

Gro Harlem Brundtland

SPEECH MADE BY PRIME MINISTER GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND AT WELCOMING BANQUET IN GUANGZHOU, 22 JANUARY 1988

Mr. Mayor,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for your kind words of welcome, Mr. Mayor, and for the warm reception that my husband, my delegation and I have received here in Guangzhou.

It is a great pleasure for us to visit this City of Rams. Coming from snow-covered Norway, we are struck by the lush vegetation and fertility of the city and its parks. It is also easy for us to see that Guangzhou is a thriving modern city and a very important gateway to China. We know that Guangzhou has a long history of contact with foreign countries.

A key element in the good relations between Norway and China is economic cooperation and trade, which have steadily increased over the past several years. Some of our joint ventures have their headquarters here in Guangzhou. It has been an interesting and pleasant experience for me to participate in the opening ceremony for the new office premises of the Guangzhou Marine Engineering Corporation/Norwegian Petroleum Consultants (NPC).

The World Commission on Environment and Development, which I have had the honour to chair, has examined some of the most pressing problems facing humanity today and in years to come. Serious economic and ecological problems are facing us, challenging governments - central as well as local - and people everywhere. Economic growth is essential, but it must be a sustainable growth which meets the needs and aspirations of the present generation without jeopardizing the living conditions of future generations. I understand that the local authorities in Guangdong Province and the city of Guangzhou are well aware of these problems and are working hard to find solutions. Let me wish you success in these very important endeavours.

I have been told that in Beijing people spend their time and money on their houses, in Shanghai on their clothes, and in Guangzhou on their food. This banquet, Mr. Mayor, certainly confirms that Guangzhou's taste in food is exquisite. Numerous Chinese restaurants have introduced Chinese food to Norway, and Norwegians are particularly fond of Guangzhou-style food.

In conclusion, I would like to express our gratitude to our Chinese hosts, who have taken such good care of us during this most interesting and rewarding stay in China, and for winding up the visit so splendidly here in Guangzhou.

Let me, Mr. Mayor, propose a toast to You, to all our Chinese friends present here, and to the City of Guangzhou.

Ganbei!