



Bürgermeister Markus Hollemann

**Rede zum Festakt** Europafest am 06.07.2014, KUB, 11.30 Uhr

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- es gilt das gesprochene Wort -

Dear guests,  
Dear fellow citizens,  
Dear representatives of the media,

I welcome you all heartily to today's celebration act of our twinning anniversaries.

I welcome our guests of honour, namely Landrat Hanno Hurth, Dr. Johannes Fechner, Member of Parliament and the members of the Landtag Mr. Marcel Schwehr and Mr. Alexander Schoch.

And I also welcome very heartily the presidents of the twinning committees present here.

We are very pleased that you all - from far and near - have come to our Kultur and Bürgerhaus.

It is with pride that we look upon more than 40 years of twinning with Saint Cyr sur Mer, upon the twinning with North Hykeham existing now for 25 years, upon the now twenty years of active twinning with Città della Pieve, and upon our twinning with Konstancin-Jeziorna, existing since 2011 and thus the youngest of the four.

Numerous guests from our twinned communities will spend this weekend here in Denzlingen. And I particularly welcome my colleagues

Mayor Philippe Barthélemy from France,  
Deputy Mayor Councillor Keith Sampson and his wife, Lady Councillor Suzanne Sampson from Great Britain,

Mr. Sindaco Fausto Scricciolo from Italy,  
and Mayor Kazimierz Janczuk and the town council's head Mr. Andrzej Cieslawski and his wife from Poland.

From Arnsdorf, I welcome Deputy Mayor Matthias Werner. With Arnsdorf in Saxony we are linked by ties of friendship since the Fall of the Wall.

All people present here today are Europeans. According to my understanding they are all dedicated Europeans, who - wholeheartedly - see themselves as Europeans.

As we can see and perceive these days, Europe is for all of us an identity creating unity within the diversity of countries, languages and landscapes.

Europe is the western common ground of history, art and culture. Finally, Europe is also a civilizational bracket by which most of the European countries are held together - after centuries of wars and conflicts.

Of the fundament of Europe I will mention only a few building stones: peace, freedom and democracy. At present these are of inestimable value and have to be defended - with passion and courage. But there are also problems in Europe, e. g. problems created by immigration from conflict areas and areas of poverty, problems due to regional conflicts and threats, economic problems and financial crises. These we have to face fearlessly and resist them together. Again and again we must try to find common and in the long term sustainable solutions on a national level.

Twinnings between communities and towns make an important contribution in this. All European citizens are called upon to cooperate.

We are partners, and we meet regularly

- to remember our common roots
- to communicate with each other on this basis
- to confirm ourselves that we are on the right road in paying tribute to Europe throughout the world, and this despite occasionally different viewpoints and differences of opinion or different temperaments.

We ask ourselves: What can we do additionally? What could the contribution of our communities look like?

I place my impulses under the motto: Live in a way so that there will be a future!

However, what does that really mean in different countries and under different circumstances? In which way do we have to react to changes in our societal living conditions? How do we meet with demographic change? Which part do our environment and the climatic change play in this?

Each twinning partner has to find his own answer to this. But we can learn from each other. We can receive impulses and concrete experiences and transfer them to our own communities. This is one reason why exchange between partners and friends is so important. We can and may learn from each other.

It is especially diversity of opinion and democracy which make Europe. This is what we believe in. Only a short time ago we had local and European elections. We, the twinned communities, stand for cooperation and exchange between the European people. We are the meeting places and we want to celebrate together at our meetings. Because these festivals in particular

bring us close together, they do away with barriers and overcome different cultural mentalities.

Thus our common and definite target is to make Europe grow more and more closely together. And, ladies and gentlemen, nobody and nothing will make us leave this way. We will continue in our joint effort to build a strong and peaceful Europe in solidarity.

I invite all of you to join in. Make use of the time for meetings, for making contacts and for conversations marked by a spirit of understanding and sympathy supported by tolerance and respect. Dear guests, I ask you to take these positive signals back home with you to your countries.

I thank the orchestra of the Erasmus Gymnasium for the dignified musical arrangement of this ceremony. My thanks go to the many helpers from societies and twinning committees and also to the local administration. Last but not least I thank the organisation team headed by Rainer Steigert and Jürgen Sillmann. At the top of the many voluntaries, I would like to mention Peter Kindt in particular, who - for many years - has shown great commitment for our twinings and who has held a central coordinating function this year. As the representative of all participating clubs, associations and societies, I would like to express my special thanks to Robert Reichinger and also to all persons responsible in the twinning committees.

As the Mayor of Denzlingen it is my wish that the festival may proceed enjoyably, and I call out to you: Let us stand up for a peaceful and powerful Europe! For strong twinings in Europe!

Allow me to finish with a personal closing quote by the Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero:

Friends are close to each other, even if they are separated; they are rich although they are poor; they are ready to help, even if they are ill; yes - what seems to be impossible - they stay alive, even after they have died.