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"Hamburg Summit": Germany and China Continue to be Strong Partners

Chamber of Commerce President Melsheimer calls for an investment treaty

HAMBURG, Germany, 23 November 2016 - Chamber of Commerce President, Fritz Horst Melsheimer, opened the seventh "Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe", which is taking place on 23 and 24 November at the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce. In his speech, he called for an investment treaty between the EU and China as soon as possible within the next year in order to put bilateral economic relations swiftly onto a more solid legal basis. He emphasised that Chinese-European relations are currently facing major challenges. According to Melsheimer, "China has to master a tremendous economic transformation to make this growth more sustainable". He added: "At the same time, economic stagnation in many European countries and United Kingdom's vote for Brexit both shake and shape our bilateral economic relations." He said that Eye-to-eye exchange and open discussions were therefore particularly important, and that the "Hamburg Summit" had made a significant contribution in this area for the last twelve years.

In his opening speech, former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder highlighted the importance of German-Chinese relations: "In the last four decades, China and Germany have built a very successful partnership." He said that Germany continues to be China's most important partner in Europe, with Germany opting for political cooperation with the People's Republic over recent decades. "Cooperation, rather than confrontation, should characterise the relationships between countries, even when their political and economic systems differ", emphasised Schröder. "In today's world, there is no country that can master all these new challenges alone. This is why we must intensify the strategic partnership with China in all areas - in politics and culture, as well as in the economy and civil society." After his speech, Gerhard Schröder, who was made Honorary Chairman of the conference this year, also received the China-Europe Friendship Award in recognition of his outstanding achievements in cultivating relations with China.

Further press releases, background information and images from the "Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe" 2016 are available at <http://www.hamburg-summit.com>.

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