

Press Release

Munich, September 23, 2015

Heinz Hermann Thiele is 2015 German-Brazilian Personality of the Year

At the annual bilateral Economic Meeting, the German-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry named Heinz Hermann Thiele 2015 German-Brazilian Personality of the Year.

This annual award is presented to one leading figure from Germany and one from Brazil whose work and commitment make a special contribution to strengthening bilateral ties. This year the award honors the exceptional engagement of Heinz Hermann Thiele in Brazil – both in the business sector and in the context of social projects. Thiele has maintained close relations with Brazil for over 40 years now.

“Quite apart from my commercial activities, I treasure this country on account of many valuable contacts and friendships that I have here. Despite the sharp decline in the business environment, we, like most other German companies, are standing by our engagement, not least because of our long-term personal and emotional bonds with this country,” said Thiele in his acceptance speech at the presentation ceremony. “Brazil also has to contend with rising levels of corruption, although more recently industry has been working systematically to eradicate this phenomenon and we hope that these efforts meet with success.”

In 2013, Thiele inaugurated the Knorr-Bremse Group’s new Brazilian headquarters at Itupeva, 75 kilometers northeast of São Paulo. The Itupeva facility is considered one of the Knorr-Bremse Group’s most productive sites. The Group has some 25,000 employees and will this year report sales of approximately EUR 6 billion. The Itupeva site represents a volume of investment of some EUR 40 million and forms part of a global investment program spanning the past five years that has seen more than EUR 1 billion invested in plants and production equipment. In South America too, Knorr-Bremse is the leading manufacturer of braking systems for commercial vehicles and rail vehicles.

The Group decided to build a leading-edge factory in Itupeva near Jundiaí as there was no room for expansion at its existing site in São Paulo. Knorr-Bremse also took the opportunity to bring the production equipment into line with the state of the art and step up the level of vertical integration. With a gross floor area of 31,000 m², the factory unites redesigned structured production processes with the latest production methods and greater conservation of natural resources at a highly efficient site.

Through its Global Care association, Knorr-Bremse has also been demonstrating a commitment to social causes in Brazil for many years now. The main areas in which support is provided in Brazil are vocational training and continuing professional development, caring for the homeless, and helping to access supplies of drinking water. Most recently, at the beginning of September, Knorr-Bremse Global Care joined with local partner “Pro Brasil” to open a workshop in São Paulo where women with little or no income are taught to sew. In all, since the association was founded in 2005, Global Care has already invested more than EUR 11 million in social projects around the world.

Along with Heinz Hermann Thiele, at the presentation ceremony on September 20, 2015, on the Brazilian side the personality award went to Weber Porto, CEO of Evonik Degussa Brasil Ltda. with responsibility for South and Central America, in recognition of his commitment to German-Brazilian relations. The Journalism Award, which was presented this year for the first time, went to Dr. Hildegard Stausberg, Latin America correspondent of the newspaper "Die Welt".

Caption: Heinz Hermann Thiele receives the 2015 German-Brazilian Personality of the Year Award.

The **Knorr-Bremse Group** is the world's leading manufacturer of braking systems for rail and commercial vehicles. For more than 110 years now the company has pioneered the development, production, marketing and servicing of state-of-the-art braking systems. In the rail vehicle systems sector, the product portfolio also includes intelligent entrance systems, HVAC systems, power conversion systems, control components, and windscreen wiper systems, as well as platform screen doors, friction material, driver assistance systems and control technology. Knorr-Bremse also offers driving simulators and e-learning systems for optimum train crew training. In the commercial vehicle systems sector, the product range includes complete braking systems with driver assistance systems, as well as torsional vibration dampers, powertrain-related solutions and transmission control systems for enhanced energy efficiency and fuel economy.

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