



International Summit on the Teaching Profession 2016 Berlin

3 March 2016

10:00 – 12:00

BCC – BERLIN CONGRESS CENTER

Opening speech

Dr. Claudia Bogedan

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Senate of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen

and

President of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and
Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany

Esteemed fellow ministers, Dear Ms Mari Kiviniemi, Dear Ms. Susan Hopgood,
Ladies and gentlemen,

“I don't believe there is anything in the whole earth that you can't learn in Berlin
except the German language.”

Mark Twain was clearly impressed by the country of poets and thinkers. However, he
found that the German language took more than a little getting used to. So my
question to you would be: What can I learn from this?

- First of all: to eliminate the language barrier, I would like to welcome you in
English.

- Secondly: Berlin has a great deal to offer, I'll agree with Mark Twain there.
Enjoy this exciting city.
- And last but not least: let us all take the opportunity at this conference, here in Berlin to discuss a lot of things together and to learn from each other.

We are delighted that you have accepted our invitation. Thus, welcome to Berlin!

If the International Summit on the Teaching Profession did not already exist, we would have had to invent it: in just five years, the ISTP has become one of the key global education forums.

The 6th International Summit on the Teaching Profession is following on the great tradition of its predecessors. We were extremely happy to agree with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Education International (EI) to host this summit in Berlin. This is a great honour and commitment for us.

The Standing Conference has knowingly brought this global forum to Germany because we are networking more on a global scale. This is also evidenced by the close cooperation between the German-speaking nations, and our collaboration with our federal sister organisations EDK and CMEC in Switzerland and Canada. Yesterday we signed a trilateral declaration.

Germany has learned a great deal in the past fifteen years. It would not have done so without international networking. The progress of Germany's results in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is something to be proud of. The federal structure of the German education system has an amazing flexibility, creativity and robustness. It gives 16 Länder the freedom to shape their education,

science and cultural policy autonomously, and to coordinate on all important issues where necessary. As a result the Standing Conference has drawn up national educational standards and implemented them in everyday school life, from grade 1 through to the higher education entrance qualification, in all 16 Länder. Above all, we are making huge joint efforts in the initial and in-service training of teachers. In this process, we are pursuing a holistic approach, which anchors the entire educational chain from early-childhood education to lifelong learning at work and continuing education. At the same time, we see successful education policy as an exchange of expertise at the international level. We are therefore focusing even more on cooperation with our partners and friends throughout the world.

Germany, as well as the whole of Europe, is currently coping with a large influx of refugees. Our education system is facing up to its responsibility. In the past year alone we have taken more than 100,000 young refugees into our education system. It demands massive logistical efforts and the recruitment of more teachers to ensure that every child is taught and given the support he or she needs.

Dealing with greater diversity in the classroom also demands new didactic concepts. We are convinced that the use of digital technologies offers a great opportunity for this. The Standing Conference is therefore developing a strategy for learning in the digital world. But the improved use of digital technology does not replace the most important cornerstone for good learning: good teacher-pupil interaction. The professionalisation of teachers therefore remains an essential quality criterion for successful education policy.

And this brings us to the main theme and the core questions we are addressing here at the International Summit on the Teaching Profession 2016 in Berlin:

What are we as education policymakers, we as school administrations, we as teachers, and we as representatives of teachers' associations, the educational sciences and foundations, doing to ensure sustainable professionalisation of teaching?

What we are doing to ensure that the children and youth entrusted to us acquire the skills they will need in future to build up democratic institutions, as well as peaceful coexistence, a resource-conserving economy, a healthy environment, sustainable well-being and a meaningful life?

This requires a more precise definition of the skills, abilities and attitudes needed to develop teaching in a professional way.

We need to develop criteria for education policy decisions and mechanisms that lead to professionalisation in teaching. Of course fiscal frameworks always play an important role. But I believe that it is even more crucial to allow room for ministries, teachers, teachers' organisations and unions to work together more efficiently and more cooperatively.

Therefore we have gathered here in Berlin. The 6th International Summit on the Teaching Profession 2016 is looking at the entire working and learning biography of teachers. It is important that teachers are closely involved in shaping their own professionalisation. They are autonomous subjects of the development of their professional domain. To this end we need to agree on instrumental structures, processes and incentive systems that facilitate forward-looking, continuous and self-determined teacher development.

We will be looking at these and other important aspects of the teaching profession in the next days.

Before I close, I would like to say thank you:

Thanks to

- my colleague, the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs of Saxony-Anhalt, Mr Stephan Dorgerloh, and the Secretary-General of the Standing Conference, Mr Udo Michallik, and his team for planning and organising this congress;
- our partners, the OECD and the EI;
- the German teachers' associations, the GEW and the VBE;
- the non-profit foundations, which have been instrumental in facilitating this Congress and in bringing it to Germany: the Stiftung Mercator, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Bertelsmann Stiftung, the Telekom-Stiftung, the Hertie Stiftung, the Joachim Herz Stiftung, the Vodafone Stiftung, the Stifterverband für die Wissenschaft, and TES global.

Last but not least, I would like to thank you for your attention and I wish us all a successful conference! Let us therefore now proceed to the foreseen discussions.