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## Editorial - VGB PowerTech Journal 9/2016

# Welcoming address to the VGB Congress “Power Plants 2016”

The electricity market and the power generation industry in Europe are still experiencing radical transformation.

Corporate structures are changing. Renewables and conventional generation are having to grow together. The Paris Agreement of December 2015 raises further demands for climate protection. At the same time, we see unsettled energy markets with an extensively uncertain legal framework and a market situation burdened and inhibited by regulatory intervention. Subsidies on one side and competition on the other are counterproductive in terms of reliable power supply. There are fewer and fewer investors willing to fund the developments necessary for the future - in all sources of energy. Even hydro power, so important for environmental conservation and climate protection, is now overstrained by the market price pressure both in round the clock supply and in peak load coverage, and new investments in wind power are being increasingly influenced by competition and the market throughout Europe. A further long-running issue in electricity supply is that of missing acceptance. Since nuclear power was politically pushed aside at least in Germany, acceptance has now been achieved by renewables and the expansion of the grid. Yet regarding lignite a worrying trend of impulsiveness beyond the bounds of any legal framework is developing.

In that difficult context, companies face the challenge of how to position themselves and be fit for the future. The issues cover a broad range, concerning corporate organisation, strategy and of course also technology.

At our VGB Congress in 2016 under the motto of

### **„New Horizons: Navigating the Power Industry in Times of Change“**

we wish not only to explore and discuss these key topics, but also to imbue them with impetus for our industry.

We are pleased to welcome you to Leipzig for the Congress on 21 and 22 September.

In the plenary session, we will be casting our gaze beyond energy supply itself. Dr. Jörg Rothermel, member of the governing board of the German chemical industry association VCI, will be examining “The role of energy supply in Industry 4.0”, and Jens Baier of the Boston Consulting Group deals with “Management changes in connection with the industrial transformation of processes”. Climate protection, decarbonisation and security of supply then round off the forum.

With the presentations which follow, the VGB Congress provides an in-depth examination of the following topics:

- Integration of renewables
- Investments in new-build projects
- Optimisation of existing plant and environmental protection and
- Commercial optimisation

The VGB Congress is therefore the ideal forum for an exchange of information and ideas on how leading technologies in Europe are key to overcoming economic challenges.

We are therefore greatly looking forward to your attendance at and contribution to the European conference of the power and heat generation industry, the VGB Congress 2016. Together with all those involved from industry, politics, administration and science, we look forward to welcoming you in Leipzig in September and joining you in discussing not only the challenges facing the industry, but also the ways by which we will overcome them.

„New Horizons: Navigating the Power Industry in Times of Change“ - a motto with which we endeavour to show the way to the future of the industry.