

CITY OF WEIHAI, SHANDONG PROVINCE, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Second Meeting of the Kitakyushu Initiative Network (Expert Segment)

15-16 October 2003, Weihai, China

Opening Statement

The Honourable Dr. Song Yuanfang
Mayor, City of Weihai

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

Good morning! Today, the Second Meeting of the Kitakyushu Initiative Network convened in Weihai in such a beautiful golden autumn. First of all, on behalf Weihai Municipal Government, I would like to extend our warm congratulations to the meeting's opening and heartfelt welcome to all of the distinguished guests!

Located at the eastern tip of Shandong Peninsular, Weihai is surrounded by sea on three sides facing Korean Peninsular and Japan Archipelago to the east, and adjacent to land on the west, covering a total area of 5,436 square kilometers with 2.5 million population.

Sticking to the objective of 'Building an Ecological Coastal City Through Hi-tech Industries,' culturing the environment-oriented concept, and fully bringing the comparative advantage into play, Weihai has adopted a policy of promoting opening with environment, promoting development with opening, attracting talents with development, upgrading level with talents, and achieved harmony and sustainable development between economy/society and ecological environment. Weihai was awarded the first National Hygienic City, first National Model City Group of Environmental Protection, first round of China Excellent Tourist City, twice Best Practice for improving Human Being's Settlement by UN, and 2003'UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honorary Award. Therefore, it is regarded by friends from both home and abroad as the best city for human settlement and investment.

It is of important significance for enhancing the sustainable development of the regional economy by promoting the contact and cooperation among local governments, international organization, sponsoring societies and intellectual institutions. As one of the first member cities of the Kitakyushu Initiative Network, Weihai highly values the exchanges and cooperation among the network members and institutions. Last July, under the support of UN/ESCAP and IGES, Weihai successfully hosted the International Seminar of Global 500 Scroll. To choose Weihai as this meeting's venue shows the affirmation, support and stimulus of our environmental protection, and at the same time, it helps us set up a new platform to broaden exchanges and cooperation of economic/social and environmental technologies. We wish to take this good opportunity to safeguard our beautiful home and explore the way of sustainable development together with those men of insight.

Finally, I wish everyone a good health and happiness, and the meeting a complete success!

Thanks!