



“The Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”

Official Closing Remarks

by

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15th September 2006



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Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The second “Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe” has come to a grand final highlight.

I first of all like to thank all speakers, especially Chancellor Dr. Helmut Kohl for his inspiring and great speech.

Dear speakers, thank you so very much for sharing your insights with us! We learned a lot, we understand better now and in future how and what the partner in China and in Europe think and their positions are. Dialog is the bridge for understanding and this bridge leads to peace, and peace worldwide is the basis for progress for the wellbeing for all of us.

During the last three days, approximately 450 decision makers from 10 countries discussed a variety of current political and economic issues.

What did we learn from this year’s conference talks?

Let me point out some major results for you:

- First: China’s further integration into global politics and the global economy is inevitable incl. IPR; the global economic interdependence is becoming more and more a reality.

The People’s Republic is on its way to becoming a global player.

This is true for foreign politics, but above all it is true for foreign trade.

No one can deny China's growing influence.

On the contrary:

It is a primary task for politicians, but also for entrepreneurs to pro-actively involve our Chinese partners in all international and transnational issues.

The European Union should view the People's Republic as a strategic partner and give impulses in order to forge a beneficial relationship of equals and grant China market economy status. We shall work to achieve this as Mr Fu Chengyu suggested.

And we should jointly do our utmost, to promote multilateral cooperation leading to a fair, just, and rule-based international system.

In this respect, the WTO Doha Development talks should be resumed as soon as possible.

For the time being, there is regrettably no purely European way of doing business with China and of jointly representing our interests vis-à-vis the central government in Beijing.

Despite the EU position paper on China, national interests still are predominant.

This certainly has to change.

We do need a common European position when it comes to the key issues that are to be discussed with our Chinese partners!

- Second: China is definitely a must for most European companies. For some firms facing growing competition from China, it is a question of survival to arrange partnerships with Chinese firms. The People's Republic is constantly opening up its markets for foreign businesses, and companies in Europe, the US and from all other parts of the world – we all - can benefit from that development. The process of opening up, which is a direct result of China's accession to the WTO, holds new opportunities in store. They should not be missed!
- Third: The European Union should support the Chinese government in its endeavors to further reform the economy, to enhance environmental protection and establish a stable society. All speakers and panelists of "The Hamburg Summit" unanimously pointed out that there still is an enormous need for reforms in the People's Republic:
The banking system is far from corresponding to international standards, a stable social security system has to be established as soon as possible, the social gap between the rich provinces in the South-Eastern part of the country and the Western provinces still tends to grow, the environmental problems and infrastructural inefficiencies have to be abolished, legal security should be ensured

and finally the demand for a more open society must no longer be neglected.

Up to now, the Chinese government was successful in keeping the economy growing and creating political stability on its way to a real market economy.

The European Union has a lot of experiences to share with China, for example in creating a sustainable social welfare system and successfully coping with problems of social disparities.

It is exactly the aim of "The Hamburg Summit" to offer a forum for China and Europe in order to exchange ideas and experiences for the benefit of both sides in the spirit of our joint power of partnership.

It is our duty to understand each other and as I already have pointed out, dialog is the bridge to peace and sustainability ,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

The second "Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe" was in my judgement a remarkable success as far as the quality and quantity of speakers and participants is concerned.

Our Chamber of Commerce will therefore organize a third "Hamburg Summit" in autumn 2008 and I promise that we shall improve on some shortcomings which were brought to my attention.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

dear speakers,

dear delegates,

Thank you so much for participating in the second “Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe” and for making it a success.

See you in two years for the next “Hamburg Summit”!

I wish you all a safe journey home – or the Chinese would say:

Yi lu ping an!

Before you leave I should like to invite you for lunch and for our Sino-European table tennis show downstairs in our hall.

Shin Shin!

