



Dear Member,

*Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany accompanied by a 30-member delegation of top business leaders representing companies like aircraft manufactures – Airbus, conglomerate Siemens, rail operator Deutsche Bahn and reinsurer Munich Re. paid a 4-day official visit to India from 29<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2007. It was significant in several ways.*

*The trade between India and Germany amounts to US\$ 15 billion annually, although India only ranks as Germany's 29th most important partner, but the visit re-inforced India's position as the largest trading partner of Germany within the European Union. Germany is the 7th largest investor in India with a total inflow of US\$ 1.9 billion between 1991-2007. The visit strengthened the position of Germany as India's second most important source of technical collaborations worldwide and a significant investor in India particularly in the area of up gradation of infrastructure.*

*The Indian railways is set to take a new role to spread awareness of advances in scientific knowledge and research to people across numerous Indian cities. An ambitious project – “The Science Express” designed and fabricated involving some of the Germany's premier research institutes, including the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres and Max Planck Society, and the Indian government, was flagged off jointly by German Chancellor, Angela Markel and Indian Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh from Delhi Station. It seeks to generate popular interest and create a phenomenal increase in scientific knowledge and research among the educated laymen. The train will also feature a ‘Scientific Tunnel’ – meant to be an interactive experience for students. “The Express” will travel across India for a year highlighting the two countries cooperation in Science and Technology.*

*The visit sought to promote social security systems, development, micro financing and rural cooperative banking. A new financial commitment by Germany of 150 million Euro to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in India is laudable. These projects re-in force the common goal of India and Germany to produce clean energy and protect the global climate.*

*The visit enhanced the scope of Indo-German partnership based on shared principles, common perceptions and interests, universal values of democracy, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms including religious, which are best realised in a pluralistic environment. India had become the concentrated focus not for its just economic potential but as a partner for building abiding relations in the spheres of trade and bilateral investment, energy, science and technology, education, culture and defence. More than anything else the visit raised the profile of Indo-German ties to a higher pedestal than before. It marked a considerable change in awareness of India in Germany and served as a beginning for re-discovery of India.*

I thank you for your co-operation.



ATLURI SUBBA RAO