

Dear Friends and Partners,

In 2012 we are celebrating forty years of the Berghof Foundation. When the Foundation was set up in 1971, at the height of the Cold War, the world was struggling with the threat of nuclear warfare in its northern hemisphere. Since then the conditions and challenges we were facing in our work have changed dramatically. What has remained constant is the focus in our work on the prevention, termination and transformation of political and social violence. Beyond that we have also consistently maintained a long-term perspective in our work, because there can be no doubt that working on conflict transformation requires such a perspective, as well as the vision and unbreakable conviction that the world could be a different and better place. Professor Dr Georg Zundel must have been aware of this when he established the Berghof Foundation in 1971.

Forty years and hundreds of projects later the world is indeed a different place. Whether it is a better place, and whether and to what extent the Berghof Foundation may have contributed to any improvements, is a matter of discussion, critical reflection and also disagreement. What remains beyond our successes and failures, and the lessons learned from them, are the people and institutions we have supported, the reputation we have earned, and the networks we have built. More than anything, Berghof stands for the conviction that today's conflict-related challenges cannot be addressed through standardised cookie-cutter solutions, but through constructive human relationships stretching across a spectrum ranging from civil society members to policy-makers. We believe that such collaborative relationships, when based on good-will and openness, can lead to processes that have real transformative impact. Following our new leitmotif, "creating space for conflict transformation", we want to concentrate with spirit, knowledge and passion on helping to bring about the conditions that such relationships and processes require.

Fulfilling our mission to a high standard leaves no room for complacency. On the contrary, it requires us to work continuously on ourselves in order to make our work more beneficial, effective and efficient. Having understood this we have decided, as a first step, to reshape our organisation. Three operational entities – Berghof Conflict Research, Berghof Peace Support and the Institute for Peace

Education Tübingen – with more than forty highly motivated and committed members of staff will henceforth be integrated under a single leadership and a single brand: the Berghof Foundation. This move reflects first of all our conviction that a synergistic combination of skills and competencies in research, practice and education will allow us to harness potentials that will positively impact on the quality of our work. By integrating our operational strengths and competencies, we will pave the way for new projects and effective partnerships. This being said, grant-making will continue to play an important role. By helping us to remain open to new ideas, people and resources, grant-making serves our organisational vision of a Foundation with open and fluid boundaries. However, with regard to our funding, we will pay greater attention to ensuring strategic complementarity with our operational activities.

More than just a celebration of our history, the landmark of forty years of the Berghof Foundation means to us a celebration of our ability to face the future and our continuous efforts to improve our work. Beyond that, we see our anniversary as an opportunity to thank you – our friends and partners – for your trust. And indeed we hope that the investment we are making in our organisation and managerial capacities will enable us to create better conditions for collaboration and partnerships in the years to come. In that spirit we look forward to working together with you towards a world in which conflict stakeholders and actors can engage with each other in non-violent ways.

Berlin, 1 January 2012



Johannes Zundel

On behalf of the shareholders of the
Berghof Foundation



Hans-Joachim Giessmann

Executive Director