

**Speech by HE Ole Egberg Mikkelsen, Ambassador of Denmark to Poland
Handing over a diploma of the Danish Export Association
and His Royal Highness Prince Henrik's Medal
to Mr. Jens-Christian Møller, founder and CEO of BIC Electric Group
Szczecin, 7th June 2018**

Mr. Marshall, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Guests,

I am very honored to be present here today to hand over the Diploma of the Danish Export Association and His Royal Highness Prince Henrik's Medal of honor to a member of the Danish-Polish business community, Mr. Jens-Christian Møller, founder and CEO of BIC Electric Group.

First of all, I wish to convey my warmest congratulations to Mr. Møller and to everybody who have made BIC Electric Group a success, including your employees and your family.

You started out your business career back in the 90's in Denmark's industrial heartland – Central Jutland.

I don't think that is a co-incidence. Over time, Western Denmark has fostered many entrepreneurs that have gone from being local to being global within a short time span, based on ingenuity, hard work and an international outlook. Thus, you inscribe yourself in a strong entrepreneurial tradition – the Spirit of Jutland.

Since the start in the 90's, you have developed your business tremendously. Now BIC Electric is a global operation with about 200 employees – expected to increase to 300 in 2018. You have affiliated companies in Denmark, Norway and Poland and you are involved in projects all over the world – over 150 projects in more than 20 countries in the past year.

What is the business model behind this commercial success?

BIC Group is an international technical service provider, servicing large industrial corporations. You handle the workmanship, including the hassle of paperwork, visas, transportation, accommodation relating to international projects etc. Your customers can scale their capacity up or down easily and smoothly, and avoid the costs of recruiting their own employees.

Thus, basically, your customers can focus on what they are good at, namely electrical and mechanical engineering, while you ensure the workmanship. Both parties can optimize costs and improve competitiveness. It is a clear win-win. The further away from home and the more complicated, the better.

This has been very beneficial for your Danish customers. That includes the Danish wind industry, which is operating all over the world.

So, as a subcontractor you are a part of the global success of the Danish wind industry. Your name might not be on wind turbines, but they would not be there without you. The bestowment of the medal of honor to you is a recognition of this.

The medal of honor is also a recognition of your personal engagement in furthering Danish exports and your willingness to share your experience with the Danish business community. I know that this is highly appreciated.

So there are many good reasons for awarding you the medal of honor.

However, today's ceremony also has a broader meaning and importance. It goes beyond far beyond the success of an individual company.

It has a strong symbolic importance in Danish-Polish relations.

It is not a coincidence that we are celebrating a Polish-Danish success story in Szczecin, Western Pomerania. This is where Danish investments started to pour in after the transformation in the early 90's.

This is still the region in Poland where you have by far the biggest number of Danish investors operating. They have chosen this part of Poland because the local and regional authorities have always had a very positive approach to foreign investors.

They see foreign investors as partners – not as adversaries. Investors feel really welcome here. They know that the local and regional authorities are always willing to walk the extra mile when it comes to furthering the local business environment.

So the ceremony today is also in honor of the city of Szczecin and the region, where the success of BIC Electric Group has unfolded over the years.

I wish to take this opportunity to commend both the regional and local authorities - represented here today by the Marshal and the Mayor - for their supportive and positive attitude towards the local business community and foreign investors. You are truly living up to Szczecin's motto: "Szczecin jest otwarty" – Szczecin is open – also for business and investment.

Finally, the award ceremony today also symbolizes the development that Danish investments in Poland have undergone in the last decades.

In the beginning, many Danish companies moved here to set up simple manufacturing operations and sometimes also to sell their products. Today most of the Danish investments in Poland are part of highly sophisticated value chains and globalized production processes.

Poland's biggest asset is the highly skilled labor force, especially in engineering, and an advanced industrial infrastructure. The success of BIC Electric is a prime example of this.

Let me conclude by expressing my hope that BIC Electric will continue to grow and prosper. That will benefit both Denmark and Poland.

Thank you for your attention.