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Ringturm shines in the light of 40 years of Solidarność movement in Poland

From 28 to 31 August 2020, Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein and the Vienna Insurance Group will set a visible sign with a light projection at its headquarters the Ringturm in Vienna to mark the 40th anniversary of the Polish Solidarność movement.

In August 1980, social unrest in Poland led to the creation of the Solidarność trade union, which is considered a harbinger of the upheaval in this country and as a result of the former Eastern Bloc. In several Eastern European countries, the collapse of the communist system and the opening up of the East occurred almost a decade later. Today it is considered the beginning of the largest political-economic transformation process in the late 20th century and has opened up great economic opportunities for the European Union. *"The great upheaval laid the foundation for many Western European companies to enter and gain a foothold in the new markets. We were one of the first insurance companies to take this step and we believed in the opportunities that this region had to offer. Over the years, we have successfully seized this opportunity and developed the VIG Group into today's leading insurance group in Central and Eastern Europe,"* explains Günter Geyer, CEO of Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Vienna Insurance Group (Wiener Versicherung Gruppe).

At the same time, it has always been and still is important for the VIG Group to make an significant economic contribution, not only by covering risks, but also through investments and the long-term business perspective in the countries. *"Economic and social responsibility are very important to us and this is manifested in our extensive social commitments,"* adds Mr. Geyer.

"This year is the 40th anniversary of the emergence of the Solidarność movement, which contributed significantly to the fall of communism and has caused groundbreaking, historical changes in Europe on the political and social level, but also in the fields of economy, science and culture. I am pleased and grateful that this project was made possible with the generous support of Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein, Vienna Insurance Group and in cooperation with the Parliament of the City of Vienna," explains Jolanta Róża Kozłowska, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Austria.

The light projection, which will appear for the first time on the evening of 28 August at the Ringturm, will be on display until 31 August 2020. This is the day on which exactly 40 years ago the "Gdansk Agreement" was signed between workers and the government, thus allowing the first independent trade union in a socialist country. *"When we use our projection to refer to the anniversary of the freedom movement that was created as a result and from which our development potential ultimately emerged, we also want to emphasise the high level of solidarity and importance with our Polish insurance companies and customers. We also benefit in particular from the numerous creative ideas of our Polish colleagues and use their expertise as a centre of innovation for our Group,"* explains Harald Riener, VIG Board Member and responsible for Poland.

Parallel to the light projection in Vienna, the Polish VIG insurance companies are also commemorating the anniversary. The same projection as in Vienna will also be shown at the Compensa headquarters in Warsaw. The VIG Group has been represented in Poland, the largest CEE market, since 1998. In terms of premiums and profit, Poland is now the third largest country within the VIG Group.

Vienna Insurance Group (Wiener Versicherung Gruppe) is the leading insurance group in Austria and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Around 50 insurance companies in 30 countries form a Group with a long-standing tradition, strong brands and close customer relations. The more than 25,000 employees in the Vienna Insurance Group (Wiener Versicherung Gruppe) take care of the day-to-day needs of more than 22 million customers. VIG shares have been listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange since 1994 and were awarded an A+ rating with stable outlook by the internationally recognised rating agency Standard & Poor's. That is the best rating of all companies in the ATX, the leading index of the Vienna Stock Exchange. Vienna Insurance Group (Wiener Versicherung Gruppe) cooperates closely with the Erste Group, the largest retail bank in Central and Eastern Europe.

If you have any questions, please contact:

VIENNA INSURANCE GROUP AG Wiener Versicherung Gruppe

Group Communications & Marketing

Schottenring 30, 1010 Vienna

Wolfgang Haas - Manager

Phone: +43 50 390-21029

mailto: wolfgang.haas@vig.com

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