



“The Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”

Welcome address

by

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- Check Against Delivery –

Hamburg Chamber of Commerce

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Your Excellency Ms. Liu Yandong, Vice-Premier of the People's Republic of China,
Your Excellency Mr. Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President of the European Commission,
First Mayor Scholz,
Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,
Members of the European Parliament and the Hamburg Parliament,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The seventh "Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe" is coming to an end, and it is my great pleasure to welcome you to our conference's final part, the closing lunch.

It is indeed a delight and privilege to have such high-ranking representatives of the Chinese, the European and the German governments as guests of honour and keynote speakers on this occasion.

It is my outstanding pleasure to welcome Her Excellency Ms. Liu Yandong, Vice Premier of the People's Republic of China, and one of the most powerful ladies in today's world politics.

A very warm welcome to you, Ms Liu!

We are very pleased that you are accompanied by a very high-ranking official delegation.

It is a special pleasure for me to say "hello" to his Excellency Mr. Wang Gang, Minister for Science and Technology, who was guest of honour at the "Hamburg Summit" 2012 and who welcomed us at that time with a very familiar "Moin, Moin!".

Let me also extend a special welcome

to Mr. Jyrki Katainen, Vice President of the European Commission,

to Hamburg's First Mayor Olaf Scholz and

to Nikolaus W. Schües, Chairman of this conference and former President of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you for your support and contribution to the success of this conference!

Our federal foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the German guest of honour, is on his way to join our luncheon and will be here within the next minutes.

His short delay is due to a debate in the German Bundestag, where he had to be present.

We are proud that also with this year's "Hamburg Summit" we have been able to create a platform for exchange, for engaging with each other and for building trust between leading stakeholders in European-Chinese relations.

China and Europe are among the main drivers of the global economy.

Our trade and investment relations reach across the globe, and our actions and decisions have effects on the entire world.

China's path to an innovation-driven, sustainable economy requires us here in Europe to re-think our own modes and strategies of doing business and of cooperating with our Chinese partners.

This transition is not necessarily a threat, as perceived by parts of the European public in the recent debate on the Chinese "One Belt, One Road"-concept and on Chinese investments in European knowledge-intensive industries.

The transition opens opportunities for capitalization, investment and market access on both sides, if there is a clear understanding of common interest.

We are grateful to our Chinese speakers and delegates for sharing their perceptions on the role Europe can and should play in this process.

As we could see during this conference, there is a huge interest among European businesses to understand the challenges and opportunities generated by China's transition, and to contribute to its success.

Hamburg has long pushed for being part of the "New Silk Road"-Initiative of the Chinese government.

And I use this opportunity to re-emphasize that there is no better location for the maritime and the land route to come together than Hamburg, China's gateway to Europe.

Forging alliances by means of acquisition is another important way of fostering mutual cooperation, and I believe it has become very clear during this conference that Hamburg, as a spearhead of European-Chinese relations, claims to have open doors for Chinese investments.

However, partnership on an eye-to-eye level needs a level playing field, and the necessity to provide equal opportunities to Chinese and European investors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We place trust in our Chinese partners, their farsightedness and capacity to shape a sustainable economy and reliable partnerships with Europe and the world.

I am sure that the seventh "Hamburg Summit" has contributed to take our collaboration forward, to reduce reservations, but also to clarify differences and set the path for further negotiations in order to solve remaining issues to the benefit of China and Europe alike.

I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers and participants for making this event what it is: the most important Chinese-European economic conference.

And now it is my great pleasure to hand over to the First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg for his address.

First Mayor Scholz,
the floor is yours!