

“Partnerships in Education and Industry:
China, Indiana, and Indiana University”

Introduction of Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie

President

Indiana University

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is my great pleasure to be here today to welcome Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong and the distinguished delegation from the Chinese Embassy. I would also like to add my special welcome to Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard and Indiana Secretary of Commerce Nate Feltman.

2. CHINA AND THE STATE OF INDIANA

Ambassador Zhou’s visit offers us a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the strong relationship between China and the state of Indiana that dates back well over a century. We can trace that connection back at least to the 1840s, when Indiana University alumnus William Alexander Parsens Martin served the Chinese Imperial Court during the Qing Dynasty.

This relationship has never been stronger than it is today.

For the past twenty years, our state has had a sister state/province relationship with Zhejiang Province, one of the most prosperous regions in China. Indiana also established one of the first state offices in China in 1987 to promote increased trade and investment.

Companies such as Cummins and Eli Lilly offer models of international partnership for others to follow. Cummins was among the first foreign companies to invest in China's transportation sector, and today, it is the top foreign investor in the Chinese diesel industry. Eli Lilly's connection with China dates back to 1918. That was the year when it assigned its first sales representative abroad there. It recently announced a \$100 million commitment to partnerships with Chinese biology, chemistry, and clinical research labs over the next five years.

It is testimony to the strength of the Chinese people, their energy, and determination, that the Chinese economy has experienced such phenomenal growth over the past two decades—averaging nearly 10% per year.

It is no surprise, then, that Indiana companies like Cummins and Lilly recognize that strength and industry.

3. PARTNERSHIPS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The same could be said of higher education in Indiana.

We greatly value our long-term partnerships with institutions of higher education in China. Three universities in Indiana are home to a Confucius Institute, which promotes the study of Chinese language and culture. No other state in this country can claim such a distinction.

Moreover, Indiana University has one of the strongest China studies programs in the United States. This includes extensive educational and research programs in the culture and history of China as well as courses in Mandarin, Cantonese, and classical Chinese languages.

To enhance these programs, Indiana University has identified universities in China as some of our most important partners. Today we have long-standing and productive relationships with a number of Chinese universities including Tsinghua University and Renmin University in Beijing, Fudan University in Shanghai, and Zhejiang University, located in the ancient capital Hangzhou.

Just last fall I was part of an IU delegation that visited Zhejiang University. We have had collaborative agreements with Zhejiang dating back 25 years. During this visit, we extended those agreements and conducted a productive research symposium on higher education and technology transfer activities.

We are also very proud of our agreement with Sun Yat-sen University, which has its main campuses in Guangzhou. This agreement established a partnership focusing especially on our medical schools.

These, and many others, are the kinds of collaborations that offer great opportunities to push back the frontiers of knowledge through research and education.

4. INTRODUCING AMBASSADOR ZHOU WENZHONG

Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong's visit to Indianapolis also provides great opportunities to strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

His diplomatic service dates back to the 1970s, but it was in the 1980s that his diplomatic talents were put to work in promoting the close relationship between China

and the United States. After a number of postings—including as China’s Deputy Consul General in San Francisco, Consul General in Los Angeles, Ambassador to Australia, and as China’s Vice Foreign Minister—he was appointed Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to the United States in 2005.

Soon after this appointment, Ambassador Zhou spoke before a group in New York City. He said that “China and the U.S. can benefit each other, grow together and both emerge as winners.”¹

Mutual progress is at the heart of the relationship between China and the United States. Our programs at Indiana University demonstrate that, as do the many other vitally important connections between our two countries in this state.

It gives me great pleasure and is a true honor to introduce His Excellency Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong.

¹ “The Future of China-U.S. Relations,” Remarks presented to the Asia Society, New York City, <<http://www.asiasociety.org/speeches/wenzhong05.html>>, 22 Sept. 2005.