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Message of Greeting
for the German-American Meeting of Entrepreneurs
at the University of Erfurt
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This Conference addresses issues that are extremely topical. How can entrepreneurs be encouraged to become self-employed? What framework conditions do start-up entrepreneurs need? And what incentives can economic policy give for start-ups? We have to remember that new trees must be continually planted to keep forests growing and healthy. And the same is true for the business landscape.

The goal of the German-American Meeting of Entrepreneurs is to compare the various conditions and assistance instruments for new entrepreneurs in Germany and the United States and to learn from the comparison. In this connection, the study by Dr. Grimm, which was prepared at the Political Science Department of Erfurt University and which gave the Conference its name, offers us a good orientation aid. For it lists the local, regional, national, and global conditions that influence and determine the success of start-ups today. The extent to which a kind of “global village” already plays a role as a nourishing medium for young firms is also the object of examination. Tougher competition is one side of globalization. The other side is the fact that economic systems profit from one another when they are able to help young companies get a successful start by setting the right economic policy framework conditions and providing intelligent support.

The topic of the Conference is being placed within a transatlantic framework. And I am happy to see that the event is bringing together, in particular, German and American entrepreneurs, academics, and policymakers. Apart from the specific usefulness that is of benefit to all, the meeting will also contribute to improving German-American relations. The ERP Transatlantic Program, for which my Ministry is responsible, has pursued this objective for quite some time. Since it builds upon the idea and funding of the Marshall Plan, it is just the right sponsor for this event. The many common elements and successes in transatlantic cooperation that our two countries can look back on are a bridge to a common successful future.