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**100th Anniversary of the American Chamber of Commerce in
Germany**
Berlin, May 9, 2003
Ambassador Daniel R. Coats

Thank you, Fred Irwin

Fred, Norbert Quinkert, on behalf of the Embassy, I would like to congratulate the members and staff of the American Chamber of Commerce on this historic 100th anniversary, and commend you all for your commitment to the German-American relationship.

Chancellor Schroeder, Minister Schily, on behalf of my country, I would like to thank the German government for its support of American business here in Germany.

Distinguished guests, and German and American friends,

Your commitment and your support are symbolic of the partnership that was responsible for some of the most important achievements in modern history.

On this 100th anniversary of the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany, it is appropriate to pause and reflect on these past accomplishments.

I know that there are many people here today who played an important role in these events. Without mentioning you all by name, I would like to commend you for the contributions you have made to this success.

The achievements of the German economy in the postwar years, a period aptly termed a "Wirtschaftswunder," was one of the major accomplishments of the 20th century -- and AmCham member companies played significant roles in this era of enormous economic growth.

The historic events of November 1989 ushered in a new era of economic opportunity and freedom for all of Germany. In the months and years following the fall of the wall, AmCham member companies worked diligently to realize those goals. Today, there are over 600 AmCham member firms active in Berlin and the new federal states.

AmCham can indeed look back with pride on these accomplishments.

But this important anniversary is also an appropriate opportunity to look ahead.

The 20th century was one of dramatic growth, change and opportunity. It was marked indelibly by the vision of democracy, security and prosperity that united our two nations so closely during the postwar years.

The 21st century offers even more possibilities and more choices -- but it also holds enormous new challenges. The United States and Germany share a responsibility to face up to these challenges.

A strong world economy enhances our national security by advancing prosperity and freedom in the rest of the world. Our governments need to adopt policies that support long term economic growth, even when these policies upset the status quo.

The deep and mutually beneficial trade and investment relations between U.S. and German firms are vital to both our countries. They are essential for global economic growth.

AmCham's 100-year history has shown how both governments and business have faced, in a determined fashion, threats to our free societies.

We can draw some lessons here. Our ability as governments to achieve our objectives rests in marshalling the support of our communities, including the business world. We have faced daunting problems in the past and we have overcome them. We can do so again.

Business ties are not built just on economic equations but also on close personal relationships, on dialogue and on a free and open exchange of ideas. These are the ties that bind. They are enduring, and they are vital to the future of our two nations and the world.

Nochmals, vielen Dank. Und herzlichen Glückwunsch.