



**Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier
on the occasion of a reception on the energy transition and
sustainability
at Schloss Bellevue
on 29 March 2023**

It is both a great pleasure and an immense privilege for me to welcome you, King Charles III, together with Queen Consort Camilla, to this state visit to Germany today! This visit, Your Majesty's very first trip abroad as the new King, is a tremendous personal gesture – as well as an important signal for German-British relations. For today, six years to the day after the United Kingdom began its withdrawal from the European Union, we are opening a new chapter. Together, as friends and partners, we are now looking to the future. For that reason, we made a very deliberate decision to begin this state visit with an issue which is crucially important to the future of everyone on this planet: sustainability, energy transition and climate action – a task for the whole of humanity.

Ladies and gentlemen, as important and long-standing as German-British relations are, it is only this year that our countries will become quite literally linked to each other. In 2023, construction work on a submarine cable between the Isle of Grain and Wilhelmshaven is due to begin – and in just a few years' time, electricity will flow for the first time between the United Kingdom and Germany.

This first direct power link between our two countries, between two of the largest energy markets in Europe, is a key project: we will guarantee the security of the electricity supply by compensating for fluctuations in demand on both sides – and we will primarily transmit energy from renewable sources. Even though we will not be able to see the power cable deep down on the North Sea seabed, this first direct energy link highlights how closely Germany and the United Kingdom are working together to shape our economies in a way that is climate-neutral.

I regard this as an encouraging example – just as Your Majesty's visit to Germany is encouraging for us all.

Your Majesty was prompted early on to take action to protect our planet. For what is at stake is no less than the future of humanity, a planet worth living on for us, for our children and all future generations. By coming together here today, we are also sending a message to our peoples: we see the dramatic urgency of the fight against climate change. We are taking up this challenge.

Many of the decisions needed in order to reach the goals set out in the Paris Agreement must have an impact before the end of this decade. For Germany, this means that seven intensive years lie ahead, during which we have to reduce our emissions, modernise our economy and our transport systems, as well as make buildings and homes more energy-efficient.

The coming years will therefore require a huge effort. We will have to do much more than we have done to date. And we will have to accelerate our efforts. But the good news is that our fate is in our own hands. We know and we have most of the technology we will need on the road to climate neutrality. Now is the time to create the conditions for the prosperity of tomorrow.

Your Majesty, ladies and gentlemen, I am grateful that King Charles III began to champion healthy nutrition, sustainability and climate action very early on. We are all benefiting today from Your Majesty's convictions.

I am also delighted that so many participants in the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue have come to Schloss Bellevue for this reception. The energy transition is a global task, and we will only succeed in achieving sustainable economic activity and protecting our planet if we work together. We need dialogue and an exchange of ideas, and I am looking forward to hearing your views and your ideas.

How far we have already travelled along the path towards a sustainable, climate-neutral industrial society, how much is already happening – both on a large and on a small scale – and what we can still learn from each other – that, too, should be the focus of our discussions today with you: academics and politicians, managers and entrepreneurs, as well as members of the public. You are, quite literally, the driving forces behind the energy transition. You are helping to make the world a better place.

I would like to thank you most sincerely for coming here today. And now I am looking forward to meeting you! Thank you very much.