

Bundestag Forum**German Marshall Fund****June 6, 2002****Ambassador Coats**

Mr. Kennedy, (*President, GMF*)

Herr Thierse, (*President, German Bundestag*)

Herr Hölz, (*Global Head Public Affairs and Sustainable Development, Deutsche Bank Group*)

USTR Zoellick,

Two weeks ago, President Bush spoke here in this building, the first U.S. President to address the Reichstag. He spoke about the challenges that the German-American partnership has overcome in the past half-century and the challenges we face in the future. The President's speech and his visit to Berlin evoked many memories -- memories of the milestones in the transatlantic partnership, not the least of which is the Marshall Plan.

The basis of the Marshall Plan was self-help. It involved Europeans and Americans as partners in the job of reconstruction. The genius of the Marshall Plan was cooperation at the government level -- in collaboration with leaders from business, labor, agriculture and other sectors of our society.

In 1972, Willy Brandt went back to Harvard -- where George Marshall first announced the Marshall Plan in 1947 -- to present a generous 25th anniversary gift on behalf of the German government. That gift was a grant that established the German Marshall Fund. Over the past 30 years, in the same spirit of cooperation and collaboration as the Marshall Fund, the Fund's various programs have addressed the problems and issues facing the transatlantic partnership.

The events of September 11 -- obviously and tragically -- re-shuffled those issues. We now approach many of the strategic, economic, and social challenges that confronted us on September 10 from a very different perspective.

Open, constructive dialogue is key to finding the answers to the questions of leadership, mission and strategy that have taken on new importance. The German Marshall Fund has provided the forum for that kind of dialogue in the past, and it is now more important than ever before. So, today, this first Bundestag Forum -- the first of what hopefully will become a new tradition in Berlin -- is particularly appropriate.

Mr. Kennedy, we salute you and your staff for your initiative.

President Thierse, this forum at the Reichstag is a recognition of the ongoing and unanimous support the Bundestag has given the German Marshall Fund over the past 30 years, as well as the personal involvement of countless German parliamentarians across the spectrum of political parties. That support

is greatly appreciated.

Today's keynote speaker is United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick. He is familiar to many of you for his role in developing the U.S. strategy toward German unification and his service as the senior U.S. official in the "2 plus 4" negotiations. As US Trade Representative, he is responsible for steering the course of the President's trade policy.

Trade directly sustains economic growth and is the single most important channel affecting poverty and growth for developing countries and is therefore crucial to any discussion of the transatlantic contribution to global challenges.

As President Bush said at the Reichstag, "Poverty doesn't create terror – yet, terror takes root in failing nations that cannot police themselves or provide for their people. Our conscience and our interests speak as one: to achieve a safer world, we must create a better world."

The President then went on to say, "The expansion of trade in our time is one of the primary reasons for our progress against poverty."

So it is most appropriate that our Trade Representative is here today to discuss this issue with our German friends.

Thank you.