



## **“The Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”**

Conference closing remarks

by

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**Hamburg**  
Chamber of Commerce

Thank you very much, Commissioner De Gucht,

for your excellent speech that painted a clear picture of the prospects for the relationship between China and Europe.

Thank you for sharing with us the European Commission's view on China and its further economic and political development.

Referring to the current debt crisis in some of the EU member states, your speech was encouraging, reinforcing our confidence that Europe will stay capable of political action, and that we will overcome the crisis.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests from China and Europe,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we started to plan this conference right after the end of the last "Hamburg Summit" in 2010, our aim for the fifth "Hamburg Summit" was to strengthen the European and international attendance.

We wanted the "Summit" to live up to its name: "China meets Europe"!

Looking back, we can definitely say that we reached our aim: More than 350 decision makers from 17 different countries have gathered in our Chamber of Commerce to discuss a variety of current political and economic issues.

We managed to keep up the quality of this conference and even raised it in many aspects.

The "Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe" has become:

- the major conference for Sino-European economic questions and
- a landmark in Chinese-European relations.

This year marks a special occasion, because the "Hamburg Summit" is the first major China-focussed conference in Europe after the announcement of China's new political leadership, and I believe it was a very wise decision having chosen exactly this date for our event.

The last three days, we had the opportunity to listen to some of the most prominent politicians, entrepreneurs and academics involved in Sino-European affairs.

Apart from the keynote speeches and the very interesting power talk between Henry Kissinger and former Chancellor Schmidt, we have witnessed six panel discussions, packed with experts and decision makers, full of information and bilateral cooperation perspectives.

We discussed almost every important aspect of Sino-European relations and I think it is fair to say:

We learned a lot from each other, about each other and - most importantly - in dialogue with one another.

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

First:

China is on its way to become one of the most important stakeholders of the global economic and political system.

Economically speaking, it already is one of the most powerful nations in the world.

But what about the political side?

In our discussions, it was quite obvious that the People's Republic recognizes its influence on the international stage and is willing to take up its global responsibilities.

The European Union should support this and assist China in its further integration into the global political and economic system.

In this regard, I like to mention the People's Republic's activities in helping to solve the EURO-crisis.

By China's considerable investments in the International Monetary Fund and the debt instruments issued by individual countries, our partner country highly contributed to solve the debt problems here in Europe.

Second:

The Chinese domestic market is as promising as ever.

During the years of the so-called financial crisis a strong demand from China has helped to cushion the fall for many countries in the world.

Many speakers confirmed that China has been the driving force for revitalised economic growth in Europe.

Third:

In spite of all dynamism, the Chinese economy currently is facing a decreasing growth rate.

The biggest challenge resulting from a lower growth rate can be social instability at times when the income gap is significant already and even tends to grow.

China has to put focus on trying to expand the already existing tendencies towards consolidation.

And, as most of the speakers pointed out, there still is an enormous need for structural reforms in China.

This of course is true also for Europe.

In the EU, we are in the process of doing our homework and triggering the reforms needed for a competitive Europe in the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### Fourth:

As the world economy is facing severe challenges, it is essential that all stakeholders – China, the US, Europe and all other players – stick to the regulatory framework laid down by WTO and adhere to the rules we agreed upon.

Protectionist measures are not the right way to solve any crisis.

The developments in recent months presented new challenges for global trade.

A trend towards protectionism might put a strain on even the best relationship.

It is tempting to simply care for one's own interests.

But global trade is not a zero-sum game! I repeat:

We know that protectionist measures are not the right way to solve any crisis.

#### Fifth:

The topic of the RMB is both a classic "China"-topic and also a very relevant one for the global stage.

10 years ago we most likely would have talked about the "if" of an RMB-liberalization.

Today, the discussion sounds closer to a "how".

With China's growing global importance, the interest for its currency has increased dramatically.

While the Yuan is already much more accessible than a couple of years ago, the trend does not seem to be stopping.

I wonder what this discussion would sound like in another 10 years' time.

We are already seeing the first financial products denominated in RMB, Hong Kong is positioning itself as the major hub for international RMB-dealings.

I think it is safe to say that the Chinese currency is on its way to further liberalize and has all potential to become a global currency.

#### Sixth:

Urbanisation is one of the megatrends of our time.

The need to manage increasingly larger urban communities has brought us the concept of the "Smart City".

As we can see from the discussions, this is a complex idea, with great relevance for both China and Europe.

It holds great opportunities in store for further cooperation between both regions.

Please only think of the large potentials of the future hydrogen economy which will dominate the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Seventh:

Raw materials are a “hot issue” between China and Europe.

The world’s dependence on rare earths has turned trade with natural resources into a political and geopolitical topic.

Whereas Europe – and also the US – have to react to China’s rare earths export policy, it is imperative that natural resources’ trade should follow the international rule set.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Another “Hamburg Summit” has come to an end.

And again, we remain wiser, better informed, and better connected than we were when we arrived here two days ago.

My special thanks go to Minister Wan Gang, Minister Schavan, Vice President of European Parliament Prof. Dr. Papastamkos and to EU Commissioner Karel De Gucht for honoring us with their presence, as well as all the other high-level speakers representing business, academia and politics.

Their presence and insights have made this event become a great success!

A big “thank you” also goes to our co-hosts CFIE and CATIS for the excellent cooperation.

And I will not close the fifth “Hamburg Summit” without having thanked all our sponsors.

Without their support, this conference would not have taken place!

Finally, I thank all participants, who gathered here in Hamburg to be a living example of Sino-European relations.

I sincerely hope you enjoyed the discussions, gained new insights and, of course, I hope that you will be back in 2014 for the sixth “Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”.

Again, sincerest thanks to all of you.

I wish you all a safe journey home.

Goodbye and Zai Jian (Dsai Dschiän)!