

**Written Welcome Address
by the Minister President of Thuringia
Bodo Ramelow
for the European Youth Team Chess Championship 2018
U12 & U18 in Bad Blankenburg 11th – 19th July 2018**

I warmly welcome you to the European Youth Team Chess Championship 2018 in Bad Blankenburg!

Around 200 young chess players from all over Europe have come here to us in Thuringia to measure themselves at the “royal game”, as the game of chess is also known. This is the first time that the European Youth Team Championship takes place in Germany. I am especially delighted that it was possible to bring this German premiere to our Thuringian State Sport School in Bad Blankenburg. I am certain that Bad Blankenburg and the Thuringian State Sport School will be excellent hosts, and that they will do everything to ensure that the chess talent of around twenty European countries will feel welcome and at home. Perhaps, and I would certainly hope so, this first European Youth Team Championship in Bad Blankenburg is the initial impetus for many further international chess championships in Thuringia. The sporting and cultural landscape of Thuringia offers the very best conditions – and what competition, other than the thinking sport chess, better combines our successful sporting tradition with the great Thuringian cultural tradition. The Free State of Thuringia supports this competition wholeheartedly and I have gladly become the patron.



The success in bringing the first European Youth Team Championship to Bad Blankenburg is the result of a joint effort. I thank the German Chess Federation, the Thuringian Chess Federation, the Thuringian State Sport School in Bad Blankenburg, the trainers, mentors, and the many supporters. Finally I wish the young chess players an exciting competition and much success, and I wish all of our guests a memorable time in Thuringia!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Bodo R.". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Bodo Ramelow
Minister President of the Free State of Thuringia