



“The Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”

Words of Welcome

by

Nikolaus W. Schües

Conference Chairman

Hamburg Chamber of Commerce

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Your Excellency Mr. Ma Kai,
Secretary-General of the State Council of the People's Republic of China,
Commissioner Almunia, Vice-President of the European Commission,
Vice-Chancellor Dr. Westerwelle,
Prof. Xu Kuangdi,
First Mayor Ahlhaus,
President and Members of the Hamburg Parliament,
Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,
Prof. Dr. Braun,
Mr. Löscher,
honourable guests from China,
Conference Chairman Schües,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my greatest honour to welcome you all on behalf of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce to the Closing Dinner of the fourth "Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe".

It is my outstanding pleasure to welcome His Excellency Ma Kai, the Honourable Secretary-General of the State Council of the People's Republic of China!

Excellency Mr. Ma,

words cannot describe how delighted we are about your participation in our Hamburg Summit!

I also cordially welcome Mr Joaquin Almunia, Vice-President of the EU Commission, Dr. Guido Westerwelle, Deputy Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Prof. Dr. Bruno Braun, Co-Chairman in the German-Chinese Dialog Forum, and Peter Löscher, Chairman of the Asia-Pacific Committee of German Business and Chief Executive Officer of Siemens AG.

And I extend a very warm and sincere welcome to Prof. Xu Kuangdi, Chairman of our co-host, the China Federation of Industrial Economics CFIE, Mr. Liu Haiyan, Senior Vice Chairman of CFIE, and – last but not at all least - Capt. Wei Jiafu, Chairman of CATIS and President of Cosco.

Dear Prof. Xu Kuangdi,

as figure-head of the Sino-European dialogue, you participate in the “Hamburg Summit” now for the second time, and your organisation, the CFIE, is – together with our Chamber of Commerce – co-host of this year’s “Hamburg Summit”.

My deepest gratitude goes to yourself and to all members and staff of CFIE.

We had an excellent cooperation in preparing the fourth “Hamburg Summit”!

Your Excellency Mr Ma Kai,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no doubt about it:

China is the winner of the crisis.

The People’s Republic has become the engine of world economy, pulling Europe, especially Germany, out of the economic slump.

The crisis very obviously has contributed to a power shift from Western countries to the People’s Republic.

China has become more influential and, at the same time, it has changed its economic profile:

The China we see today is no longer workbench of the world, but has turned into a global player of high-technology, research and development.

And it has become one of the most attractive domestic markets in the world.

For us in Europe, it is necessary to accept, regard and treat the People’s Republic not only as an equal partner, but as one of the most powerful economies worldwide.

Nevertheless, China needs to continue with the implementation of the WTO rules.

And there is still some distance to travel.

With increasing economic power, the People's Republic has to take over responsibility and integrate itself even more strongly into the multilateral system of the world economy.

This implies observing the existing standards and also creating new ones.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not have any doubts that the Chinese government will place all emphasis on that.

The Chinese way of meeting new challenges is a strategic and focussed approach.

With the continuing recovery of its economy, the People's Republic has to look for new markets in order to source, but also to sell its products.

As a result, China recently increased its relationships to countries like Brazil, Australia and the ASEAN countries.

So, Europe has to strive in order to defend its position as trading and investment partner of the booming Chinese economy.

We will only be able to reach this aim with a strong Europe.

With a Europe that speaks with one language and that jointly represents its interests vis-à-vis the government in Beijing.

Dear Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Two aspects, two opinions, two parties:

For the purpose of a fair dialogue, our Chamber of Commerce has created the "Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe".

Anticipating the Chinese economy to continue its successful rise, the "Hamburg Summit" provides a fair platform for exchanging views on all bilateral economic issues, for clarifying the debate and for finding common solutions.

I am very confident that the “Hamburg Summit” will achieve its aim and strengthen the dialogue. This is more important than ever, because currency and trade wars are best being averted not fought.

Your Excellency Mr. Ma Kai,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us all contribute to build a bridge between China and Europe – a bridge that can carry common challenges such as climate change, urbanisation or environmental problems.

I would like to thank you all for supporting this dialogue!

Let me now conclude by thanking you, Excellency Mr Ma Kai, Commissioner Almunia, Dr. Westerwelle and Mr. Löscher for having accepted our invitation to Hamburg. Your attendance here tonight shows that the platform for a fair and open Sino-European dialogue is highly appreciated.

It is also an honour for me to thank the China Federation of Industrial Economics as our co-host of all its support and CATIS for bringing a business delegation to the “Hamburg Summit” for the first time.

And, last but not least, I like to thank our sponsors and partners, especially Montblanc, for their endeavours.

I wish you all a very pleasant evening!