



## EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

Two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall friends border Germany. Reunification was a success, not only in Germany but also in Europe. Reunified Germany's relations with its neighbors are built on trust and Germany's role as a partner in Europe is viewed as downright positive. The European project has established about democracy, prosperity, and security following hundreds of years of military disputes and two world wars. Instead of disrupting or slowing this process, the reunification of Germany spurred this process on. Fears to the contrary held by individual European partners and by some Germans did not come true.

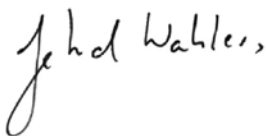
To commemorate the 60th anniversary since the creation of the Federal Republic and the 20th anniversary since reunification, numerous events celebrating freedom and unification were held this year and last in Germany. The celebrations were especially directed inward. Germans celebrated a national success story. However, German reunification was also an international success, one that marked the end of the bipolar world order with the USA on the one side and the Soviet Union on the other. The Iron Curtain was first lifted in the Hungarian town of Sopron on the Austrian border. The emigration of larger numbers of East German citizens through neighboring Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary ultimately led to the collapse of the regime.

German reunification was the start of a new chapter for German foreign policy. Germany's relations with its neighbors – many of who were also in the midst of transformation processes at the time – have blossomed. Over the last 20 years, Germany has accompanied its neighbors to the East in overcoming socialist structures, integrating into NATO, as well as becoming members of the European Union. By working together with these countries but also with the established members of the European Union,

Germany has helped shape the future of Europe. The ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon built on this success.

German Christian Democrats were the ones who urged for speedy reunification and the Federal Government was determined to use of the opportunities at hand. In retrospect, the government was right. Germany did not slide back into nationalism. International guests and observers were confronted with a new form of German patriotism during the World Cups in Germany and recently in South Africa. This patriotism is sympathetic, never disparaging toward other nations, and able to integrate peoples from different backgrounds.

Newspaper comments and political statements made one thing clear. Germany's European neighbors no longer fear that Germany could become too powerful. Instead, it is demanded that Germany throws even more of its weight behind solving the problems plaguing Europe. Germany's favorable economic development is also predominantly welcomed elsewhere in Europe, as shown by a recent study conducted by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (*Der Blick von außen*, <http://www.kas.de/wf/de/33.20195/>). Reports of Germany's recovery and decreasing unemployment rate have many hoping that favorable trends will be possible in their countries as well. This recovery vindicates the social market economy. Politicians and social partners reacted responsibly and economic programs, German funds, short-time compensation, temporary work, and wage restraints have shown their effectiveness. The European Union should look to the social market economy for guidance when balancing the markets and budgets and laying the foundation for lasting growth. The social market economy contributed to the success of Germany and Europe as well. Sixty years ago, Christian Democrats used the social market economy to establish an economic model that provides "prosperity for all" and guarantees social security.



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