

Welcoming remarks at the First Bosch Industry Forum

Robert Meier, Managing Director, Robert Bosch Ltd

Reform Club, Pall Mall, London

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My Lords, ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to welcome you here today for the first meeting of the Bosch Industry Forum. This has been arranged to underline our commitment to industrial excellence in the UK.

We are here in this beautiful library at the Reform Club with its long commitment to liberal thinking. I can assure you that I will not be making any political points today, and as a German national you are safe in the knowledge that I am not seeking an election mandate!

But I would like to say that today's event is an attempt by Bosch in the UK, and I am supported by colleagues from many of our Divisions, *(gesture to colleagues on each table)* to support our products and services with a dynamic and innovative approach to industry in many different sectors.

Bosch is in a good position to do this. We have a track record of more than 100 years in the UK. We have 10 sites and employ nearly 5,000 people in this country, with a turnover of £1.3 billion and exports of £265 million. *(CF 185, BR 43, PT/LG 24)*

We have a very wide range of activities and offer our products and services in many manufacturing and consumer sectors. To the motor industry, ranging from Braking systems to Engine systems and almost everything electrical in between. To engineering and electronics industries with boilers, heating, automation technology, security systems

and packaging technology. Through to the more well known power tools, household goods, lawn and garden equipment and in car entertainment.

We at Bosch are very proud of our heritage, our commitment to innovation and R&D, our popular and competitive range of products and above all our people, without whom the company would not be so successful. Bosch is an unrivalled innovative force, proof of this is the patent registration for new inventions; there are 12 filed every day. In 2004 we spent 2.9 billion Euros which equated to 7.2% of our worldwide sales. A figure way above the EU average. This is a key lever for Bosch to ensure our continuing profitable growth

We believe Innovation is the key prerequisite for growth and we have displayed a few of our examples. (*Gesture to banners*)

In the Automotive field there are 2 great examples; ESP, Electronic Stability Programme, developed 10 years ago has achieved over 30% fitment rate in the UK and a major support in achieving road safety targets. Common Rail, this product is the strongest driver of growth of sales within the Bosch group and the 100 millionth common rail injector for passenger car diesel engines has recently come off the production line.

From Bosch Rexroth, the precision movements make handling the wings of the new Airbus A380 easy through innovative hydraulic control systems, and from Worcester the Greenskies solar water heating system supporting new options for energy. For this innovation even Tony Blair may approve.

Garden Machinery is launching the mower that cuts right up to the edge - What will we do with all that time on a Sunday afternoon?

I am very pleased to see so many of our friends and customers from all our group sectors in the UK here today. As well as Lord Broers from the Royal Academy of Engineering who is also a member of the Bosch International Advisory Council and Chairman of the Science and Technology select committee. It would be nice to mention you all for your personal contribution but we would then be here until dinner.

I would like to say a special word of welcome to Roger Putnam, Chairman of Ford of Britain, who has kindly agreed to be the speaker at our first Forum. My colleague Hermann Kaess will give you a few brief details on Roger's impressive career immediately before he speaks after the second course.

All our companies face great challenges from international competition. Bosch still has our main manufacturing base in Western Europe and these

are all facing fierce competition from Eastern Europe and China. This brings not just problems, but also opportunities! If we combine forces - where appropriate - and learn from each other, we can do better. We can only be competitive as long as we are innovative with products, services and skills.

I have become a firm believer in the potential for combining Germany and Britain's expertise in engineering, design, marketing and sales.

At Robert Bosch we are determined to build our relationships in all these fields in the UK and Germany into even more vibrant and productive partnerships.

In this spirit I would like to thank you for coming today and wish you a pleasurable and informative lunch. We hope that the atmosphere is supportive to further success for all our enterprises and institutions as we look forward to 2006.

Please enjoy the occasion!