

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, good afternoon.

As a representative of the Czech Parliament and Chairman of the Education, Science and Research, Youth and Sport Committee of the Czech Parliament I am very pleased to be here, greet you and deliver a speech on the occasion of the Czech national day.

On 28th October 1918, an independent Czechoslovak Republic was established, on which the present independent Czech Republic exists. We recently celebrated the 70th anniversary of the People's Republic of China in Prague together with Ambassador of the Republic of China Zhang Jiang and our president Milos Zeman. It was clear from both introductory speeches that economic and trade cooperation between China and the Czech Republic was developing very well. It would be a pity if cooperation in science and research, innovation, and in particular cooperation between high school and university students, remained behind economic links. Czech-Chinese trade relations today are the strongest in history. The volume of Chinese investors this year reaches three billion dollars (i.e. over 70 billion Czech crowns). Among the Czech companies, the car market of Škoda Auto, Škoda Transportation trams, Tatra Trucks trucks. And so I could continue with the list.

Czech - Chinese relations have a long history and tradition. And we have something to build on. That is why representatives of Czech universities often go to Chinese universities and high schools, and on a bilateral level teams are formed to work together to solve specific problems. We are pleased to see that Czech University Centers are being established at Chinese universities and our teachers and students are in close contact with them.

As a former Rector of Brno University of Technology, I have to mention the participation of Chinese young postdoctoral fellows and scientists in the excellent scientific center of several Brno universities and research institutes, the so-called Central European Institute of Technology. Here, research and development in the field of life sciences and advanced materials and technologies are integrated. One of the biggest projects is between Brno University of Technology and Tsinghua University on nanoceramics for medical applications. Other joint research projects focus on clean fuel, green technology or aviation. Czech language is becoming increasingly popular. Only this year, new full-time Czech language undergraduate studies have been launched in Xian, Changchun, Dalian or Hangzhou. In total, there are over 17 Universities across China offering Czech language.

The Czech sinologists and Chinese bohemists have been always at the core of these “bridge construction sites”. Besides them, however, there are dozens of engineers, hydrogeologists or nuclear energy experts, early warning, satellite mapping, ecologic or agricultural experts, pilot trainers, animators, artists and designers, tourism, foreign trade and financial specialists.

I look forward to supporting implementation of the Strategic partnership between the Czech Republic and the People's Republic of China in the education, research, sports and youth field – which for me, are the grounds for any mutual interest, cognition, exchange and collaboration. In conclusion, I would like to wish my colleagues at the Czech Embassy and all of you a lot of work success, successful contacts between the People's Republic of China and our companies and entrepreneurs.