



Dr. Thomas M. Zielke

Candidate “Director Standardization” of International Telecommunication Union ITU

Fresh approaches for new challenges

Digitization and mobile communications networks are changing our daily lives, as well as business and commerce – now and in the future. But the rapid developments of our time also pose new challenges for a tradition-rich organization like the ITU. How can artificial intelligence, the upcoming 6 G standard or fintech services be standardized? Which key topics must the ITU focus on? How can the ITU strike a balance between self-confident independence and cooperation?

To answer these crucial questions, fresh ideas and innovative, future-oriented approaches are needed. It requires knowledge, experience and resilient networks in the field of standardization. That is why Thomas Zielke, with the support of the German Government, is applying for the position as „Director Standardization“ at the ITU.

A Broad Range of experience

Since 1993 Thomas has dedicated his professional life to international cooperation, removing trade barriers and to international standardization policy. As a lawyer he is specialized on technical regulation and international collaboration. Thomas has a broad set of international operative management experience in standardization, diplomacy and communication in different organizations and structures.

Currently he is with the German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi), Department for Digitization and Innovation, with an annual budget responsibility up to around 45 Mio. US-Dollars. Among other mandates he serves as the German Head of Delegation to the EU-Committee on Standards in Brussels and Head of German National Delegation to ETSI. As governmental program coordinator Thomas works with partners from Azerbaijan, Jordan, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, the Eurasian Economic Union, as Co-Chair of the Chinese-German Commission on Standards and for the U.S. German Standards Panel.

From 2011 until 2016 he was the appointed Director of communications in the public and private sector and CEO of Representative of German Industry and Trade in Washington D.C. Having made one of his first career moves at the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations in New York, Thomas’ „return“ to the UN would bring him full circle.

„Extensive knowledge and multi-faceted experience are important, but not sufficient qualities for an ITU director. A good portion of teamwork skills, persuasiveness and passion are also needed.“

Thomas M. Zielke

Thomas, what are your priority goals if elected?

“First I will conduct a process on how ITU-T could even more focus on the right and most rewarding key issues in standardization for the business community and industries.

Second: I will work hard to find more members and contributors who could do both: helping to create standards accepted everywhere and thus supporting ITU at the same time.

Third: I will build more solid bridges by fostering substantial cooperation with other international standardization organizations. I assure that I will listen to and work with all stakeholders and the exceptional team working at ITU-T!”

Personal Information

Age: 61 | Education: Lawyer | Nationality: German (EU) | Family: Married to Stefanie Zielke, one son (23), one daughter (17) | Contact: Thomas.Zielke@bmwi.bund.de or <https://de.linkedin.com/in/dr-thomas-zielke>



Dr. Thomas M. Zielke

Biography and Work Experience

Current Position

since August 2016

Director, Head of Division, Office for National and International Standardization Policy and Patent Policy, BMWi, Berlin.

Representative and Head of Delegation to the EU-Committee on Standards, SME-Standardization Support Program, National Delegation to ETSI, Member of Steering Committees at DIN and DKE, nat. Advisory Committees on ISO and DIN-Standards and to IEC, Co-Chair of the Chinese-German Commission on Standards, EEC-Collaboration, U.S.-German Standards-Panel. Budget responsibility 45 Mio. €

Project Leader for EU Twinning Projects on Standardization/Conformity Assessment in Jordan (2018 – 2019) and Azerbaijan (2020 – 2022)

Germany announces Candidacy for the ITU-Council 2022

As a solid and reliable member in this important board, Germany can continue contributing to the further development of all three sectors of the ITU. Germany will sustain strengthening the ITU development sector to drive digital transformation. In close cooperation with the Ministry for economic cooperation and development we are realizing a reasonable number of digital projects in Africa. Let's make the WTDC 2022 a success !

Thomas stands for

- Professional competence
- Organisational knowledge
- A fresh perspective to reform
- International networking
- Versatility
- Teamwork
- Leading intercultural teams
- Understanding business needs
- Strategic foresight

Work Experience

1/2011 – 7/2016	President, Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT) , Washington D.C., RGIT the liaison office of the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and the German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK).
3/2009 – 12/2010	Director Public Relations , RGIT, Washington D.C., Editor <i>Washington News</i> and website. Membership and stakeholder-relation, parliament and business delegations affairs, publishing.
12/2007 – 2/2009	Director Patent Policy, BMWi , Advisor to the Secretary on international and EU-patent policy, responsible for the German patent initiative, incentive and incubator programs, budget responsibility 22 Mio. €
5/2001 – 11/2007	Director Communications , BMWi, Advisor to the Secretary, responsible for all printed publications, websites, trade fair presentations and events of the ministry. Liaison to the the spokesman of the Federal Chancellor. 13 staff members, budget responsibility: 12 Mio. €
4/1998 – 4/2001	Deputy Director , Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, SME department, unit for EU-matters. Delegate to the Administrative Committee of the EU-Multiannual SME-Program in Brussels.



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Biography and Work Experience

4/1997 – 3/1998	First Secretary, Diplomat, German Foreign Office, Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations, New York N.Y., 2nd UN (Economic) Committee, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), acting member of the member-states supervisory board for UNICEF.
10/1993 – 3/1997	Gov. Official, Assistant Director, Federal Ministry of Economics, Bonn, Germany. Task Force for the New Federal States.
2 – 8/1993	Lawyer at the law firm Prof. Börner, Düsseldorf, Germany.
3 – 5/1992	Junior lawyer at the law firm B. Hausmann, Johannesburg, South-Africa.
3/1990 – 1/1993	Junior lawyer at the law firm Blättermann & Scheier, Düsseldorf.

“I firmly believe in international cooperation. Because international standards are a contribution to peace and prosperity. They shape digital progress on mobile or stationary devices and serve the needs also of those who do not have a standardization infrastructure of their own.”

Thomas M. Zielke



Education and Languages

3/1997	Dr. iur. (cp. PhD) with thesis on public administration and Air Traffic Law, University of Tübingen, magna cum laude
1990 – 1993	Admission to Bar , District Court of Düsseldorf
1982 – 1989	Studies Law, Political Sciences. Law degree, University of Bonn, Faculty of Law and States Sciences (Economy)
1981 – 1982	Studies Political Science and History, University of Bonn

Languages: German (native), English (fluent), Italian and French (basic knowledge)



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Biography and Work Experience

Selected Publications and Press Statements

2020	Interview on the Occasion of the German EU-Council Presidency in „Enjeux, (AFNOR) Magazine de la Normalization et du Management“, Paris 2020
2017	Interview on Standardization Strategies in Germany, VDMA News, Frankfurt 07/2017
2010	<i>The First Year of the Obama Administration</i> , TRADE magazine 1/2010, New York N.Y.
2005	Co-author: <i>Goal – Die Welt zu Gast bei Freunden, The Official Country Digest to the FIFA WM 2006™</i> , Bertelsmann Publications, Gütersloh 2005
2000	Co-author: <i>Economic Promotion in the New Federal States, Periodical</i> , Berlin 2004
1999	Co-author: Sommer/von Westphalen: <i>Citizens Dictionary</i> , Oldenbourg, München 1999
1998	<i>Air Traffic Rules in Airport Agglomerations – Rules on Demand of Public Services (PHD-Thesis)</i> , Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1998

Selected Relevant Engagements as Speaker

The Royal Institute of International Affairs CHATAM HOUSE, U.K. G 7-Event on Digital Technical Standards, Strengthening the Multi-stakeholder-System, Remarks, **London**, 3/2021

OxFirst/ETSI Conference on the CJEU's Decision in JAMES ELLIOTT, and its Impact on Standardization in Europe, Virtuell Conf., Key Point Speech, **London** Dec. 2020

Technical University **Berlin**, Institute of Technology and Management: Interoperability in the Digital Age – Licensing of Standard Essential Patents, Dec. 2020, Welcome Speech

Panel Discussion „Bilateral Standardization Partnership for an International Agenda“ (Co-Chair and speaker), Indo-German Working Group on Quality Infrastructure, **Delhi**, Jan. 2020

Opening Statement: Conference on the Launch of the German Standardization Roadmap Artificial Intelligence, Grand Ballroom, Ministry for Economic Affairs, **Berlin**, Oct.2019

Chairman/Moderator Panel on the Importance of Standardization in the Eurasian Economic Union and the EU, Moscow World Trade Center, **Moscow** June 2019

82nd IEC General Meeting, **Busan**/Rep. of Korea, IEC Regulator Forum, Presentation „Using and Referencing IEC Work from a Government Perspective“, Oct. 2018

U.S. German Standards Panel 2018, hosted by ANSI and DIN, **Washington D.C.**, Apr. 2018, Opening Remarks

2017 Session of Chinese-German Standardization Cooperation Commission, Co-Chair and Introductory + Closing Remarks, **Qingdao**/China, June 2017