

# NUMOV German Near and Middle East Gala Event 2012

*Symbolising the strong and trusting relations between Germany and the Near and Middle East*

*by Emily Legge*

As a symbol of the strong and trusting relations between Germany and the Near and Middle East, the German Near and Middle East Gala Event on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012, set at the expansive and idyllic Schlüterhof in the NUMOV German Historical Museum, welcomed dignitaries and guests from around Germany and the Near and Middle East to celebrate the continued economic collaboration and successes in the region. The event, hosted by Emirates Airline, was the highlight of a day full of analysis, opportunities and bilateral talks.

**Volker Greiner**, Vice President of North and Central Europe of Emirates Airline, welcomed the audience and expressed his delight and great honour at welcoming guests to the event.

On behalf of Emirates, he congratulated NUMOV, the German Near and Middle East Association for their work in the region as well as its successful organisation of the event for the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. He commented on the importance of **H.E. Dr. Gerhard Schröder's**, former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Honorary Chairman of NUMOV, early strategic interests in the Gulf States and his continued support of economic and cultural developments in the area.

Finally, he thanked **Mara Kaselitz** from the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing for her support and contribution. He wished the audience an enjoyable evening with fruitful conversation.





**Bernd Romanski**, Chairman of NUMOV and Member of the Board at HOCHTIEF Solutions AG, emphasised NUMOV's role in the region as a platform for enhancing business and cultural bilateral relations between Germany and the Near and Middle East. He used the Gulf States as a prime example of what the region has to offer in terms of investment and trade.

He praised the states for their increasing economic diversification and their major efforts to expand alternative industries such as renewable energy, construction and transport, finance and banking.

He pointed to Kuwait, which has one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds, as well as Bahrain's attempt to become the financial service hub in the region, and Saudi Arabia's continuing multi-trillion dollar project investments as prime examples of economic development in the oil-rich region. He also used the impending FIFA world cup in Qatar and the success of the Dubai-based Emirates Airline as an illustration of what the region can offer and their rising prominence in the world economy.

Following on, **Salem Obaidalla**, Senior Vice President of Continental Europe and the Russian Federation of Emirates Airline, spoke briefly about the success story that is Emirates.

From humble beginnings, with just two flights per week to Germany in 1987, Emirates now offers 60 German-bound flights per week and hopes to add Berlin to its rapidly growing list of flight destinations.

In July 2012, Emirates Airline will celebrate a quarter of a century of operation and Salem Obaidalla highlighted a recent study that estimates the economic contribution of Emirates to the German economy to be in the area of EUR 1.6bn, confirming its significant role and importance to the German economy and increasingly, a crucial import and export link between Germany and the Near and Middle East.

In response to Salem Obaidalla's speech, Bernd Romanski presented him with a mounted traditional Berlin bear, symbolising the 'strength and power' that Bernd Romanski hoped would ensure a long and prosperous future for Emirates Airline. ●