

**Dr. Christian Bode**  
**Generalsekretär des Deutschen Akademischen**  
**Austauschdienstes**

**Opening Ceremony of the Paderborn Institute for**  
**Advanced Studies in Computer Science and**  
**Engineering (PACE)**

**Keynote Address**

**Innovation through Internationalization**

**Place: University of Paderborn,**  
**Heinz Nixdorf Museums Forum**  
**Time: 8 December 2006, 4:45 p.m.**

Herr Prorektor Jarnut,  
Herr Prof. Schäfer,  
liebe Frau Professorin Langenbacher-Liebgott,  
sehr geehrte Festversammlung, meine Damen und  
Herren,

I have been asked to give my talk in English, and I will duly try my very best as a courtesy to your international students, staff and guests. These guests will, however, surely understand that I address my first words of thanks to our host in our common mother tongue German – which, by the way, the international students should at least try to learn during their stay here in the heart of Germany and Europe. I guess they already do so and will welcome my next remarks as a further training in our beautiful German language.

Nun also kurz in Deutsch mein herzlicher Dank für die Einladung zu dieser Veranstaltung. Ich habe sie gerne angenommen, und zwar aus drei Gründen:

Erstens wurde sie mir übermittelt durch Ihre Kollegin Frau Professorin Langenbacher-Liebgott, die seit langem dem Vorstand des DAAD angehört – und dem Vorstand zu dienen ist oberste Pflicht und höchstes Vergnügen eines Generalsekretärs.

Zum zweiten begeben Sie heute eine Veranstaltung, die feierliche Eröffnung von PACE, die so recht nach unserem Geschmack ist und die ich durch meine Anwesenheit, wenn sie denn nützlich ist, einer breiten Aufmerksamkeit und möglicher Nachahmung gerne empfehle.

Drittens sind wir an dem freudigen Ereignis auch nicht ganz unbeteiligt, wie etwa die mehrjährige Förderung der Graduiertenschule im Rahmen unserer

„Internationalen Promotionsprogramme“ oder die gemeinsamen Messeauftritte im Ausland belegen. Also mein herzlicher Glückwunsch vorneweg – und auf weiterhin gute Zusammenarbeit! Sie sind mit PACE ganz ohne jeden Zweifel auf dem richtigen Weg.

Und schließlich wurde es höchste Zeit, wieder einmal nach Paderborn zu kommen und der inzwischen gereiften Universität Reverenz zu erweisen für ihre erstaunliche Entwicklung, auch im Bereich der internationalen Beziehungen.

Mein erster Besuch ist weit über 30 Jahre her und galt doch auch damals schon der Universität, die da noch, kleiner historischer Betriebsunfall, „Gesamthochschule“ hieß bzw. heißen sollte. Es ging damals um die Aufnahme der neuen Hochschule in die Bund-Länder-Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Hochschulbau, die kurz vorher von der damaligen Großen Koalition eigens geschaffen worden war. Ohne diese Gemeinschaftsaufgabe stünde die Uni Paderborn heute wohl kaum da, wo sie steht.

Meine Damen und Herren, hier kann ich mir mit leicht gesenkter Stimme einen kleinen politischen Seitenhieb nicht verkneifen:

Bekanntlich haben wir nun wieder eine Große Koalition, und selbige hat als eine ihrer ersten Großtaten die Gemeinschaftsaufgabe Hochschulbau als eine historische Fehlentwicklung des Föderalismus entlarvt – und folgerichtig abgeschafft.

Wohlgemerkt hat sie dabei die Gemeinschaftsaufgaben „Agrarstruktur und Küstenschutz“ erhalten, weil es sich dort offenbar um für das Schicksal der Nation ungleich existentiellere Staatsaufgaben handelt.

Sie liegt damit ungefähr auf der gleichen Geisteslinie wie die Brüsseler Haushälter, die ziemlich genau

ein hundred Mal mehr Euro für Agrarsubventionen ausgeben als für Bildungsprogramme.

Dass nun, nachdem die Föderalismusreform als Mutter aller Reformen gerade verabschiedet ist, doch die Länder mit dem Bund wieder über zusätzliche Bundeshilfen für einen sogenannten „Hochschulpakt 2020“ verhandeln, gehört wohl zu jener politischen Dialektik, die schon vor 2000 Jahren Juvenal seufzen liess: *Difficile est satiram non scribere*.

Sie verstehen jetzt, warum ich das Gesagte lieber diskret auf deutsch verpacken wollte – es richtet sich wirklich nicht an die internationale Gemeinschaft, war mir aber wichtig.

Vielleicht war es zudem ja auch ein passender, wengleich dialektischer Auftakt für ein Thema, das mit Internationalität zu tun hat.

## **2. Innovation through internationalization**

This now is the point where I go on in English and come back to what I am supposed to talk about today: about innovation through internationalization.

**Innovation** through **internationalization** – what does this mean?

Well, it actually means exactly what it says: Internationalization is not only a phenomenon of our daily life in politics or economics, in science and education. It is also an instrument of improving quality, of reinventing ourselves, of innovating structures and content, in short: Internationalization is a goal and a way at the same time.

Thus the three words in my title are not only a headline but a message in itself. The two hidden links between internationalization and innovation are **cooperation** and **competition**. So the whole message reads as follows:

**An intelligent strategy for both international cooperation and competition is the most appropriate and efficient instrument of quality improvement and innovation in higher education and research.**

This message equally applies to all players in the field and to all levels of responsibility:  
from the individual student and staff  
through the institutional level of departments, faculties  
and universities to the national and supranational level  
of higher education policies.

## **I. Internationalization as a dominant feature in political, economic and academic trends since 1990 („new dimension of internationalization“)**

Internationalization in all its different appearances is, of course, not a recent phenomenon. However, the enormous geopolitical shifts and the dramatic political and economical changes since 1990 have led to a new dimension of internationalization that by far exceeds whatever happened before.

After the fall of the Berlin wall and the Iron Curtain in the heart of Europe, the political landscape has changed more than in the whole century before – including two bloody world wars. The dominance of the

US as the single superpower with its military power, its language and its way of life, the expansion of free trade and the impact of huge financial flows around the globe, the emergence of new economies and, after a temporary crisis, the rise of the new global players in Asia.

This ongoing process is accelerated by new information techniques, new media and omnipresent TV services. Information age and knowledge society are the new buzzwords. Cheap transport facilities reduce even long distances to a matter of a few hours. In brief: *The world is flat*, as Thomas Friedman's famous book puts it.

The same is true for the **world of education** where a global market has emerged. 2.5 millions of students are internationally mobile, and the demand for cross border education is supposed to increase to more than 7 million students by 2025. The recruitment of the best brains worldwide has become a global match. International attractiveness matters. World rankings of top universities – however problematic they might be – are taken seriously.

The **European Union** develops strategies of educational and scientific competitiveness and implements massive new programmes for research and mobility (Lisbon process 2000). The strategy then expanded beyond European borders in the so called **Bologna Process** which now unites 45 states from Lisbon to Vladivostok.

This process aims at no less than the harmonization of degree structures, a common qualification standard and quality assurance, and an increased mobility within a common era of Higher Education and Research – all in all a development that would have been unthinkable only ten years ago.

To many people, this development, its direction and, even more, its dramatic pace appear scary. Change seems to be everywhere and often beyond any individual control.

On the other hand, these changes may include great opportunities for those who not only tend to defend the past achievements, waiting and complaining, but who instead try to join the process in the driver's seat.

German industry, for instance, in spite of official complaints, has profited enormously from the economical globalization, has doubled the amount of its export and is now number one in world-wide trade. Other winners are the new EU members and the Asian tiger states.

The same applies for Higher Education: Never have there been so many chances to go international and to profit from global cooperation and competition.

Let me exemplify what I mean with some comments and recommendations concerning the three categories of players involved, namely the individual student and staff, the institution, and the national policy level.

## **II. Individual international orientation as a way of personal development**

Students today have more opportunities than ever to go abroad to pursue their academic education. Germany is among the countries that profit most from this increased mobility: With some 250,000 international students, we rank third in the list of host

countries, right after the US and the United Kingdom. Roughly around 70,000 German students are currently studying abroad, that's about 15 % of our graduates: not too bad, but not enough.

Almost 150.000 European students make use of the ERASMUS programme every year, and the number is suggested to double within the next 7 years. Again: not too bad, but not enough!

If we keep in mind what I said about the growing impact of internationalization on our daily professional and private life, we should be more ambitious in this area. The Harvard University design for a new curriculum has pleaded for some kind of international experience for each of their graduates. The DAAD in a recent action plan has set a goal of at least 50 % of all graduates to have spent a substantial time abroad – as student, in a study-related internship, or in an intensive language course. An increasing number of universities include a mandatory study abroad period into their curricula, sometimes combined with a double degree of a partner university.

Why is this so important?

There are two reasons.

The first and most obvious one is to learn about foreign languages, cultures and values, to get a better understanding of differences and controversies, to practise dialogue and tolerance and so forth, the so-called soft skills of the internationalization age. You might learn part of that in seminars, on web-sites and in books – however, only a personal experience of being a foreigner in a foreign country will really help you to acquire a truly intercultural attitude.

The second reason, less obvious but in my eyes even more important, is the building of a sovereign and solid **personality**.

Last week I attended a conference in Berlin with the title “The internationalization of business and the impact on university curricula”.

The amazing message formulated by a number of business leaders was that personality counts more than disciplinary qualifications when it comes to careers and leadership. The participants agreed that unfortunately this aim is not or no more part of the German university mission – but that an intensive international experience could very much contribute to this individual development.

Why is this so?

Again, our grand old poet and philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe has found the best description of this phenomenon. On his arrival in Italy he wrote:

*„Mit dem neuen Leben, das einem nachdenkenden Menschen die Betrachtung eines neuen Landes gewährt, ist nichts zu vergleichen.*

*Ob ich gleich noch immer derselbe bin, so mein ich doch, bis aufs Knochenmark verändert zu sein.“*

(“Nothing can be compared with the new life that the discovery of a new country gives to a thoughtful mind. Although I am still the same person, I feel that I am in fact changed to the core.”)

This quotation is very much in line with what most of our students say when asked about the main benefits of their international experience. It is not the disciplinary stuff which in most cases they could have consumed equally at home. It is the **difference** that

counts, the unexpected, the non-routine, the cross cultural challenge, the need to adapt to strange and sometime even hostile conditions. Mobile students also say that they really got to know themselves better, their own culture, their heritage, and their own character, strengths and weaknesses – obviously, there is no better way to learn who you are than to expose yourself to a completely different environment.

The conclusion – in which DAAD activities are deeply involved – is: International mobility should be made a priority until it has become a normality.

There are different strategies to promote this goal. To name but a few:

- inclusion of phases abroad and exchange in the respective curricula
- establishment of a wide-spread network of partner institutions abroad
- uncomplicated rules of leave for the time abroad
- generous recognition practice upon return
- validation of differences in curricula and methods as a value in itself
- financial support that at least covers the additional cost of study abroad for everybody
- incentives for the return of students, graduates and researchers
- use of the international experiences of those who do return.

I think that most of these recommendations are self-explanatory, and I will not comment on them.

The only one I'd like to single out is the recognition issue. There is a problematic trend to formalism and bureaucracy in this field. The introduction of ECTS was meant to facilitate exchanges and mutual recognition. Instead, it is sometimes used to make sure that the

study abroad period covers exactly the same topics as at home, putting the fundamental mission of study abroad at stake altogether.

As I said, it is not the similarities but the differences that count, and this should be recognized in a generous way.

This includes that study abroad, specially if it happens to be not in Austria but in a linguistically and culturally challenging environment, will need more time to adapt and more effort to succeed. This is by no means a “lost” time – even if it leads to an extension of the study phase. We should therefore not hesitate to extend the predominantly three years Bachelor Courses to a three plus one (four) years course, including a year abroad as many British Universities do.

### **III. Institutional internationalization as an incentive to build profile and to improve quality**

What I have said about individual internationalization partly also applies to academic institutions in general.

These institutions have to get involved if they really want to encourage and support individual mobility, and the recruitment of international students and staff to their campus. All this is a well known, regular standard and needs no further comment.

What is new is the fact that internationalization has grown from a peripheral ornament into to a core element of institutional development.

Some years ago, the European Rectors Conference CRE asked their 600 members, rectors and presidents

about their vision of the universities' future. Among the numerous answers, there was one single common denominator: the university of the future would either be an international one or it would not be a university at all.

If this is the case, what should we conclude in terms of strategy and every day agenda?

1. Universities, their institutes and faculties have to develop their own strategies of internationalization. International relations should have an advocate within the highest management level of the University. On the other hand, the organizational structure should not restrict activities: It is, on the contrary, essential that international activities permeate all parts of the university.
2. This explicitly includes the area of administration. University administration in Germany often focuses too much on – well – administration instead of management. And as for management a lot can be learned from good practise in other part of the world. In brief: an international university also needs an internationally trained and minded Management.
3. In order to promote international relations, a pure top-down approach will not be very helpful. But the mere alignment of individual activities is just as problematic because it lacks efficiency and sustainability – and puts too much burden on too few shoulders. Promoting internationalization is only achievable by creating synergy between the two approaches .

4. Marketing abroad is another crucial aspect that helps to increase international relations. And it has an additional advantage: It helps to gain a realistic view on your market position, and to provide permanent benchmarking.
5. Ideal are benchmarking procedures und partnerships with institutions that are at least as good or, preferably, better off than your own. If you can't beat them, meet them! Cooperation is the best way of learning. Don't hesitate to become a copy cat if you encounter a better model – then go ahead and try to develop it further. Japan is a good example for this strategy, and so are the best US-institutions which once were modelled along the German Humboldtian university. In the meanwhile, they have adapted the model to suit their own circumstances and requirements.

That success story takes me to my last chapter:  
The Internationalisation of the whole system of  
Higher Education

#### **(IV. Internationalization of the H.E. System )**

Some decades ago, this aspect would not have been very visible because then national structures more or less determined what happened and how it happened in higher education. Today, large parts of German national policies are coordinated on supranational levels – in accordance with governments, but also with international organizations and federations.

The EU has become a major player since the Maastricht Treaty and the amazing Bologna process is another example.

If we are honest we have to admit that most of the goals and aims of our current Higher Education policy are more or less imported from outside, mostly from the Anglo-Saxon university system which has proved to be the most successful in modern times.

But even these new principles – from the degree system through quality assurance to university management - allow a lot of variation in the process of implementation. So there is enough room for differentiations on the national, regional and institutional level.

There is a danger, however, that the continental European tradition of thinking in structures, systems and general rules - and the specific German tradition of uniformity and juridification – might restrict both the institutional autonomy and the individual freedom of choices much more than necessary or useful.

I remember a US-University president once saying: the major strength of the US system of Higher Education is the fact that it is not a system". I wished we learned a bit more from this pragmatic and sportive attitude as a prerequisite of fruitful competition.

Ladies and gentlemen,  
To draw a maximum benefit from internationalisation on the national policy level means two things for me:

1. Cooperating with good partners, always comparing oneself with the better ones and at any time learn from the best (cooperation, benchmarking, competition).
2. Throwing obsolete things overboard, showing courage to changes but also maintaining, adapting and developing good practice and successful traditions.

We have reasons, indeed, to learn from the Anglo-American higher education system, but we have as many reasons to be proud of our traditions in higher education and science and to keep the best from it for the future. If we can follow both ways and combine the best of each we will be one of the top leading countries in science and education again.

I believe that with PACE you have achieved a creative mixture which combines traditional German skills for graduate's education with models which have been successfully undertaken in other countries – and that this mixture yet remains unique. With this structure PACE is certainly well-prepared for the challenges of the international competition. I wish you every success!