

- wise – just – brave – moderate // obedient – diligent – conscientious – humble // faith – hope – love

WB 121105

Prof. Küng Speech for
K. Schlecht Birthday



WEIB
World Ethics Institute Beijing
Sister of Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies

- qualitative ? – innovative ? – prepared ? – flexible ? – competent ? – value conscious ? -

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Sunday, 28. October 2012

Prefix:

For his 80th birthday Karl Schlecht asked Prof Küng to explain in a 5 minute speech the **meaning and purpose of his World Ethos Ideas to business leaders**. They are his guests and future WEIB partners, open this evening for a non academic language, meaning a more practice orientated message, which they can better understand and follow

This shall comply with the demand K Schlecht's written in 1998 to Prof Küng. There he asked to find ways to qualify with the WORLDETHIC ideas the aspired good Putzmeister company culture with values based people **for mastership in global competition**. Since then he substantially sponsored for this purpose from his KSG foundation Prof. Küng's "Stiftung Weltethos Tuebingen" (SWT- in English called "Global Ethics Foundation"). To better meet his objective he then later in 2012 founded and fully sponsored at University Tuebingen the "Welt Ethos Institut Tuebingen" (WEIT) - and now today **"World Ethics Institute"** (WEIB) at BEIDA.

(In Prof. Küng's speech K Schlecht therefore replaced the wording **"global ethic"** with **"World Ethics"** in relevant sentences to avoid misunderstandings and **make a clear difference** to the many other endeavors for "Global Ethics". (see SM 121120)

Prof. Hans Kueng`s speech

for Karl Schlecht`s 80 th Birthday

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen!



My first word here in Beijing is an expression of deep gratitude to Karl Schlecht and his wife Brigitte for their extremely generous commitment to a world ethic. We can see its beautiful fruits here at Peking University: the inauguration of a World Ethic Institute tomorrow.

In 2002 our **Global Ethic Foundation of Tuebingen** presented its splendid exhibition on a World Ethic at the International Monetary Fund in Washington. This happened under the auspices of its Managing Director **Horst Koehler** who will become my successor as President of the Global Ethic Foundation (SWT). At this occasion I met also the president of the World Bank, Jim **Wolfensohn** who told me:

»You are right, we need urgently some elementary ethical standards. And when I arrived here in New York from Australia many years ago I told my people in my Investment Bank only two things: ›Do not lie and do not steal.« By following this rule we became in short time one of the 20 best banks on Wallstreet.«



You see: I do not plead for an ethic for the economy that is imposed from above, but for one that **grows out of the economic processes themselves**. This means: the market economy and the ethic, which underpins are not mutually exclusive. No ethic can demand that an employer acts against his own interest, permanently and systematically. On the contrary, ethically responsible managerial strategies may well prove to be successful today since the public's attention has been drawn to the issue of the morality of the market place, and often shows disapproving reactions to morally questionable conduct.

I know of course of the competitive pressures and the necessity of striving for efficiency and profit in a globalized economy. And it is legitimate to show tolerance towards different customs in different parts of the world. But there are some elementary ethical standards that are valid all over the world. We should therefore consider the advantages of doing business in an ethically responsible way.

The advantages are:

1. If you put ethical standards into practice you emphasize *long-term goals*. Thus, the management concentrates more intensely on the fundamental and strategic interests of the company and its stakeholders. This entails a move away from hectic day-to-day routine.
2. There is likely to be more *stability and reliability* of your business relations with suppliers and buyers who operate according to similar principles.
3. You will easier attract to your business *qualified personnel* not only with professional but also with social competences.
4. If your company has a *good image* and its long-term commitment to ethical standards is credible, an improvement in dealing with ecologically and politically delicate projects can be expected.

My conclusion:

A corporation's ethical standards seem to have a **positive influence**

- (a) on its performance in the long run,
- (b) on its socio-political acceptance and image,
- (c) on the quality (including the environmentally friendly quality) of its products,
- (d) on its ability to recruit and retain productive and cooperative employees.

Moreover, such a strategy is entirely in conformity with the principles of the so called »social market economy«, since it allows a balance between the freedom and responsibility of management, a long term view of corporate goals, and a better appreciation of the objectives and opinions of the most important »stake-holders«.



So I hope that Karl Schlecht and his wife will see tremendous progress and success of the new World Ethic Institute Beijing in the years to come.