

German Government



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Who you are:

Dirk Niebel

Minister for Economic Cooperation, Germany

Gudrun Kopp

State Secretary to the Minister for Economic Cooperation, Germany

Hans-Jürgen Beerfeltz

State Secretary to the Minister for Economic Cooperation, Germany

Reiner Scheffler

Manager of energy technology company PowerTech, Germany

Since Dirk Niebel took office, the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development has been pursuing a new approach: rather than focussing on development aid, your ministry's goal is to create win-win situations for the German economy. In fact the initial intention was to abolish the ministry altogether, as in your view its function to date has been that of a global welfare institution. However, you then decided to transform the ministry according to the following principle: "Sustainable development inevitably leads to economic activity, and if development cooperation benefits German companies, so much the better" (Niebel). Your government mandate requires you to promote the interests of Germany economy accordingly.

Your position regarding Yasuni national park:

Niebel's predecessor, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, had come to an agreement with the Ecuadorian president whereby the German Government would contribute 50 million dollars per year over a 13-year period to help preserve Yasuní. You are highly sceptical of this agreement. You do not understand why the international community should help Ecuador forgo oil production. You are not interested in forgoing, you are interested in creating. You see Ecuador as a country which is rich in resources, but poor as a result of the actions of its own government, which has plundered it for decades. The best thing for Ecuador would be to be able to participate in global trade by means of oil production. No country can achieve development relying solely on external aid. Rapid growth is the only way for Ecuador to alleviate poverty among its population and reduce public debt. As far as you are concerned, preserving Yasuní and leaving the oil in the ground is a left-wing delusion which helps no one.

You are not interested in getting into a discussion about Yasuní, and reject all talks with the Ecuadorian government. You know that Ecuador needs foreign contributions amounting to 100 million dollars to be paid into the trust fund in order to save the national park. However, you do not approve of the kind of international fund envisioned by Ecuador. You see these funds as being susceptible to corruption and difficult to control. What is more, you just cancelled Germany's yearly contribution of 200 million euros to the Global Fund, used to fight Malaria, Aids and Tuberculosis worldwide. You have also cancelled contributions to the Civil Peace Service and global gender equity. You don't see the point in charity – your priority is to fill order books, and you want to create a win-win situation for the German economy. In any event, the policy pursued by your ministry has created 140,000 jobs, and each euro spent on development generates returns of 1.80 euros for the German economy.

You do not have money to give away. In fact, the next place where you need to invest in development aid is Vietnam, where Siemens is to build a new underground network even though competing bidders had submitted a cheaper proposal. Once Germany agreed to supplement the difference of 86 million euros, Siemens was awarded the contract.

Minister Niebel usually takes companies with him on his trips abroad. This time too, the manager of a major German corporation, PowerTech, is with him. PowerTech is a leading international energy technology manufacturer, both in the field of oil production and renewable energies such as wind and hydro power. Your goal is to enable the company to take part in the extraction of the oil under favourable conditions.

Your demands:

You want the Ecuadorian government to pursue oil production in Yasuní National Park, as this is the only way for the economy to grow, for new jobs to be created and for both Ecuador and Germany to make a profit. You are absolutely opposed to the Yasuní initiative, as you don't want to set a precedent. Otherwise, we would soon be in a situation where every poor country comes to the wealthy North to ask for compensation payments instead of developing their economy.

Your goal is simply to do business with the Ecuadorian government and seek to ensure that the German energy technology company PowerTech is awarded the contract to build cutting-edge pipeline systems in Ecuador.

Your task for the first unofficial round of negotiations:

Seek out potential coalition partners who you think might have interests similar to yours. Discuss in your group who will negotiate with whom. Approach the other groups and find out whether you can form an interest group to further your position.