



“The Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”

Words of Welcome

by

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Conference Chairman

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Dear First Mayor Ole von Beust,
Honourable Deputy Prime Minister Zheng Peiyan,
Honourable Federal Minister of the Interior Otto Schily,
Dear Honorary Chairman Helmut Schmidt,
Dear distinguished Cpt Wei Jiafu, President and CEO of COSCO,
Distinguished guests from China and from other foreign countries,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Conference Chairman I have the honour and the pleasure to welcome you to our first Hamburg Summit - China meets Europe. Welcome in Han Bao, the castle of the Chinese. The idea of the Summit was born in a typically Hamburgian brainstorming between members of our political elite and us business people, namely in our Chamber of Commerce, where we will meet tomorrow, in the older building adjacent to this townhall.

We wish to thank our distinguished guests from China who have travelled such a long way to participate in this conference, led by the right honourable Deputy Prime Minister Zheng Peiyan and Capt Wei Jiafu. We look forward to hear your views on the various topics of our agenda when you speak to us and discuss details with us tomorrow. We are especially grateful to our former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt who supported and guided us throughout the process of preparing this Summit meeting; and that he - together with the Right Honourable Lee Kuan Yew who will talk to us tomorrow via satellite and together with our former Chancellor Helmut Kohl who regrets not to be with us because of his travelling schedule in Africa, that all three elder statesmen accepted the honorary chairmanship of our Summit meeting. We thank First Mayor Ole von Beust to host this conference welcoming dinner in our townhall. We thank very much indeed our financial partners and supporters because without your engagement, Gentlemen, we could not have started this activity.

But only with our partner Professor Horst Teltschik we dared to start the venture of this Summit conference and we owe you, dear Professor Teltschik, great thanks for your support and cooperation.

Finally I wish to thank our distinguished panel members and of course all of you that you have accepted our invitation to participate in our discussions. Germany's Federal Minister of the Interior, Mr Otto Schily, will talk to us tomorrow morning. Thank you so much to have accepted our invitation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

China has started its way to an outstanding future development. I am convinced that one has to give the central government in Beijing great credit for managing the endeavours of their huge country on its way to new frontiers including a very professional financial engineering. Please remember that the Chinese government has kept course during the Asian financial crisis, has kept interest rates stable for 9 years until end of October of this year, but has also acted a few weeks ago to keep inflation under control. The world business community is however, alerted and expects – hopefully – a soft landing. To all of us it may be no secret that both China and other hugely populated countries need strong Western economies to sustain

their momentum. Let us not forget, Ladies and Gentlemen, that above all our Chinese friends are managing day by day that every person in China has food and finds work. This is a tremendous obligation which ranks high in my opinion on the agenda of good governance on the road to more human rights.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our world is getting smaller - our comprehensive dialogs need to grow broader, deeper and become a continuous and frequent obligation - that is the aim of our Hamburg Summit - China meets Europe. We intend to entertain this conference from now on every two years. Let us become indispensable partners in the search for global peace and prosperity. Then we have done our duty for our children and our grandchildren. Ladies and Gentlemen, can there be any better activity in our age in life and in our functional position?

I wish all of you very inspiring two days between us.

Thank you very much and bon appétit.