

BDI President Rogowski Supports Frankfurt Airport's Expansion
Frankfurt/Main, Germany (ots) -The president of the German Industry Association (BDI Bundesverbands der Deutschen Industrie e.V.), Dr. Michael Rogowski, and the chairmen of companies belonging to the "Air Transport Initiative for Germany" presented today at Frankfurt Airport concepts and strategies for the sustained strengthening of Germany's air transport industry. The BDI president urged the elimination of "structural weaknesses such as capacity bottlenecks, lengthy planning periods, and high locational costs." German industry is awaiting the German federal government's clear acknowledgement of growth in air transportation.

"Air transportation is a key and strategic industry that impressively recognizes its role as a technology and export engine," declared Rogowski. In particular, Rogowski said air transport should not be regarded as a danger but rather as an opportunity for growth and employment. Everything possible must be done to strengthen this vital economic sector. This especially includes Frankfurt Airport's expansion. Dr. Wilhelm Bender, Fraport AG's executive board chairman, emphasized the renewed boom in air traffic and referred to the above average growth in passenger and cargo recorded at FRA in recent months. In April 2004, passenger traffic at FRA climbed by almost 12 percent; for the Fraport Group overall, passenger traffic grew more than 18 percent compared to April 2003. Bender called for a national master plan for Germany's airports, including the integration of road and rail links, because "investments of billions of euros for terminals and runways only make sense for the mega hubs used by the major airline alliances."

Dr. Rogowski and Dr. Bender spoke of the need for simplifying and shortening Germany's planning and approval processes. "Delays due to new administrative technical hurdles and legal interventions lead to excessive uncertainties for business planning," said Rogowski. "Planning and legal security is a necessary prerequisite for huge investments such as Frankfurt Airport's more than EUR 3-billion Airport Expansion Program." Bender declared that Frankfurt's Airport Expansion Program (AEP) must be regarded as a task of national importance because - as the country's largest privately financed investment project - the AEP will result in about 100,000 new jobs and will enable Germany's air transport industry to maintain its efficiency and innovative strength vis-à-vis international competition.

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