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Opening of Iran-Europe Business Center followed by the German Near and Middle East Gala Event 2016

by Helene Rang



f.l.t.r.: H.E. Mehdi Karbasian, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade and CEO of IMIDRO; H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Member of the International Board of NUMOV; Burkhard Dahmen, Chairman of NUMOV; new premises of Iran-Europe Business Center at Kronenstrasse 1, 10117 Berlin

On 30th May 2016, NUMOV welcomed **H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh**, Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Member of the International Board of NUMOV, to its premises to inaugurate the brand new Iran-Europe Business Center, located in the heart of Berlin.

To an expectant audience, the four main speakers to greet the assembled guests ahead of the ceremony and offer words of encouragement on



the exciting long-term prospects that this unveiling represents for the re-emergent Iranian trade partnership with Europe – and particularly Germany – were **H.E. Mehdi Karbasian**, Iranian Deputy Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade and CEO of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries

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Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), **H.E. Ali Majedi**, Iranian Ambassador to Germany, **Burkhard Dahmen**, Chairman of NUMOV, and **H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh**, who expressly thanked NUMOV for its enduring support and welcomed the new reality of increasing German government engagement and a rising number of European business delegation visits to Iran.

H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, who was central to the establishment of the new Iran-Europe Business Center, also emphasised the historic nature of the relationship between Iran and Europe, voicing his hope "that this centre will help to bring business people from Europe and Germany in particular together and we can start a new era". He noted the lack of restrictions left on trade and the diminishing hesitancy of European banks to transact with Iran, welcoming investment from all countries and advocating Iran as a potent market with many assets – from its young, educated workforce to the strategic access it provides to many neighbouring countries. Together with Burkhard Dahmen, H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh subsequently performed the official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Iran-Europe Business Center in the presence of H.E. Ali Majedi and H.E. Mehdi Karbasian, followed by a guided tour of the vast, newly inaugurated office space. This new headquarters in the government district of the German capital offers state-owned and private sector companies a prime base from which to establish commercial links with partners in Europe.

A meeting with H.E. Sigmar Gabriel, German Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy, followed for H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, at which negotiations progressed significantly on issues relating to state export guarantees. The German ministry later declaring that it will soon be able to offer fresh Hermes covers to companies that plan to do business with Iran. Anticipating a surge in German exports to Iran, the Iranian minister identified Volkswagen, Daimler, Siemens, Linde, BASF and Airbus as





firms that have already registered their concrete interest in projects. He indicated Iran's preference for German cooperation of a long-term nature with the necessary financing already in place, particularly in the transport, oil and gas, mining and food sectors.

Later, NUMOV held the German Near and Middle East Gala Event 2016 in Berlin, hosted by member company Linde AG and attended by distinguished guests from business, politics and diplomacy. Featuring esteemed speakers, the event offered those present a perfect opportunity to network, engage in productive conversations with old and new partners and build upon the enormous progress achieved recently in re-strengthening bilateral bonds.

The opening two addresses were delivered by Burkhard Dahmen, Chairman of NUMOV and President and CEO of SMS Group GmbH, and **Bernd Eulitz**, Member of the Executive Board of Linde AG and Member of the Board of NUMOV, for whose aid in staging the event, thanks were also in great order. In addition to his upbeat assessment of the latest economic outlook, Bernd Eulitz was able to relate his first-hand knowledge of the business activities of Linde AG as a long-standing and highly regarded brand in the region, notably in Iran, where it has been represented for more than 40 years, presently boasting more than 100 plants in its engineering division alone.

The special occasion was also punctuated by the enthusiastically received keynote speeches from **H.E. Gerhard Schröder**, Former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Honorary Chairman of NUMOV, and H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh.

In a spirit of great optimism in the face of challenges, these political representatives both emphatically reaffirmed the mutual responsibility of Germany and Iran to grasp this chance to enhance their resurgent political and economic ties in this era of renewal and growth.

H.E. Gerhard Schröder took to the podium to discuss the state of affairs in the





Near and Middle East in general, and Iran in particular, commending the signing and implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Addressing honoured guest H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh directly, he took the opportunity to express his gratitude to the Iranian minister for his more than 20 years of trustful cooperation, before appealing to German businesses to boldly confront the challenges involved in committing sustainably to the region, as "German industry has always distinguished itself as being a reliable partner for foreign clients".

H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh proceeded to add his own observations on the political situation in the region before referring to the World Bank forecast of 5% growth in Iran in the coming Iranian year, an encouraging sign for German investors, concluding that "if we work together this growth will help and will be beneficial to you and us all together".

NUMOV has been unwavering in its support for the restoration of the once flourishing trade relationship between Germany and Iran, having striven to sustain communication and preserve traditional ties throughout the recent era of internationally imposed economic sanctions.

The Iran-Europe Business Center inauguration and the German Near and Middle East Gala Event 2016 were triumphant in their core mission of further promoting productive mutual exchange and discussion, both occasions distinguished by the contributions of prominent business and political figures.

In the aftermath of these successful events there nevertheless remains the obligation not to take for granted the continued revival of this proud bilateral relationship following the lifting of international restrictions. Continued engagement, dialogue and stimulus are still required if this opportune moment to optimise this trade partnership for the long term is to be seized.



