

Thomas Sommer, Scientific Director of the MDC

Axel Radlach Pries, Dean of Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin

Christopher Baum, Chair of the BIH Board of Directors and Chief Translational Research Officer of Charité

Joint welcoming remarks at the opening of the Käthe Beutler Building on March 24, 2021

Baum: A warm welcome to the Honorable Federal Research Minister Ms. Anja Karliczek,
and to the Honorable Governing Mayor of Berlin Mr. Michael Müller,

Sommer: A warm welcome to the Beutler family

and to Dr. Joffe,

Pries: And a warm welcome to our colleagues. Ladies and gentlemen!

On this very spot in October 2018, we laid the cornerstone for the Käthe Beutler Building (KBB). Today, we stand in an impressive research facility that provides 3,000 square meters of space and brings together basic research, clinical research and core facilities under one roof.

Baum: The opening of the KBB is a particularly joyous occasion for us, as this is the first BIH building to be finished and filled with life and activity. The fact that we are able to open and run the facility jointly with the MDC demonstrates the special bond we share with our Privileged Partner. Directly adjacent is the Experimental Clinical Research Center (ECRC), where Charité conducts outpatient research and clinical trials together with the MDC. This means that all three partners, represented here by Prof. Sommer, Prof. Pries and myself, are now united in one location and will collaborate on a daily basis. This is a place where researchers and clinicians will work side by side and interact closely with patients.

Sommer: Incidentally, the border between Berlin and Brandenburg runs through the middle of this building. So it is very fitting that the Käthe Beutler Building also bridges the border between basic research and clinical practice. The research conducted here will focus on translational vascular biomedicine – in other words, research into blood vessels and the transfer of laboratory findings into diagnostics and therapeutics.

Pries: The building's namesake also plays a very important role for us. Käthe Beutler studied medicine at Charité from 1917, as one of very few women to do so at that time. She obtained her doctorate and remained active in the scientific field during her further training as a pediatrician, eventually opening her own practice here in Berlin. She and her family were Jewish, and were forced to flee to the United States during the Nazi era. There, she continued to practice as a doctor. And she passed down her inquiring spirit to her children: Her son Frederick also became a scientist, her son Ernest a leading hematologist, and her grandson Bruce was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 2011 for his work in the field of innate immunity. We are delighted to have many of Käthe Beutler's family members here with us today, including Frederick and Bruce Beutler, who will pay tribute to the memory of their mother and grandmother.

Sommer: Several researchers from the MDC and Charité were involved in chronicling the life story of Käthe Beutler, and we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks – particularly to Thomas Kammertöns.

Baum: We are delighted that, with this impressive research facility, the Käthe Beutler Building, our successful collaboration with the MDC is getting its first proper home.

Sommer: A home that, with its spacious design and open layout, facilitates productive encounters between scientists from the MDC, Charité and the BIH.

Pries: A home that, thanks to its state-of-the-art technology and laboratory infrastructure, provides the best conditions for excellent patient-centered translational research to flourish.

Sommer: And a home that is located in the best possible neighborhood: As well as being the location of the MDC, the science and biotechnology park Campus Berlin Buch is also the site of the Experimental Clinical Research Center (ECRC), the Leibniz-Forschungsinstitut für Molekulare Pharmakologie (FMP) and various other clinics and biotechnology companies.

Baum: The fact we are able to hand this building over to scientists today is the result of a great deal of commitment and collaboration. We would like to express our sincere thanks for the support and guidance provided by the Federal Research Minister Anja Karliczek and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, as well as by the Governing Mayor of Berlin Michael Müller and the State of Berlin.

Pries: We would also like to thank the Beutler family for allowing us to commemorate Käthe Beutler with this building. Particularly as part of Science Year 2021, which focuses on Rudolf Virchow and Hermann von Helmholtz, the commemoration of historically significant scientists is very special and important to us. It fills us with great joy that Dr. Joffe, Chairman of the Board of the Jewish Community of Berlin, is here with us today.

Sommer: Whenever a new building is inaugurated, one must not forget its creators. We would like to thank the architects Alexander Koblitz and Timm Kleyer from the architectural firm kleyer.koblitz.letzel.freivogel for bringing this wonderful, modern research facility into being. We would also like to thank the MDC Construction Department, Ralf Streckwall and especially Juliane Körner, without whose commitment this project would not have been possible, as well as Lyudmila Borisenko from the BIH, who provided invaluable support throughout the planning and execution of the building project.

Baum: We are very disappointed that we are not able to explore the new building with you today. But this gives us all the more reason to wish the building's future users all the best as they settle in and great success in advancing their research through regional, national and international exchange. This is precisely what the name Käthe Beutler stands for, as well as the mission to use research discoveries for the benefit of as many patients as possible. It also aligns perfectly with the guiding principle of the Berlin Institute of Health: to turn research into health. We extend our sincere thanks to the Beutler family for granting their approval for this facility's name, and wish the Käthe Beutler Building a long future as an outstanding place for collaborative international research and patient-oriented science.