There is an old saying in China which goes: at forty, I have no doubts. This doubt-free state requires inner maturity and the ability to understand the external world. “No doubts” is a fitting description of the relationship between China and the EU, since the two established diplomatic relations 40 years ago. Looking ahead, the publication of the China-EU 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation and Joint Statement on Deepening the EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Mutual Benefit, as well as frequent high-level interaction between China and the EU, have injected more confidence and motivation into those who will shape the next 40 years of Sino-EU relations.

During the 21 years since its foundation CEIBS has played an active role in the field of people to people exchange between China and the EU. The school has become an important platform where the sharing of information and mutual learning as well as the promotion of the development of Sino-EU business and trade can take place. CEIBS’ success will forever remain as a landmark of the friendship between China and EU.

CEIBS has gathered not only intellectual resources from the EU but strong support from her member states. EFMD has also helped CEIBS in raising funds, gathering talented individuals and enhancing its international influence. With economic globalisation and China’s reform and opening up, CEIBS gradually shifted from merely introducing advanced management theory and educational models from the EU to promoting two-way communication in capital, technology, market and personnel exchanges between China and the EU. CEIBS’ 17,000 alumni are also a huge international network which is an important force in cross-border trade and investment.

The year 2015 marks the beginning of the renewed CEIBS Extension Agreement and we are looking forward to a more exuberant CEIBS and to witnessing even more achievements that will give full play to its “China Depth, Global Breadth”, in promoting close cooperation between China and the EU.
We are happy to celebrate 40 years of good relations between Europe and China but, in the future global world, good relations and increasing economic exchanges are not enough. A strong strategy of mutual cooperation is needed. In the new world either you work together or you fight together.

Therefore we need shared scientific and cultural efforts but, even more, joint cooperation in the major political issues starting from fighting against terrorism and poverty. A more active Europe and a more open China are the precondition for all that. Let us take the Silk Road as the symbol of a new life, but let us work on it.

As a member of the CEIBS board, I am confident that the school will lead the way in providing the knowledge and business management skills needed by those – from both China and Europe – who will navigate the challenges ahead and make the best of all possible opportunities.
During the 40 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the EU, Shanghai has consistently played an important role in economic & trade cooperation, scientific & technological collaboration and cultural exchanges between the two sides. At present, Shanghai is committed to accelerating the construction of “Four Centres” as well as an internationally influential centre for scientific and technological innovation. This process will also benefit from positive future development trends in China-EU relations.

CEIBS, established in 1994 through the hard work of a group of people with insight and jointly funded by the Shanghai municipal government and the European Commission to provide higher education, has successfully aligned Europe’s – and other regions’ – wealth of experience in management education with the huge demand of the Chinese market. Over the last 21 years, CEIBS has become a model of Sino-EU cooperation in the field of business management education. With the deepening of China’s reform and opening up, CEIBS will leverage its internationally renowned faculty and research strength to keep making contributions to the development of Shanghai and China by making further and deeper study of the country’s business cases. Today, a large number of CEIBS alumni from all over the world are involved in the growing economic and trade relations between China and the EU. Let us look forward to the steady and healthy development of Sino-EU relations, and to a brighter future for CEIBS.

Weng Tiehui  
Vice Mayor of Shanghai
We have come a very long way since 1975 when the EU and China established formal diplomatic relations. At that time the EU was made up of just nine member states, now we are 28; China was only beginning to open up and had yet to undergo its economic miracle. Trade between our two sides was miniscule; now the EU is China’s largest market and China is the EU’s second-largest trade partner. This relationship has made us truly interdependent, in the sense that the success of one party is predicated on the success of the other.

Although we cooperate in more areas than ever before, there is still much untapped potential in our relations and this is why in November 2013 we adopted the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation, the framework for our relations until the end of the decade. It identifies four main areas to bring our partnership to the next level: peace, prosperity, sustainable development and people-to-people exchanges.

In terms of concrete measures, we are currently negotiating an ambitious and comprehensive investment agreement, as well as looking to deepen our cooperation in the WTO and other plurilateral negotiations. This would further open up access to each other’s markets, while creating more balanced world trade. There is huge opportunity for sharing the EU’s experience and technology through the EU-China Sustainable Urbanisation Partnership and for further developing connectivity between Europe and Asia, which will bring benefits to both sides. Indeed, this was a major point of discussion at the EU-China Summit at the end of June and both investment and connectivity were high on the agenda at the EU-China High-Level Economic and Trade Dialogue that took place at the end of September.

Another important area where the EU and China must work together more is in the environment and climate change. Both sides have already shown commitment to forging a successful outcome to the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris later this year. This will be an important step on the path to a cleaner, greener, low-carbon future.

Over the coming decades, this relationship can only deepen further as we continue to seek, as firm partners, resolutions to common global issues and increase people-to-people contacts in areas like tourism, scientific & cultural exchange and education. In this context, we look forward to continued collaboration with CEIBS as the EU-China relationship strengthens and grows.
This year is the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the EU and also the 70th anniversary of the birth of the United Nations. Throughout history, China and the EU have made great sacrifices and contributions to the peaceful co-existence and development of human beings. Today, they’re also the shapers and guardians of international order and systems. The current international landscape is now in a new era full of reform and exploration, bringing forth the new through the old. As the scope of co-operation between China and the EU expands, there is more cooperation and mutual learning in the fields of trade investment, financial innovation and more. CEIBS, an important platform for cultural exchange and business collaboration on both sides, began a new twenty-year journey this year. I hope CEIBS can play its role in the developmental trends of the international economy and society, promote the exchange of thoughts, ideas and experiences between China and the EU and deliver excellent managerial talent to enterprises in China, in Europe and all over the world.
I am delighted and honoured in being EFMD Honorary Chairman and CEIBS Board Vice Chairman at the time when this year sees the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the European Union.

One of the challenges of the increasingly interconnected world economy is the development of managers and business leaders who are able to function and operate globally in different ways and in different cultures. If cooperation between China and the European Union – two of the three largest trade powers in the world – can contribute to this process, it is a sign of accomplishment and encouragement for future cooperation.

One of the most successful EU-China projects has been the establishment of CEIBS, a joint venture between EFMD and Shanghai Jiaotong University. CEIBS was the first international business school in China and, within a relatively short period of time, it has confirmed its leadership in business education in the country and it has succeeded in becoming one of the top business schools in Asia.

As Vice Chairman of the CEIBS Board it has been a great pleasure, both professionally and personally, to see the incredible progress the school has made in developing business leaders of the future and in strengthening the relations between China and the European Union in the field of education.

I am convinced that in years to come CEIBS will continue to play a prominent role in bringing wisdom and professionalism to the global business world.
On May 6, 1975, China established official diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community (EEC, predecessor of the EU). Forty years on, China and the EU, formerly “distant neighbours”, have turned into “comprehensive strategic partners”, and the Sino-EU relationship has become one of the most important, stable, constructive and influential partnerships in the world. Among the many political, economic, cultural, sci-tech and educational cooperative relationships between China and the EU, the establishment and development of China Europe International Business School is a particularly rich and colourful one.

CEIBS’ origins can be traced back to as early as the mid-1980s. At the time, insightful individuals from China and the EEC’s management education field pursued their shared dreams and facilitated the establishment of China Europe Management Institute (CEMI). The predecessor to CEIBS, CEMI opened a gateway for the best of China’s business world to access Western management knowledge. With the support of the Chinese government and the EU, most CEMI students enjoyed the opportunity to do internships at transnational corporations in Europe. This invaluable overseas work experience equipped them with international vision, and heightened their sense of responsibility for the development of China.

On November 8, 1994, China Europe International Business School was officially established. Throughout its development over the last 21 years, CEIBS has always been a cornerstone of the bridge that supports “peace, growth, reform, and civilisation” between the continents of Europe and Asia. With the help of CEIBS, many Chinese entrepreneurs gained international vision, brought “Chinese capital” and “Chinese experience” to Europe, and practised international cooperation between China and the EU. Through CEIBS, many European entrepreneurs also obtained a richer, more profound understanding of a more robust and independent version of China. Major players from the EU’s political, business, and academic realm often visit CEIBS campuses and the school has also actively hosted academic forums related to business and trade cooperation between China and the EU. Over the years, CEIBS has also invested a lot of effort into the study of specific cases of mergers and acquisitions between Chinese and European enterprises. Among the 17,000 CEIBS alumni, there are Chinese working in Europe, as well as Europeans working in China. They have contributed to the build-up of mutual trust between China and the EU.

Now, with China’s most recently proposed opening-up strategy “One Belt, One Road”, Europe has also come up with their Juncker Investment Plan. CEIBS scholars, students and alumni are now faced with the huge challenge of finding synergies between these two great strategies of business practice. The future holds glory and offers opportunities. We believe that CEIBS has gained rich experience and accumulated massive resources through the years, becoming an inspirational example of collaboration between China and foreign countries in the field of education. We’ll continue our efforts to cultivate excellent management elites who understand both China and Europe, and to provide constant intellectual support for mutual trust and cooperation between China and the EU.
Today we see increasing connectivity and knowledge exchange around the world. There are Chinese companies going global, and global companies entering China. We also see young people from China going abroad to study and youngsters from around the world studying in China. What this means is that, in the future, China, Europe, the USA will have a lot more in common. Brands – for everything from cars to food & drink, clothing, phones, hotels, restaurants, banks – will be global. And people will feel comfortable in this environment.

But how do we get to that next step, where we can take advantage of the opportunities ahead? There are various companies, consultants, experts, who help big name companies go global. They may point out, for example, that there are small and medium sized companies in both Europe and China whose future may be brighter if they were acquired by global firms that then use them as a base to penetrate their local markets.

And what would be the tools needed to overcome challenges that will surely crop up along the way? At the company level there would be a need for good people, funds, commitment, professional management. Yes, there are many companies in Europe that want to go to China, and the other way around, but many seem to ignore the fact that this cannot be done without strong commitment, some level of investment, the hiring of well-prepared people, using experts (consultants, lawyers) and, above all, a healthy dose of professionalism (knowledge, ethics, strategy).

Management schools have been addressing, for years, the issue of global competition. Business school graduates – such as our CEIBS alumni – are assets for this deployment. But it is vital that top management shows clearly that it is committed to this objective.

After all, progress made at the company level will bode well for the cities involved, for the countries involved, for the EU-China relationship.
When I think about Sino-EU ties, I remember my Spanish friend and former Dean of CEIBS Prof Alfredo Pastor. He was an excellent Dean, and we worked well together. He made wonderful contributions in improving the academic quality of CEIBS, and was very concerned about the Chinese economy, culture and society. He supported David Gosset in setting up the Euro-China Forum which holds annual meetings in a European country each year. He also actively participated during these forums and tried his best to promote communication between China and EU.

There is one particularly interesting story about Alfredo I want to share: In September 2004, a few Chinese shoe manufacturers’ products were set on fire in Elche, Spain, and the event threatened to escalate into a bilateral conflict between China and Spain. Alfredo, who is an economist and who did not wish to see the conflict taking place, wrote an article which appeared in El Pais, appealing to the Spanish people to be reasonable. He explained that while it was true that their traditional industry was being ‘invaded’ by the Chinese, it was also an opportunity for the EU to optimise its industry structure – and moving away from the low end industry was the first step. His article was convincing and effective. At that time he was no longer serving as the Dean of CEIBS, but his commitment to a healthy relationship between China and the EU had not changed, and he did what he perceived as correct as a Spaniard and as a member of the CEIBS family.

This is merely an example of how members of the CEIBS community have contributed to the Sino-EU relationship. We are consistent in our efforts to gain understanding with knowledge, and communication with reason.

The CEIBS logo is the Chinese character 合, which means cooperation; it is a symbol of the cooperation between China and EU. The logo also resembles a house with an arrow pointing upward. This is a metaphor which tells us that CEIBS is a big house, one big family; and the school, as well as each family member, is always moving upward. With this spirit, the CEIBS family is striving to make a contribution to the better future of China and the EU.
The year 1994 marks the starting point of my friendship with China Europe International Business School. It was then that I suggested that CEIBS put its campus in Jinqiao Development Zone, in the Pudong district of Shanghai, where I worked as general manager. I was so happy when my suggestion was adopted. I still have vivid memories of the signing of contracts and the solemnity of the ceremony that launched CEIBS. That solemnity, I believe, came from the sagacity and effort of talented individuals from China and the EU.

In June 2006, I had the privilege of starting an unforgettable journey: serving as the President of CEIBS. Over the next nine years, I spent many days and nights with faculty, staff and students of this young and vibrant business school. I watched as it blossomed, from a blueprint, into a world renowned business school with international faculty, teaching facilities, students and a global alumni network. On campus, I received many guests from the European Union and its member states; and each of these exchanges and sharing of ideas motivated me to keep moving forward. In this fascinating atmosphere, a blend of Chinese and Western cultures, I was thrilled to see CEIBS’ progress in remaining true to its promise of providing China Depth, Global Breadth.

Today, I still have the pride of being a part of the school, and I will still be active in all things which I deem are good for CEIBS. An ancient Chinese sage once said: “The highest virtue is as water, and great virtue can carry all the things in the world.” I believe that CEIBS epitomises this saying every day and the school owes her success to a “harmonious heart”. The 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the EU has brought us into a new era, where the two sides are engaged in building four major planks in their partnership: peace, growth, reform and civilization. This is also an opportunity for further development of CEIBS. Therefore, it is imperative that we be more open, more inclusive, more innovative, so that we will be better able to produce more and more business elite with global vision and Chinese wit for China, for the EU, and for the world.
The 40th anniversary of China-EU ties represents a new departure point for China and the European Union to strengthen their relationship by deepening cooperation in a holistic way.

Looking ahead, there’s huge room for the improvement of Sino-European relations especially through economic cooperation between the two sides. China has reinforced its intent to deepen reforms, and by cutting down on governmental power it has enhanced market vitality. The European Union has consistently attached great importance to dealing with relations among governments, enterprises, societies and civilians. The two parties may strengthen communication in this aspect.

The two parties may also cultivate and develop new growth points in cooperation and expand their shared areas of interest. It is worth noting that the “One Belt, One Road” strategy initiated by China has set Europe as its final stop, and the active participation of developed economic circles within the EU have a role to play in its development. The European Union has, in the past, launched development initiatives such as the "Juncker Plan" and the Pan-Europe transportation network. If the two parties can effectively work together on developmental strategies, the result would be one plus one equals more than two.

Education is an important part of the China-Europe cooperation. To date, every year there are 6 million people traveling between China and the EU, and there are more than 300,000 overseas students studying in both countries’ educational institutions. CEIBS, as the paradigm of Sino-European educational cooperation, has been at the forefront in combining China and Europe’s management experience, business wisdom and practical knowledge. With all its brilliant accomplishments, CEIBS has earned wide social recognition. More than 17,000 CEIBS alumni all over China and the world have played significant roles in different fields, an important force to accelerate cooperation between China and Europe.

I sincerely hope that with us now at the new departure point for the next forty years, China and Europe will realise much closer, all-round and strategic cooperation; and I hope CEIBS will play a stronger and better role during this significant period in our history!
China-Europe relations over the past four decades are a testimony that strategic vision is the firm foundation for healthy development of bilateral relations, while innovation is an inexhaustible drive for the advancement of ties between both sides. From the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the European Commission (EC) in 1975, to the establishment of the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two in 2003, to the 2014 declaration that they were to forge the four new partnerships of peace, growth, reform and civilization, generations of Chinese and European leaders have devoted their insights and wisdom to upgrading relations between China and Europe. Innovative Chinese and Europeans also invested their efforts into the deepening of Sino-European collaboration.

China Europe International Business School is the fruit of what greatness can be achieved through China-EU cooperation. For more than 20 years, the school has held steadfast to its strategic position of “China Depth, Global Breadth,” upholding the school motto of “conscientiousness, innovation and pursuit of excellence”. It now ranks among the world’s top business schools, serving as a bridge between China and Europe… and the rest of the world. We believe that CEIBS will certainly make new contributions in the cultivation of leaders for globalisation, the forging of a world-class management education brand, the creation of a high-end think tank for China’s economic management, and the strengthening of ties between China and Europe… and the world.