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## SHORT NEWS

### **Business Forum in Munich**

#### **Festive event at Bayerischer Hof on 30 January 2020**

The international law firm BEITEN BURKHARDT invited to its first "BEITEN BURKHARDT Business Forum" on 30 January 2020 at the Bayerischer Hof in Munich to mark the beginning of a new decade. The evening with more than 500 guests was a further development of a well-known talk event held since 2007 with top-class speakers.

Keynote speaker was the former Vice Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Sigmar Gabriel. As one of the most popular former politicians in demand, he inspires with his lectures on global and socio-political topics as well as on economic and environmental issues.

In his welcoming address, host Philipp Cotta, Managing Partner of BEITEN BURKHARDT from Munich, talked about the successful 30-year history of the firm. Apart from his special thanks to the partners and staff, he was particularly grateful to the law firm's clients.

Then Sigmar Gabriel, received with much applause, had the floor. In his lecture lasting almost one hour under the headline "The importance of media and journalism in times of globalisation and digitalisation" he also examined the current situation in European and world politics. He drew, for instance, a comparison between the twenties of the 20th and the 21st century, from a political and mental point of view, while emphasizing, illustrated with many examples, the achievements of our time, such as peace, democracy, prosperity. But he also discussed and highlighted the challenges facing Germany in particular, due to digitalisation, currently for example due to Chinese dominance in 5G technology, the new energy policy and global distortions. According to Gabriel, stability and old certainties are at risk. Europe was no longer the gravitational centre of the world, globally there was a shift in power, a new policy of interests. Gabriel reminded us to be vigilant and also to be flexible in our thoughts. Germany had to make sure of its role, he said, and warned that it would not be possible to remain leading as the "last vegetarian in a world of carnivores". Our country, heavily dependent on the international value chain, is particularly exposed and vulnerable. Politics must now provide a firm compass for society and the economy.

Sigmar Gabriel's exciting and also entertaining lecture, which was frequently accompanied by applause, was followed by an intensive question and answer session led by Dr Axel Goetz (BEITEN BURKHARDT), in line with Gabriel's credo that tough discussions and open exchange are absolutely necessary in order to create more transparency in an increasingly complex world, thus promoting trust in democratic institution. The following get-together at the Hotel Bayerischer Hof provided a perfect platform for business representatives to exchange ideas and network.

