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**Former Meiko Managing Director Dr. Ulf Starke Dies Unexpectedly**

*Offenburg, Germany. Dr. Ulf Starke, who was the Managing Director of Meiko Maschinenbau GmbH & Co.KG for many years and a former Chairman of the Oskar and Rosel Meier Foundation, died unexpectedly last Saturday. The news of his sudden death came as a huge shock to the members of the Foundation's board of trustees, the company's board of directors, the works council, and many other Meiko employees.*

Dr. Ulf Starke joined Meiko as Managing Director on July 1, 1980 after previously working for BASF and Neff. At that time the company had 407 employees and a turnover of 45 million German marks. By the time he handed over the role of Managing Director to his successor in 2000, Meiko had evolved into a Group with an overall turnover of 245 million German marks and 1,250 employees worldwide. Dr. Starke and his employees had successfully turned the medium-sized company into a globally active corporate group.
Born in Berlin and raised in Bavaria, Dr. Starke – who had a doctorate in business administration – made a major contribution to this rapid and successful development of the business which primarily revolved around growth, especially in export sales. One of the biggest challenges was to maintain a clear focus on the big picture. Key strategies included bringing customer requirements, technical innovations, quality and service all under one roof while creating the structures that would allow a steady increase in worldwide sales.
Dr. Starke placed particular emphasis on getting all his employees involved. He believed that a successful business offering maximum benefits to customers could only be maintained over the long term by establishing positive, constructive relationships. His abilities came to the fore at exactly the right time. Eloquent and ambitious, he developed Meiko into a globally renowned 'gem' of the German mechanical engineering industry He inspired trust in those around him, succeeding at virtually everything he did.

At the end of his time at the helm of Meiko, he moved to the board of trustees of the Oskar and Rosel Meier Foundation, which benefited from his experience for a further 10 years.

Dr. Starke turned 75 last month. He had always retained close ties to the company. He spent his free time on art, culture and travelling to a wide range of destinations with his wife.

Meiko Managing Director Dr.-Ing. Stefan Scheringer expressed his profound respect for his predecessor:
"What Dr. Ulf Starke did for our company can still be felt right through to the present day. I greatly admire his 20 years of successful management, his commitment to social causes, and the medal he received from Dr. Walter Döring – the Minister of Economic Affairs at that time – for outstanding services to the economy of Baden-Württemberg. For Meiko, his death marks the loss of a valued friend and mentor, and we send our deepest sympathies to his family. We will always honour the memory of Dr. Ulf Starke".

Starke is survived by his wife Eira and one married son.