

Welcome Address of Prof. Dr Heinz-Walter Große Chairman of SAFRI

The Sub-Saharan Africa Initiative of German Business (SAFRI) is proud to host the fourth edition of the German-African Business Summit (GABS) 2022 in Johannesburg. The thriving business hub in the South African province of Gauteng provides a perfect setting for deepening business partnerships between African countries and Germany. We are very grateful to our South African partners and friends for their cooperation and hospitality.

Since the last GABS in Accra 2019, world economies have been shaken by the corona pandemic. African countries could defy this development to a certain extent: They are again among the world's fastest-growing economies. Political and economic integration is also progressing as the continent's commitment to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) shows. The German Government on the other side develops a wide range of instruments to support business driven partnerships for sustainable development and continues to put Africa high on the agenda in Germany, the European Union and within the G20 context.

In February this year, the world has been hit by Russian aggression in the Ukraine, which led to a severe food crisis in many African countries. Furthermore, prices for energy and raw materials were climbing to a level, which strongly endangers the business model of many African and German companies.

We should try to give an answer to these challenging developments by building new relationships aiming at economic diversification and value addition. To achieve this, we offer reliable partnerships, not only for investing in technology, but even more for developing people – to grow together.

With the German-African Business Summit, SAFRI, a joint initiative of the German-African Business Association (Afrika-Verein), the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Indus-

try (DIHK), the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and the German Federation of Wholesale and Foreign Trade (BGA), offers a platform for decision-makers from business and politics from Sub-Saharan Africa and Germany to exchange views and experiences, explore business opportunities and to establish or deepen personal contacts. I do hope that by doing so we build robust and successful African-German business relations for joint success.