



Left: Jörg Sturm, spokesperson for the Executive Board of Stauff Germany, and Helmut Ahrens, his predecessor (right).  
image: Stauff

## Stauff Global Hydraulic Systems

# “Making hydraulics more understandable and manageable”

*Stauff Germany is embarking on the next step in its development: Jörg Sturm is taking over the role as spokesperson as Helmut Ahrens retires.*

**To a certain extent, in recent years, Stauff has grown contrary to the economic trend and, now again, is looking positively towards the future. What is the reason for this success?**

*Helmut Ahrens:* “Stauff pursues a clear strategy throughout economic fluctuations: our customers need to be able to rely totally and completely on their hydraulic line system. That explains why, among other things, at no time have we questioned our product quality, in the knowledge that this might make it impossible to access certain international markets. The reliability of the hydraulic system will continue to be a priority in future. We hold discussions, analyse applications and, with our expertise, create conditions that enable the right decisions to be made for the entire system as early as the

design phase. Working closely with us, our customers rely on avoiding errors that always go hand in hand with high follow-on costs. We do not therefore consider issues, such as oil purity, filtration or monitoring, as an additional service, but rather as an integral part of our understanding of quality.”

*Jörg Sturm:* “Requirements placed on hydraulic systems are becoming ever more individual and are increasingly geared to specific applications. Our proximity to our customers is an important factor against this background as well. Standardisation remains important, but often the ability to provide a customised solution is critical to collaboration. We are observing a shift in focus in all application sectors from the individual component to the complete system. Efficiency, safety, and



availability are now systemic rather than being isolated concepts. Stauff took this development into account over ten years ago and, with its Stauff Line, positioned itself as a system partner along the entire line system. We will continue to pursue this successful course. Ultimately, we are investing in smart components, condition monitoring solutions and technologies, as well as in digital services, training and knowledge offerings for our customers, to ensure that their systems can be operated reliably, at the same time as conserving resources. Our aim is to make hydraulics even more understandable and manageable.”

**Stauff relies on a strong value chain within its own company, but has never presented itself as “Made in Germany”. Mr Sturm, what will be more important in future: the Stauff brand or the issue of its origin?**

*Jörg Sturm:* “I prefer ‘Made by Stauff’! At heart, we are a family-run business with German roots. However, our high quality standards are rooted in our DNA and are not tied to our German sites. Stauff Germany, for instance, continues to drive forward the technological development of our products for the entire group of companies. However, we should not think of our products as being ‘German’ and sell them globally, rather we need to think globally from the outset. I regard our international branches as customers whose requirements need to be

taken into account as well as OEM requirements. I consider “Made by Stauff, made for the world” to be fitting for the future. In my role as spokesperson for Stauff Germany, I also regard myself as a facilitator of international cooperation.

*Helmut Ahrens:* At Stauff, employees at all levels – from the development department to production – feel responsible for the performance of our components in applications, whether in a passenger ship or in agricultural machinery where it cannot be allowed to lose a drop of oil in the field. This awareness is anchored in Germany, but is also actively practised throughout the entire international Stauff Group. Incidentally, every subcontractor and every supplier also has to share our quality standards. If it carries the Stauff name, it needs to embody Stauff quality, regardless of who produced the product and where.

**What is your strategy for international development?**

*Jörg Sturm:* I believe that we should continue as we have done up to now, namely to grow organically in small, well-thought-out steps. For instance, we recently set up corresponding branches to strengthen our presence in the Middle East and North Africa. In India, we are currently expanding our production and development capacities, as there is tangible expertise and dynamism in the Indian market. In other regions, it is advisable to start building a business foundation from Germany, which will then justify having a stand-alone site in the medium term. I also see there being continued growth potential in Africa over the next twenty years. Regardless of the market or region we are looking at: apart from product quality and proximity to our customers, the Stauff brand is also synonymous with good and reliable delivery. We need to guarantee this at all times. Gradual future development is therefore the right approach for us.

**Mr Ahrens, you have held various management positions within the Stauff Group both in Germany and abroad for almost 25 years. What inspires you about Stauff as an employer?**

*Helmut Ahrens:* An important point for me has always been corporate stability, as Stauff is a family-run company at its core. This stability gives employees plenty of creative freedom and, at the same time, strong support. Over the years, we have become more broad-based and able to withstand crises, we have secured our foundation, and thus been able to create greater freedom. This mechanism has worked well over the last few decades and has brought us to where we are today.

**Mr Sturm, what was your experience of Stauff in your first six months?**

*Jörg Sturm:* I can only reinforce what Mr Ahrens has just said. There is a great deal of trust placed in people and their expertise, not just at a management level, but at all levels of the organisational structure. Compared to my experiences in large corporations, communication routes here are short, decisions are made faster, and things are not made more complicated than they need to be. This is challenging, but I already feel like this is precisely where I am meant to be. ■