



**THE HAGUE CONSENSUS
ON
CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN CHINA AND EUROPE**

September 20, 2013, The Hague

Participants from **The Clingendael Institute** (The Netherlands), the **Charhar Institute** (China), and the **Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen** (ifa, Germany), with the support of the **Robert Bosch Foundation**, reach the following ten-point consensus after a two-day conference on *Culture and Understanding in China-Europe Relations*. Their network and dialogue are meant to contribute to the debate on relations between Europe and China and will produce concrete policy recommendations for policy-makers on both sides.

1. The strengthening of cultural relations and mutual understanding benefits from the long-existing linkages between Chinese civilization and European civilization.
2. A broad and balanced cultural exchange between the cultures of China and Europe can only succeed if the principle of cultural diversity is mutually respected. It is a contribution towards a global culture of peace and harmony.
3. Cultural interaction as an activity is aimed at building bridges, genuine collaboration and a mutual willingness to change, and as such it is characterized by equality, partnership, process orientation and open-endedness.
4. Cultural exchange is an integral part of the relations between China and Europe. It serves national interests, helps create understanding and trust, and facilitates agreement on political issues and global governance challenges.

5. Governments play an important role in creating platforms where non-governmental cultural actors can develop their relations and engage in collaborative projects that will strengthen mutual understanding, respect and appreciation. Understanding the culture of the other contributes to one's own cultural resources.
6. Cultural diplomacy, understood as the way in which governments address the citizens of other societies through culture, is on a par with cultural dialogue as conducted in people-to-people diplomacy. Each aims to cultivate interest and mutual learning.
7. Efforts to impose on others political ideology through cultural exchanges should be avoided. For this reason, not only culture itself is crucial for cultural diplomacy, but also the way culture is dealt with.
8. Cultural activities, goods and services have both an intrinsic and a financial value. They are of economic importance and they carry identity, values and meaning.
9. Chinese-European cultural dialogue takes place in the context of global communication, mobility and the creation of networks, and should inspire decision-makers from the fields of politics, industry, media and culture.
10. Cultural exchange is a process spanning generations and can only produce a sustainable effect in the long term. This puts any quantitative or short-term qualitative evaluation into perspective, as culture cannot be fully understood and appreciated by one-dimensional measurement.