

Dear NMUN Delegation of the University of Tuebingen,

Let me first congratulate you for your outstanding commitment and efforts as members of the National Model United Nations Group.

2013 marks the 40th anniversary of Germany's membership in the United Nations. While Europe's inner dialogue continues to challenge our conceptions of the nation state and its responsibilities, we can find comfort in the fact that Germany has become an indispensable and cherished member of the international community.

20 years ago, the European continent was shaken by a war in its immediate neighborhood. The war in the Balkans left its trace in our common European history. Europe, just united after the fall of the Iron Curtain, had to find a response to the humanitarian catastrophe that was taking place in its backyard. We found this response in actively supporting multilateral efforts for peace.

Your delegation will represent Montenegro at the National Model United Nations in New York – a country that owes its peaceful existence as a sovereign nation to a large extent to the UN's efforts for peace and stability in the region. As I was personally involved in the Bosnian peace negotiations and during the Kosovo crisis, I am especially happy that a German delegation will advocate Montenegro's position at the Model United Nations.

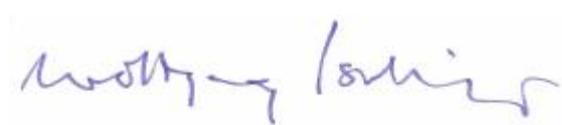
Since the establishment of the United Nations, our closer and more meaningful cooperation has brought about an age of unprecedented progress, peace and prosperity. For the first time in history, we now have the tools to affect positive change on a truly global scale, by fighting poverty and disease, fostering peace and creating a more sustainable future.

But as our capabilities have grown, so have our challenges. Our biggest challenge today is not an external threat. The greatest obstacle to a strong and common stance to today's challenges is a lack of confidence in our abilities, solidarity and shared goals. All of our international institutions, bilateral contracts and alliances have one thing in common. They will only ever be useful, if we are willing to trust in them. Trust is the tool of our trade as diplomats. We trust that the ideals and actions taken by the United Nations today will be mutually beneficial to all sovereign nations tomorrow. We trust that diplomacy may guide even the weakest among us to peace and security. We trust that our paths to prosperity and progress lead ever forward.

That is not to say that we need to be naïve. We come together from different backgrounds and with differing opinions. Our approaches and convictions may not always be the same. What benefits one nation, may adversely affect the peace and security of another. But where there is a shared goal, there is also a shared solution.

Once in New York, you will look back on six months of intense preparation for the conference in which you have written position papers, polished your arguments, improved your negotiation skills. But most important, you will have learned to see the world from a different perspective – the perspective of the country that you represent. You will be experts in Montenegro's history as well as its political, economic, and social system. The great asset of NMUN is the opportunity to think in cross-border categories and to be creative in finding new policy solutions. I wish that National Model United Nations will offer you a platform to experience once again that our greatest obstacles can only be overcome if we act in concert. Use this simulation not only to engage yourself in critical thinking but also to improve international understanding. Study and use the institutions we have in place and – through strategic dialogue – search for new answers to old problems.

Inactivity is not a solution to any of our challenges. We already know what the status quo looks like. As you aspire to be young leaders, I urge you to be agents of global change. Be as bold and optimistic as your youth allows you to be!



Wolfgang Ischinger
Chairman of the Munich Security Conference
Adjunct Professor in the Political Science Department of the University of Tuebingen