



## **Dr. Andreas Herzfeld, Chairman of the German Vexillological Society**

Dear Mr. President of FIAV,  
Dear Mr. Deputy Director General,  
Dear Mme. Delegate of the Federal Ministry of Interior,  
Dear Participants of FlagBerlin 2007  
Ladies and Gentlemen,



In the name of the German Vexillological Society (DGF) and the Organizing Committee I have the great honour to welcome you all to Berlin. 122 participants and 39 family members and other accompanying persons from 29 countries found their way here. We are completely overwhelmed by this interest.

Our society was founded in 1995. During that year's vexillological congress in Warsaw, I attended as the official delegate of DGF for the first time. At that time the congresses were four days long, and of these at least one entire evening was filled by the dialog between William Crampton and Whitney Smith. At the next congress, in Capetown in 1997, our society was admitted to FIAV. Two years later we were asked if we Germans might be ready to organize a vexillological congress. After an intensive discussion within the German Vexillological Society, in 2001 we applied to host the XXII. International Vexillological Congress. And two years after that we were entrusted with the organisation of this congress.

Vexillological congresses are not solely the papers that are read, above all create an opportunity for direct communication between us vexillologists. We get acquainted with and make friends with each other, and we exchange vexillological information. I remember with pleasure those past congresses, a special memory is recalling the emotional words of farewell by Theodore Amerlinck.

Now the time has come. You all have come to Berlin full of expectation. And we have done a lot of hard work to prepare everything. I would now like to thank all the busy members of the Organizing Committee, of the German Vexillological Society, and of the German Historical Museum for all their hard work.

Here, in this wonderful setting of the German Historical Museum, we will exchange the results of our latest research. Unfortunately we had to turn down some requests to read papers because of lack of time, but we will include them in the proceedings. The speakers will take us to many regions of the world. We shall visit the exhibition “Flags and Colours”, organized by the museum especially to coincide with our congress. On Wednesday our excursion will lead us through Berlin to Potsdam. And of course there will be enough time to see Berlin on one’s own, to exchange vexillological books and flags, and to make new friends.

Ladies and gentlemen, what are we in reality – we vexillologists?

Many people cannot imagine what that is – vexillology. My explanation is the following: On one hand we vexillologists are archaeologists; we dig in archives, libraries, castles, and churches for long-forgotten flags and colours. On the other hand we are journalists; we always have a camera with us to take pictures of every unknown flag, and then we publish the results as quickly as possible in the next journal.

That is why we need these international congresses, such as this one here in Berlin.

To all of us – best wishes for a pleasant, interesting, and successful XXII. International Congress of Vexillology.

Thank you very much.



Registration at sunday afternoon

Photo: Grahl

