Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues and friends,

I want to start my speech with a short story or better an incident which happened to me many years ago.
Once, sitting in a hotel bar in Colombo, Sri Lanka, a Danish colleague taught me the main components of a successful professional career as a coastal engineer. Main components – he told me – are:

1. working in the office
2. traveling
3. talking

To illustrate his ideas he started drawing on the table cloth. Joking, he introduced some weighing factors to consider the different importances of these components as a function of the engineer's age. You will certainly not understand what I mean and therefore I should give some comments on this for a better understanding:
For a young engineer working in the office can be considered as the component of greatest importance. There remains no time for traveling abroad, no time for talking or to see old friends. Even his family must often wait. The engineer is sitting in his office working late also during the night. Let say, this component has a value of nearly 100%.

After some years and a respective increase of his professional experience, probably connected with an additional degree as a doctor of science or engineering, the coastal engineer starts traveling. He joins various conferences, seminars and becomes a member of important technical working groups. His time abroad from the office increases rapidly. He enjoys to go to foreign countries and to learn what is going on besides his own daily work. He is happy to meet interesting persons.
Correspondingly. The time for walking around and for discussions and the respective percentage of this second component increases, and the percentage of home work decreases respectively.

At he end of his career the coastal engineer is very experienced (not only because of own work and ideas!), but, after having visited so many countries, after having joined so many conferences and seminars he becomes a little tired. He does'nt like to travel for a longer time. He does'nt like to stay at he airport waiting for the connecting flight, sometimes for many hours. He also does'nt like to travel in the economic class of the plane with very narrow seats and – more or less – always the same meals and respective questions:

Beef or chicken? Tea or coffee? Noodles or rice?

Consequently, his interests are changing and the component talking becomes dominant. He likes to see friends. He likes talking about every thing under the sun, he likes refreshing old experiences from his career and he likes to talk about personal and privat experiences. The factors home work and traveling tend to become zero.

Why do I tell this story on the occasion at our JOINT Symposium? Off course, the story describes the career of a coastal engineer in a rather simplificated way but the story (which may also be used for various other professions) includes many true things when I think about my own life and my professional career.

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When preparing this notes (during a technical session of this symposium, shame upon me!) I was thinking about the co-operation with Chinese Universities and my longlasting friendships with colleagues in various countries of the world. Regarding my Chinese colleagues travelling means:

- I joined the APD / IAHR-Conference in 1980 in Taipei
- I joined the ICCE-Conference, again in Taipei in 1983
- I joined the COPEDEC-Conference in Beijing in 1987
- I was a member of the German delegation traveling to China more than 20 years ago and with great pleasure I remind the first Chinese-German-Symposium on Hydrology and Coastal Engineering in Nanjing 1984 (the original JOINT no 1!)
- Together with two colleagues I have run seminars in Honkong and Shenzen on the use of Geotextiles in Civil, Hydraulic and Environmental Engineering 1991
- After all I was included in the examination committee at NCKU in Tainan where Dong Jiing Doong and Chien Hwa finished their doctorate in 2002

This Third Chinese-German JOINT Symposium (JOINT 06, the name with its twofold meanings was introduced by Prof. Kao and myself in 1997 during our Symposium in Schloß Hasenwinkel – a manor near Rostock) is in fact the seventh, may be eight's of this kind of our co-operation. Symposium means, that it consists of both a seminar and a technical excursion. Various times we have slightly changed the name to consider the changes of development in our fields of interest (despite some other reasons).

Regarding my age this third (or seventh) symposium will most probably be the last one of this kind in my life, which does'nt mean that I do'nt want to travel to China anymore. Therefore, I hope that you can understand me that I want to talk to all Chinese and German participants on the occasion of this symposium.

Communication between engineers and scientists was and still is one of the main objectives of such an event. I mentioned three main components of a professional career in our field of common interest: working, traveling and talking.

There are, however, various links between these scopes of work. One link is drinking. Drinking is very important for a coastal engineer, in my opinion. Coastal engineers are usually able to take a lot. Therefore, it is a common expression in Germany that a rubble mound revetment or a breakwater must be able to suck the water: It must be rough like the throat of a hydraulic engineer. All my students during the past years were trained in this respect. Drinking of Mau Tai was an essential part of the education over years, even for the young ladies. After a certain reservation all of them enjoyed drinking Mau Tai very much. That was, however, my experience.

As a young engineer I got the opportunity to travel to Pakistan working for six month on a harbour project. One of my young Pakistani engineers used to say „Germans start drinking in the morning and end drinking during the night“. This is definitely not true but, to strengthen personal relationships drinking is an excellent help, as experience shows.

Few month ago, reflecting the „Second JOINT Symposium in Nanjing“, I have written an article entitled „20 years of cooperation between Germany and China“ which will be published in the German magazine „Die Küste“. I mentioned also the nice party during the symposium in Nanjing 1984 which was organised by the late Prof. Yen Kai, one of the great persons in our profession. This symposium and all the other events in mainland China,
Taiwan and Germany were the basis for many productive institutional relations. The exchange of scientists in both directions was, in addition, the basis for long-lasting friendships.

During the opening ceremony of this Third JOINT Symposium Prof. Tang mentioned his visit to the Franzius-Institut in Hannover in the early 1960's. I should remind in this respect that the famous founder of this institute, Prof. Otto Franzius, stayed in Nanjing as an expert on Hoang Ho regulation works.

It must have been during the 1930's and when I stayed in Nanjing our group had got the chance to see a film showing Prof. Franzius at a large hydraulic model of ECTUWR, today the Hohai University. I personally was very impressed. Prof. Yen Kai, the president of the Hohai University when we stayed there also visited Germany. I think it was during the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936. Staying in Germany for a few month only he learned excellently the German language and later it was a great pleasure for me to talk with him on the occasion of various meetings.

So, links between institutions, universities and private persons in our countries are very old. Personally, I want mainly to mention the relations to my distinguished colleagues from Taiwan during this seminar, especially Prof. Shan-Hwei Ou, Prof. Tai-Wen Hsu and last but not least to Prof. Chia Chuen Kao, Dr. Nian-Tzu Wu and Prof. Nai-Kuang Liang. We know us for many, many years and we are really good friends. But I should not forget the links which resulted from the previous symposia in Rostock an Nanjing, in the first row of all Chinese partners Prof. Yixin Yan.

It was a great pleasure for me to meet you all again here during this well organised Third Chinese-German JOINT Symposium. It was a pleasure for me to be a member of the German delegation again, despite the fact that I have retired already three years ago. I want to thank Prof. Zanke for his support in this respect.

It was a very fruitful and interesting seminar. I enjoyed to participate in an exciting Technical Excursion to the highlights of Taiwan. I would also like to thank you all for the nice and friendly atmosphere during the last week.

Special thanks however I would like to give to our hosts in Taiwan. In this respect I also want to express my gratitude to the busy young persons behind the key persons of this symposium mentioned before. Your warmhearted and circumspecting work was very impressive. There are so many things which have to be foreseen and ad hoc considered during such a large and complicated event like a symposium. Every detail was planned and executed without any hitch. You all did an excellent job!

Sören Kohlhase

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