

Translation of:

Press statement by Chancellor Merkel on her visit to LASEROPTIK GmbH in Garbsen

Transcript of press conference

Friday, 17/09/2021

Chancellor Merkel: Dear Mr Ebert, ladies and gentlemen, on the recommendation of Henrik Hoppenstedt, who is a member of the Bundestag here, I also came across the company LASEROPTIK today on my trip to small and medium-sized enterprises, which I made in the last few weeks, and was able to see that world-class work really is being done here in the rural area, but also in the Greater Hanover Region. As luck would have it, I was at the Max Planck Institute of Laser Optics a few days ago. For the lasers that are needed there to work on a quantum computer, the optical prerequisites are created here and the coatings are applied. It is a very, very good feeling to know that Germany is a world leader and that we are at the global forefront with small and medium-sized enterprises, in this case also with a family business for which the father laid the foundations, so to speak.

This includes great entrepreneurs, of course, you as the boss, but also great employees. In the course of a discussion, we just emphasised once again how important it is that school education is sound, that there are motivated teachers who also introduce children and young people to the technologies and that we then offer good vocational training opportunities. The dual vocational training system helps us to do this.

But of course all this has to be brought up to date again and again. Today, work means more than simply measuring nanometres – people should also feel comfortable in their workplaces. I think you do a lot on this front as well. So this is social market economy in action, from the day care centre to the questions of whether someone wants to continue working a bit after retirement age or how to give young people access and also maintain a good mix.

I am very impressed with what is being done here and wish you all the best for the future. You said that there is obviously also international competition. The world does not sleep. We have to earn our progress anew every day.

To my Minister of State in the Chancellery, I can only say: A great company that I was able to get to know here today. Thank you!