

## **Opening Address**

Dr. Ralf Guldner

Deputy Chairman of the Board of Kerntechnik Deutschland e. V. (KernD)

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50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on Nuclear Technology (AMNT 2019)

07 to 08 May 2019, Berlin

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the German Atomic Forum and the German Nuclear Society, please allow me to welcome you to our 50th AMNT. Our first meeting, called the Reaktortagung took place in Frankfurt in 1969, the same year, by the way, in which the German Nuclear Society was founded. So, happy birthday KTG. Ever since, this meeting has been the most important meeting of its kind in Germany, addressing the widest range of topics and attracting international speakers and visitors.

The fiftieth meeting after 50 years also provides us with the opportunity to look back at the varied and eventful history of nuclear technology in Germany. So, in our traditional companies' exhibition, we have prepared a historic display for you with photos and exhibits from five decades of nuclear technology. At this point, I would sincerely like to thank all partners who have supported us with their exhibits and thus made this exhibition possible.

Our meeting this year is not only the fiftieth, it is also forward-looking. After 60 years of the German Atomic Forum and 43 years of the Trade Association for the Nuclear Fuel Cycle, the two associations have decided to merge and to go forward into the future as Kerntechnik Deutschland or KernD for short. The process was not always particularly easy and has taken time. However, it was successful and so now, after the approval of both general meetings yesterday, we have joint representation for the entire industry as contacts for the public, politics and public authorities as well as the media.

The "new association" also goes hand in hand with a change in leadership and so, after nine intensive years at the head of the German Atomic Forum, I am handing the baton to the new chairman of the board of KernD, Dr. Joachim Ohnemus, who was unanimously elected by the general meeting of KernD.

Mr. Carsten Haferkamp will continue as treasurer with the new managing board. Dr. Hannes Wimmer and I will join the new managing board as deputy chairmen.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please allow me to look back briefly on these nine years during which a great deal has been imposed on our industry. It all began in 2010 on a positive note when lifetime extensions, corresponding retrofits, the climate protector media campaign were the topics that occupied us. I was convinced that, following the adoption of the energy concept in autumn 2010, we would be able to shape the future of nuclear energy in Germany together with the utility companies, manufacturers and suppliers as well as research and teaching.

Everything changed on 11 March 2011. Initially the shock on seeing the images from Fukushima and then the political reaction in Germany which pulled the rug from under out

feet, so to speak. A reaction, ladies and gentlemen, which even today I consider was overhasty and exclusively politically motivated. Particularly now when the discussion about climate change and the phase-out of coal-fired power generation is intensifying, we could well use the additional operating years of CO<sub>2</sub>-free nuclear power plants. I experienced the reaction of our foreign colleagues at WNA and Foratom at close quarters and there was not much understanding there for the German way.

For me personally, Fukushima ushered in a phase of my professional career that I would have gladly foregone. For several months I was suddenly a sought-after guest in various television studios. Whether every performance was successful is for others to judge but I believe that it was important to show our colors.

This was followed by a phase during which we had to deal with the consequences of the exit decision. Decommissioning and dismantling were suddenly the topics, garnished with the labor of various commissions that were working on a reorganization of the search for a final repository and on the financing of interim and final disposal. The German Atomic Forum was allowed to support this in the media too and it ultimately led the nuclear community in Germany to the situation in which it finds itself today. The description of this situation also includes the fact that our member companies suffered massive economic losses and therefore demanded significant reductions in membership fees or even resigned. This too is a serious reason for merging the German Atomic Forum and the Trade Association for the Nuclear Fuel Cycle into KernD.

Despite these difficult phases, I have always enjoyed working for the German Atomic Forum. I would like to thank all the employees in the office for the dedicated and professional work they have put in and I would like to thank all of you too and your companies for your constructive collaboration and support in turbulent times. I wish Dr. Ohnemus every success in his new, extended task and I promise that I will be happy to support him if he so wishes.

Before handing over the microphone to Dr. Ohnemus, I would just like to announce our anniversary film “KernD – For Expertise and Dialogue”. It gives us the chance to experience a time-lapse history of nuclear technology in Germany together. I hope you enjoy it!