

2007-10-05 | 000-001-007 DE-EN
SCHAEFFLER KG, HERZOGENAURACH

Maria-Elisabeth Schaeffler is awarded the Cross of Merit, 1st Class of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for special services to the nation

Federal President Horst Koehler yesterday awarded Maria-Elisabeth Schaeffler with the Cross of Merit, 1st Class of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. The award was presented during a special ceremony in Berlin's Schloss Bellevue to mark the occasion of the 17th anniversary of German reunification. The Office of the Federal President explained the award with the following statement: "As a successful business woman, Mrs. Schaeffler manages INA-Holding Schaeffler KG, one of the largest industrial companies under family ownership. In a voluntary capacity in her role as Vice President of the Nuremberg Chamber of Commerce and Industry, she has been committed to the economy of the Mid-Franconian region since 2000 and is especially dedicated to the needs of trainees in the region. She has been a member of the board of the Bavarian Red Cross since 1977 and has been a member of the council of the Friedrich-Alexander University in Erlangen and Nuremberg since 2002.

The Federal President honored 50 citizens during the ceremony for their outstanding achievements in the fields of politics, in social and economic issues and intellectual work who have therefore made a special contribution to the Federal Republic of Germany. The Order of Merit was instituted in 1951 by Federal President Theodor Heuss and it is the only general state decoration and therefore the highest tribute the Federal Republic of Germany can pay to individuals for services to the nation.

Maria-Elisabeth Schaeffler was presented with an award for the first time on a federal level in 2001 for her entrepreneurial achievements and dedication to social issues when she received the Cross of Merit on Ribbon of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. She then went on to receive numerous awards both in Germany and abroad.

Following the death of her husband Georg Schaeffler in 1996, Maria-Elisabeth Schaeffler and her son Georg F.W. Schaeffler continued his work with a high level of dedication as sole partners of INA-Holding Schaeffler KG. Since taking on this responsibility eleven years ago, the sales volume of the company has quadrupled and the number of employees has doubled. The Schaeffler Group and its 63,000 employees achieved sales of 8.3 billion euros during the financial year of 2006. With its brands INA, FAG and LuK, the Schaeffler Group is present at 180 locations in 50 countries worldwide and is among the world's leading manufacturers of rolling bearings and a renowned supplier to the automotive industry. Alongside her commitment to the company, Maria-Elisabeth Schaeffler is dedicated to many aspects in social and charitable work, education, the arts and culture.

- Press picture "149540_aaa_rgb.jpg"

Maria-Elisabeth Schaeffler receives the Cross of Merit, 1st Class of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany from the Federal President, Horst Koehler. The Order of Merit is the only general state decoration and therefore the highest award given by the Federal Republic of Germany for services to the nation. On the right, Eva Luise Koehler.

Source: Federal Government/Sandra Steins

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The Schaeffler Group with its product brands INA, LuK and FAG is a leading manufacturer of rolling bearings and linear products as well as a renowned supplier to the automotive industry of high-precision products and systems for engines, transmissions and chassis applications. The group of companies stands for exceptional customer focus, innovative ability and the highest possible level of quality. Sales of over € 9.5 billion were generated at over 180 locations in more than 50 countries in 2010. With around 70,000 employees worldwide, the Schaeffler Group is one of the largest German and European industrial companies in family ownership.

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