

Rede von Oberbürgermeisterin Henriette Reker anlässlich des Besuchs der 8. World Dwarf Games am 2. August 2023 in Köln-Müngersdorf

Es gilt das gesprochene Wort!

Sehr geehrter Herr Ministerpräsident,
sehr geehrte Frau Carl-Innig,
sehr geehrter Herr Professor Abel,
dear athletes, dear coaches and everyone who is making this
event possible to take place,

welcome to Cologne!

500 athletes from around the world have gathered in our city to
compete and celebrate a truly unique sports festival. The World
Dwarf Games are the largest multi-sports games for people with
dwarfism and we are very happy and grateful that you have
chosen Cologne as the venue for the eighth Games.

I was told it is the first time ever you came to Germany and I
can tell you that you have selected just the right city for your
endeavour. First of all, from what I have heard so far, the
venues here at the Sportpark Müngersdorf are excellent and to
the satisfaction of most athletes.

With the unique German Sports University just around the
corner, we have most, if not all, venues in close proximity. All
this in short distance to the city center. I especially would like to

extend my gratitude to Professor Doctor Abel, who strongly supports the World Dwarf Games.

What I take from the World Dwarf Games is that you can very much compete no matter what's your age or ability. We have people who take their sport as a demanding hobby while there are athletes who are strongly performance-oriented. The rules of the Games make it possible to compete under equal conditions.

The World Dwarf Games are creating opportunities to encounter people from all over the world, it forms new friendships and understanding. It brings together and unites people who have dwarfism, it strengthens their ties and empowers their voices.

Cologne has hosted quite a number of sports events in the last couple of years, such as the ID-Judo European Championships, the Bernd Best Tournament for wheelchair rugby or the Football Inclusion Days. We have also hosted the Belgian Delegation to the Special Olympics World Games before they went to Berlin just some weeks ago.

As a host city of next year's UEFA EURO Championship, we will make sure that the values which these events carry with them will also be part of this tournament.

Let me give special credit to the German Dwarf Federation as the organising force behind these days. You have done terrific

work! Now I am looking forward to score some targeted shots at the Boccia-lanes.

Thanks for your attention.