

Statsminister Willochs besøk i China.

Tale under returbanketten i Beijing 20. november 1984

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Mr. Prime Minister,

We have now come to the end of our stay in Beijing. Our discussions have again shown that we have similar views on a wide range of international issues. They have also demonstrated that countries of different size, and situated in very different parts of the world like Norway and China, have many and growing common interests.

Your open and thorough presentation of China's modernization programme has impressed us all. The decisions you have taken towards economic modernization are bound to have far-reaching consequences for your country, both internally and in your relations to other countries. The implementation will be followed with great interest.

For my wife this is her first visit to your great country. For my own part, I have been looking forward with great pleasure to revisiting China. For both of us the historical monuments, the Great Wall, the Ming Tombs and the Forbidden City are eloquent testimonies of a great Chinese past, having their important place in your country's history - and indeed in the history of the world as a whole. I have noticed that also these historical

monuments are now being beautifully restored, to the benefit of everybody with an interest in the links between the past and the present.

In the days to come we shall have the opportunity to see more of China, and especially its expanding industries. It will be interesting first to visit Shanghai which is both a traditional and modern industrial and economic centre, and later the special economic zone Shenzhen with its ambitious economic and managerial goals.

China faces, in certain fields, some of the same economic challenges that Norway has met with. I am confident that there is room for closer cooperation and exchange of goods, ideas and services in many sectors. New fields should also be explored in our bilateral relations. We will certainly elaborate further on these ideas during our visit to Shanghai and Shenzhen, bearing in mind that collaboration must be based on the principles of equality and mutual benefit.

Norwegian companies which have already established connections with China, are ready to develop their activities further, while others are waiting to enter into active cooperation with Chinese counterparts. I am confident that together we can and will achieve positive results.

In this spirit of understanding, I am pleased that we have just signed an agreement between our two countries on the protection of investments. I hope that in the near future we will also be able to conclude an agreement on the avoidance of double taxation. These agreements will be important instruments for realizing still closer cooperation in the economic field.

The day before yesterday, I referred to the long tradition of hospitality which is so prominent in Chinese culture. We are indeed overwhelmed by the many tokens of this hospitality which you have so generously bestowed upon us. I beg you to accept our sincere thanks for the warm and friendly welcome which we have all experienced during our stay in Beijing.

Let me propose a toast to the friendly relations between our two countries, to the success of China's ambitious programme of modernization, and to good health for you, Mr. Prime Minister and all our Chinese friends.