



“The Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe”

Welcome Address at Closing Lunch

by

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Hamburg Chamber of Commerce

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Your Excellency, Mr. Liu He, Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China,

Ms. Vestager, European Commissioner for Competition,

Dear Minister Scheuer,

First Mayor Dr. Tschentscher,

Distinguished Members of the European and Hamburg Parliament,

Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Welcome to the closing lunch of the 8th "Hamburg Summit – China meets Europe"!

We feel honoured and privileged that once again high-ranking representatives of the Chinese and the German governments as well as the European Commission have accepted to be our guests of honour and key note speakers on this occasion.

We take this as confirmation that the "Hamburg Summit" is still one of the most important platforms for Sino-European economic dialogue.

It is also an indication that such dialogue gains more and more importance as global trade faces headwinds from different directions and the need for joint action to preserve our planet forces us to cooperate in ways inconceivable only few decades back.

It is my outstanding pleasure to welcome His Excellency Liu He, Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China and Director of the Office of Central Commission for Financial and Economic Affairs.

Vice Premier Liu is often called "the brain" behind China's current economic reform.

There are probably only few people who have similar insight into China's path to becoming a leading player in the global economy, 40 years after the People's Republic's economic 'opening up'-reforms were initiated.

A very warm welcome to you, Vice Premier Liu, it is an honour to have you here!

Let me also extend a special welcome to Margarethe Vestager, European Commissioner for Competition, and to Andreas Scheuer, Federal Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure.

While Mrs. Vestager stands for shaping and enforcing a rule-based economic order, Mr. Scheuer is working for enhancing our infrastructure. Thank you for your invaluable work!

We are grateful to the European Commission and the German government for their continuous support and engagement.

A very cordial welcome goes to the First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Dr. Peter Tschentscher.

The city government has always hugely supported this event, and we appreciate the continuity and reliability of your support and cooperation!

Ladies and gentlemen,

China and Europe are 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 and its ambition to contribute to reshaping the global economic order requires us here in Europe to re-think our own modes and strategies of cooperation.

China's transition opens tremendous opportunities for investment and market access, but also innovation and cooperation, if there is a clear understanding of common interest, and also of legitimate concerns.

We are grateful to our Chinese representatives and delegates for sharing their perceptions on how China and Europe can move forward on pressing issues such as preserving the international rules-based trade system and moving forward on sustainable financial systems, mobility and digitalization.

Creating convergence between China's "Belt and Road Initiative" and the EU's strategy for enhancing connectivity between Asia and Europe could be one way forward in this respect.

Hamburg plays a central role here, being a junction for the European Transport Network TEN-T and an important hub on the sea as well as the land routes of the “Belt and Road”.

The adjustment of the shipping channel in the Elbe River is a major and important step to secure Hamburg’s leading position as multimodal logistics hub, but also as important industrial and trade centre.

We are ready to act as a link between the European and the Chinese initiative for better connectivity between Asia and Europe!

Ladies and gentlemen,

Cooperation which is beneficial to all sides requires a level playing field and a reciprocal approach.

We need to ensure equal access to opportunities and resources to create true win-win scenarios.

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

I hope that this 8th Hamburg Summit has contributed to taking our collaboration forward, to reducing reservations, but also to clarifying differences and setting the path for further negotiations in order to move Sino-European cooperation forward.

I would like express my sincere gratitude to the organisers, partners and participants for making this event what it is: One of the most important China-Europe economic dialogue platforms in the world today. Thank you very much!

And now, same procedure as every year, it is my great pleasure and honour to hand over to the First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg for his address to you.

Dr. Tschentscher, the floor is yours!