



Dear Readers,
Events which are a permanent fixture in the yearly calendar are often a good opportunity for an inspiring exchange across disciplines and national boundaries. A current event is, for example, World Metrology Day, in commemoration of May 20, 1875, on which the state representatives from all over the world signed the Meter Convention and thus committed themselves to the international unification of weights and measures. Also the annual meeting of our intermittent short-term experts was again a stimulating exchange of information which will give our work more impetus. Please note that May 16 and 17, 2011 will be the date for our Braunschweiger Tage der Qualitätsinfrastruktur [angeMESSEN!](#)

Your
Dieter Schwohnke

Learning From the Future

The participants of the meeting of PTB's Intermittent Short-term Experts (IKZE) recently risked a look into the year 2020. In six working groups, the most pressing future challenges for German development cooperation and how they can be taken into consideration for the setting up and extension of quality infrastructures were discussed. The issues at stake here were the changes due to new energies and to resources becoming more scarce as well as the strong growth of megacities, possible changes in the world order and terrorism. A second focus of the meeting was called "Innovation", because innovations can indeed introduce economic progress and create jobs, but without a functional quality infrastructure they would, however, impede sustainable development for humanity and nature. The consultant Martin Kaiser is therefore convinced that "quality infrastructure is indispensable so as to ensure that the introduction of organizational and technical novelties does not cause life and limb to suffer damage." Nevertheless, quality infrastructure is not the only prerequisite for sustainable development. The experts agreed that technology transfer on its own would not suffice to strengthen the innovative force of developing and newly industrialized countries. The tenor of the meeting was that setting up own competencies and an international network are at least just as important.

Briefly

EU Twinning Project Albania

PTB, the Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing (BAM) and the state metrology institutes in Austria and the Czech Republic have won an EU twinning project. Albania is to profit, whose [metrology institute in Tirana](#) will be supported by the provision of specialist advisory service and laboratory equipment amounting to two million euros. Currently, the experts are, on behalf of the EU, compiling the technical specifications for the acquisition of the equipment. The project officially commences at the beginning of 2011.

Promotion of Trade in Colombia

Advising and training are the central tasks of PTB experts in an EU project for the [promotion of trade in Colombia](#). In the three-year project, the exportability of the country's products is to be strengthened. To achieve this, technical obstacles to trade are to be reduced and the responsible institutions strengthened.

Quality Infrastructure for Africa

A new edition of the brochure on the current activities of PTB for the establishment and the development of quality infrastructure in Africa is now available. The subject is becoming an increasingly hot topic, because currently the proportion of African developing countries participating in world trade is continually decreasing.

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