

Good morning

Ladies and gentlemen,

Could I begin by extending a warm welcome to you all.

I would particularly like to thank those that I have made the effort to travel from far afield.

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Purpose

The purpose of this informal breakfast is to exchange ideas about three topics:

- 1) the future of manufacturing industry in Europe;
- 2) The need for research and innovation in this sector;
- 3) Thirdly, the role of the European Technology Platform, Manufuture, in attaining our goals.

Importance

This meeting is particularly timely given that we are in the process of receiving the FP7 (the mid term review) and we are about to start preparing FP8.

It is important that we draw the lessons of the past when we draw up FP8. It is essential that we get this right from the start.

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Europe's industry

Europe is currently faced with a decline in its competitiveness on global markets. Consequently, we must find ways of strengthening Europe's industrial basis to meet the challenges that this represents. If we do not act decisively now, 2020 – the end of FP8 – will be too late.

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3 Questions

To finish what I have to say by way of introduction, let me throw out 3 questions that I hope will set the ball rolling:

- 1) What do you feel should be our technological and scientific priorities from the point of view of the manufacturing industry?

2) Concerning the structure of FP8, how can industry participation, in particularly participation on the part of SMEs, be encouraged?

3) The next FP will probably cover the whole range of research and innovation, from frontier research to the launching of new products onto the market. My question is how we can encourage industrial competitors to collaborate in the general interest of us all. Perhaps some of you believe that FP8 should encourage vertical cooperation along the manufacturing chain and not some greater or lesser degree of horizontal cooperation between competitors.

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That is enough from me. Let me now hand you over to Mr. Heinrich Flegel who is Director of Research and Advanced Engineering at Daimler, Chairman of the Manufacture High Level Group and President of the German Federation of Welding and Related Processes.

Thank you Mr. Flegel.

Perhaps, the best thing to do now is to ask you all to introduce yourselves before the beginning of the discussion.

Thank you very much