Reunde von Herrn Oberbürgermeister Jürgen Roters anlässlich des Empfangs für die Repräsentanten aus den Partnerstädten Göteborg, London, Genua und Rotterdam im EU-Projekt CELSIUS am 10. Oktober 2013, 15:30 Uhr, Historisches Rathaus, Muschelsaal

Mr. Riesgo,
Mr. Houben,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you to the CELSIUS-conference in Cologne. I am very pleased, that the City of Cologne is now hosting this project meeting and welcome the representatives of the European Commission, as well as our CELSIUS-partner-cities here in our beautiful and historic city. The conference and the site opening in Köln-Wahn is an essential part of the CELSIUS-project. CELSIUS is supported by the European Commission within the SmartCities Initiative of European Cities.

Mr. Riesgo as our guest from the European Commission in Brussels and responsible for the Smart-City Initiative in the European Commission for Energy had the chance to see one of our CELSIUS sites in Cologne. The warmth of sewage water will be used for heating of bigger facilities as schools, hospitals or other complex buildings in Cologne. In case of Köln-Wahn it is a school-building which will be heated in a sustainable, CO₂-reduced way. This site is a good example for more efficiency in the use of energy and to put more into practice climate-protection and to prevent climate change.

CELSIUS is an example for our efforts, which are done by the city of Cologne, to reach the targets of climate protection. In 2008 Cologne was one of the first cities who signed the covenant of Mayors, which is meanwhile followed by and respected by more than 5.000 cities in Europe. This response gives the hope, that Europe will be successful to reach the climate protection targets of

- 20 percent reduction of CO₂-Emissions,
- 20 percent more efficiency in energy-use and
- 20 percent renewable in the primary energy-production
until the end of this decade.

One very helpful instrument from the European Commission to act in this successful way is the project support for example by the Smart Cities Initiative. Gothenborg, Cologne, London, Genova and Rotterdam found together in the CELSIUS-project to take a small, but ambitious step in the right direction.

The climate-protection strategy of the City of Cologne and the SmartCity Cologne scheme are strategic important projects for our city. We follow not less than the sustainability of our city and the viability of our children. The consequence of climate change for our city was just investigated in a research-project by the German Weather Service and the results were presented Tuesday for the citizens of Cologne. High Flood of the river Rhine, dryness of water-supply or thunder-storms and other consequences have to be taken account for also in Cologne.

In 2009 the City of Cologne submitted the first SEAP, in words Sustainable Energy Action Plan, to the Brussels office. Meanwhile we have improved and going together with our regional energy supplier “RheinEnergie” and other important companies in Cologne to develop a successful SmartCity Cologne Movement. In the evening, at the same location, as we are now, we will have a kick-off event for companies and citizens to sign up and to follow our way in energy-saving, energy-efficiency and climate-protection for our beautiful city.

Those of you, who have participated in the working-group-meetings in the morning, have already recognized and visited the exhibition “Dialog-Kölner-Klima-Wandel” in our city-hall opposite of this building. There you find a lot of creative ideas and initiatives of Cologne people to practice climate-protection and more efficiency in energy-consumption.

Together with our strong partners we follow our strategy to reach the targets and to add our small piece to European, or better, world efforts to combat climate change and save a worth living planet for our children and successors.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

thank you for your engagement in energy-saving and for the excellent and fruitful cooperation in the CELSIUS-project.

I hope you will have more good and effective working-group-meetings tomorrow. And if you have the chance to stay in Cologne I hope you get an interesting and enduring impression of our 2000 years old city and its cultural heritage.