of September! There’s a lot to like about the autumn in our region: walking through thick carpets of red and golden leaves, taking in the fresh and crisp air and sensing the warmth of the sun. And if the weather by a chance should all of a sudden become chilly and wet, you will find shelter in the cozy and charming restaurants of our region. There are a huge number of paths and hiking trails over the Randen – which is our local mountain, or maybe rather hill - just minutes away from the city of Schaffhausen. Don’t worry if you’re not familiar with the area, just follow the yellow hiking trail signs, which indicate the trails as well as many places of interest, such as viewing platforms and restaurants. From those platforms you can enjoy fantastic panoramic views, which stretch from here as far as to our famous Swiss Alps and also across the Black Forest.