



**Speech by Dr Herbert Diess, Chairman of the Board of Volkswagen AG, on the world premiere of the new Volkswagen Golf\* on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2019 in Wolfsburg**

*Check against delivery.*

Ladies and gentlemen,

The premiere of a new Golf is a very special event for us.

And amongst many other valuable guests, it is a special honour for me to welcome Giorgio Giugiaro. Thank you that you together with your wife are with us tonight.

Over the course of seven generations, the Golf has impressed more than 35 million customers. The entire automobile industry expects a new Golf to set the standard.

While our engineers here in Wolfsburg developed the first Golf, the industry was undergoing a fundamental change. The 50ies and 60ies were characterized by the euphoria of progress and society's striving for prosperity. The symbol for both was the car. Anybody who could was happy to show what they had: Capacity. Chrome. Tail fins. However, in the early 70ies, a new objectivity became reality.

The Club of Rome published a new study, "The Limits to Growth", in 1972. And on top of this, there was the first oil crisis in 1973, with car-free Sundays and exploding fuel prices. For the first time, resource efficiency stood at the top of the wish list for many car buyers.

It was time for a radically functional and economic car. At the same time, customers expected even more driving comfort. Even more space. Even more performance.

The Golf was our answer. With its balanced overall concept, the Golf marked the beginning of a new era. A new vehicle class had been established. The Golf class.

45 years have now passed since the launch of the first Golf. The "Club of Rome" has become "Fridays for Future". The oil crisis has become the climate crisis. The Old Economy has become the Digital Economy. The calls for climate-friendly technologies are becoming ever louder. Apps and digital applications are changing our daily lives. We are always online.

The customers of today continue to expect a new vehicle to answer the questions of the future with innovation and without compromise. And today, as ever: the new Golf is our answer.

With the new Golf, we are providing a broad spectrum of semi-electrified drives. The new Golf makes it possible to access a whole variety of climate-friendly drive technologies. And every customer can decide for themselves just how big the first step should be.



Highly efficient new petrol, diesel and natural gas engines, mild hybrids and plug-in hybrids gives the customer the choice. This is an important intermediary step on the way to reducing our share of 1 percent of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to zero by 2050.

And with its intelligent assist systems, the Golf is pushing forward in the field of semi-automated driving. It can communicate online with its environment and other vehicles. It has the operating convenience of a tablet on wheels.

Ladies and gentlemen,

almost one tenth of all vehicles sold by Volkswagen Group, which offers more than 300 models, has the same label: VW Golf. The Golf is a world car. We sell it on five continents. It is the car used by all age groups from young people taking their driving tests to the young at heart. It is a timeless classic for everyone. It's classless - both in front of the opera house and the clubhouse.

Ladies and gentlemen,

the new Golf is ready to hit the road now. The first customer vehicles will be delivered to the German and Austrian dealerships at the beginning of December. In the first quarter of 2020, we will deliver the new Golf to customers in the main European markets in the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Spain. The important overseas markets in China, USA, Australia and Japan will follow.

Ladies and gentlemen,

the Golf is once again the right vehicle at the right time.

And that is what makes it a true Golf.

Thank you!

\*The vehicle has not gone on sale yet.