



“The Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”

Speech at the Opening Dinner

by

Frank Horch

President of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce

Hamburg Chamber of Commerce

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Check against delivery!

Your Excellency Deputy Prime Minister Zhang Dejiang,
Minister Dr. Steinmeier,
Commissioner Kovács,
First Mayor von Beust,
Madame Xie Qihua,
Ministers and Excellencies,
Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my greatest honor to welcome you all on behalf of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce to the third “Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”.

It is our most outstanding pleasure to welcome His Excellency Zhang Dejiang, the honorable Deputy Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of China!

Excellency Mr. Zhang,

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

I also cordially welcome Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, and Commissioner László Kovács from the European Commission in Brussels.

And I extend a very warm and sincere “Welcome to Hamburg” to Madame Xie Qihua, representing our co-host, the China Federation of Industrial Economics.

Dear Madame Xie,

as a figure-head of the Sino-European dialogue, you support the “Hamburg Summit” now for the second time and we cannot thank you enough for that.

Please accept my deepest gratitude!

A special welcome goes also to Her Excellency Anne-Marie Idrac, Minister for Foreign Trade of France, and to Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi, Minister of Foreign Trade of the United Arab Emirates.

Thank you both very much for attending “The Hamburg Summit”!

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are still deeply impressed by the perfect organization and the warm-hearted atmosphere of the Olympic summer games in Beijing.

We experienced the world’s best sportsmen and women competing on the highest level.

What can we learn from them?

It is very simple:

Only the highest quality under fair conditions will win!

Since its accession to the WTO, China has made significant efforts to integrate itself into world trade as a fair partner.

The People’s Republic has not only turned into the most important trading partner of the European Union.

It has also undertaken a great development to transform its economic system:

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

For the EU, it is necessary to accept, regard and treat the People’s Republic as an equal partner.

China, on the other hand, needs to continue with the implementation of the WTO-rules.

And there is still some distance to travel.

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”.

As the Olympic Games have done, the “Hamburg Summit” will try to do as well:

We provide a fair platform.



I am very confident that the “Hamburg Summit” will achieve its aim to strengthen the dialogue, to build new bridges and to revive existing ties.

The stronger a bridge is built, the more it might carry.

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

I should cordially thank you all for supporting this dialogue.

Let me now conclude by thanking you, honorable Deputy Prime Minister Zhang Dejiang, Dr. Steinmeier and Commissioner Kovács, for having accepted our invitation.

Your attendance here tonight shows that the platform for a fair and open Sino-European dialogue is highly appreciated.

It is also an honor to thank the China Federation of Industrial Economics as our Co-Host for all its support.

And, last but not least, I like to thank our sponsors and partners, especially the HSH Nordbank as our Exclusive Sponsor, for their endeavours.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I herewith declare the third “Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe” as open!

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, please stand up for the two national anthems and for the famous “Yellow River” song, presented to you in Mandarin by the Hamburg-based Monteverdi-Choir.