

Rede von Bundeskanzler Friedrich Merz anlässlich des Vorabendempfangs zum Invest in Germany Summit am 19. Oktober 2026 in Berlin

Montag, 19. Oktober 2026 in Berlin

Dear colleagues from the German government and our parliaments,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to Germany! And welcome to Berlin and welcome to the first Invest in Germany Summit.

I am really honoured to welcome such a distinguished group of globally accomplished industry leaders to our country. And as you all might know, for the first time, Germany is hosting an investors' conference of this kind.

And this sends a powerful message: Germany is open for investment. Germany is open for business. And Germany is ready to grow at a faster pace.

We want to work with you to usher in a new era of investment, capital mobilisation and economic growth in Germany – drawing on the expertise, ambition, and entrepreneurial spirit of the world's leading investors and innovators.

We want to build the next chapter of Germany's economic success together with you.

I am also delighted to welcome my Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Katherina Reiche – warm welcome, Katherina!

As well as my Representative for Investments in Germany Martin Blessing – welcome, Martin! Thank you for putting together and hosting this most impressive event in this impressive building.

A warm welcome also to the many representatives of our 16 federal states. Thank you for joining.

And, finally, it's a great pleasure to see so many of our German industry and business leaders gathered in this room, representing the vitality, diversity, and depth of our economy! I would like to thank all of you for being here tonight! Thank you for joining!

Now, ladies and gentlemen,

we are meeting here in times of fundamental changes.

I personally have the doubtful privilege of being able to look back quite a few decades – like others among you here in this room.

And, of course, every decade was characterised by its own challenges. Each period felt special, felt precarious, challenging and promising in its own way.

However, the times we are in today feel different.
And they are different.

We are in the midst of a fundamental economic and technological transformation, fuelled by exponential progress in artificial intelligence.

At the same time, we are facing the strongest economic and geopolitical headwinds in generations:

Wars in the Middle East are at risk of destabilising the entire region and putting global energy supplies under severe pressure.

Russia and its allies, from North Korea to Iran, are attacking not only Ukraine, but, ever more aggressively, the most precious accomplishments of the post-World War II era:

our fundamental values of human rights, our democracy, our liberty, and the rule of law.

Ladies and gentlemen, the good news is we know what we have to do.

We know how we can and have to respond:
We have to team up with our partners and we have to build on our strengths!

We have to invest in our world-leading innovation ecosystem, invest systematically in scaling up our productive capacities in sectors of strategic importance, invest in rebuilding and modernising our infrastructure and our defense capabilities. And we have to respond by strengthening the EU and our strategic partnerships around the world!

Now, ladies and gentlemen, we also know this:

These are generational challenges to which we must respond with a generational effort!

And that is what we are doing!

That is what this summit is about!

Germany is embarking on the biggest modernisation drive in its recent history.

In the coming years, we are – on top of our annual efforts – channelling half a trillion euros into rebuilding and modernising our infrastructure as well as into green energy and climate initiatives;

And we will commit over 500 billion euros by the end of the decade to strengthen our defensive capacities and modernise our military infrastructure.

We are driving forward EU economic integration to fully unleash the potential of one of the largest integrated markets in the world.

We are doubling down on our diplomatic efforts to deepen our ties and trading relationships with allies around the globe.

And we are complementing all this with structural reforms at European and national level, reducing regulatory burdens across industries, modernising and digitising our administration system, as well as updating our welfare system, from healthcare to pension schemes.

This summit is about inviting you to join us in our modernisation drive!

Tomorrow, we will have the opportunity to go into greater detail about where we stand with our economy, about our goals, and what policy measures we are taking to achieve them.

We want to showcase and discuss investment opportunities with you, and, above all, to engage in as many individual conversations as possible.

Because this event is first and foremost about dialogue.

Against the backdrop of the challenges I sketched out just now, our aim is to send a message to you and our partners worldwide, loud and clear:

We are open for business and partnerships!

We welcome foreign companies and investment.

We are not about zero-sum thinking.

We believe in multilateralism, international trade, and open markets.

And, above all, you can continue to count on us as a stable, reliable partner that stays true to those values.

Now, ladies and gentlemen,
the challenges ahead are not small.

Neither here, nor globally.

But, as one of the largest and most advanced economies of the world, situated in the world's largest market – the European Union – we are coming from a position of strength.

And I believe that the best way to rise to the occasion is together: based on close cooperation between like-minded partners, building on and pooling our mutual strength and expertise.

In that spirit, I am very much looking forward to this summit, to hopefully getting to know many of you, and to starting to shape our future together!

Thank you again and a warm welcome to Berlin again!