



Mercedes-Benz

**Excerpts from the statement
on the occasion of the
Sprinter World Premiere
at Duisburg, 6 February 2018**

(The spoken word is binding)

**Dr. Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler AG
and Head of Mercedes-Benz Cars**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I extend a warm welcome to you here in Duisburg!

“Next Level” is exactly the right heading for this event, because the new Sprinter will once again redefine the standards – in a segment to which it gave its name more than 20 years ago. It’s the Sellotape and Hoover of the transport sector. If you’re moving house, you don’t order a van from the local vehicle hire company; you order a Sprinter.

So, it’s no wonder that the Sprinter is to Mercedes-Benz Vans what the S-Class is to Mercedes-Benz Cars: an icon, the core of the brand, the driver of change and technological innovation. And the benchmark in their respective sectors. For instance, in 1995, the Sprinter was the first van in its class with ABS. It got ESP in 2002 and, in 2013, came Euro VI engines and Crosswind Assist. The new Sprinter will seamlessly continue this story of innovation – way beyond the hardware alone.

You see, the big issues for which the new Sprinter delivers answers in commercial applications are those currently occupying the entire industry. It’s about connectivity and digitalisation. It’s about increasingly automated driving.

And, of course, it's also about electrification and alternative drives. At Daimler, we address these forward-looking issues under the heading CASE: Connected, Autonomous, Shared and Electric.

No other manufacturer has anything like the scope we have to benefit across the board from these opportunities: from vans to trucks, buses and mobility services to cars. And we'll make full use of this strategic advantage. Just last Friday, for example, we presented the new Mercedes A-Class in Amsterdam, equipped with MBUX, our all-new infotainment system. MBUX will fundamentally change the way we interact with our vehicles and navigate to new destinations. MBUX is capable of learning and adapts more than ever to the driver's individual needs.

The new Sprinter will be the second vehicle across the entire Group to receive MBUX. Lots of functions, such as meter-precise navigation to exactly the right loading ramp, are helpful for commercial users in particular. And that's exactly what "next level" means for us: We want to offer the customer the best possible, tailor-made overall package. And these days that means, above all, the right combination of hardware and software. While it might be useful to a car driver to be able to access key vehicle data via smartphone, for a fleet customer, this could be a tangible competitive advantage. So, why should he be left behind?

Besides connectivity, electrification is becoming an increasingly important topic for our customers. Electric mobility will establish itself first in cities. And this where alternative drives present a particularly interesting option for commercial delivery and courier services, also in terms of range. At the same time, forecasts for the package delivery sector show sharp increases over the years ahead. Which is why we're expanding our line-up significantly. We're electrifying our entire commercial vehicle portfolio step-by-step. We already presented the eCanter and the eVito in 2017. And they'll be followed this year by the electric Citaro, while today we'll give you a first impression of an electric Sprinter.

The Sprinter is our latest demonstration of how CASE helps fulfil our customers' needs on a detail level even more individually. Now and in future, too. Our CASE activities are paired with major investment. And we can afford to do this because our core business is going better than ever, right now.

Last year, we sold a total of 3.3 million cars, buses, trucks and vans. In our Cars business, we're looking at our 59th record month in a row. In 2017, we were once again the most successful premium brand worldwide. Our Vans business is also

looking amazing, with four record years in succession. And the lion's share of this was again down to the current Sprinter, which completed its final full year with a sales record. Daimler, as a whole, benefits from all this success. Our Group revenues grew by 7 percent to 164,3 billion euros. Profit increased by twice as much as revenue, which means our growth has been extremely profitable. And it's on the basis of this strong position that we've planned a great deal for 2018 – strengthening our core business across all divisions. In parallel to this, we're pushing the four CASE principles resolutely forward.

And our transformation goes even further. The scale of change in our products must also be matched by change in Daimler as a company. To continue translating the opportunities of the future into compelling products, we also need a new culture. We've launched this cultural change at Daimler with the "Leadership 2020" programme. The initiative already has thousands of ambassadors – across all hierarchies and locations worldwide. I am one of them. The mood for change is enormous. And 2018 is the year for taking full advantage of that and building upon it: This means seeing even greater opportunities instead of risks.

And it means understanding transformation as something we must work on continuously every single day.

It makes me very proud to have a team that can create a vehicle like the new Sprinter. And it makes me proud to see how great the will and desire for change is among our employees across all parts of the company. It's exactly this combination that's lifting Daimler onto the next level. And I'm happy to play my part in that and to work together with our 290,000 employees to shape Daimler's future.

Thank you!