



## **WKF Day 2: Solo Speech/ Hu Angang's Super China** by Theresa Arico

### **Moderator:**

Jae-Ho Chung – Seoul National University, Prof of International Relations, Director of the Program on US-China Relations

### **Speaker:**

Angang Hu – Institute for Contemporary China Studies, Tsinghua University, Dean

China's future is not just bright, it is radiant. This was Angang Hu's message during his solo speech, entitled Super China, at the second day of the 16<sup>th</sup> annual World Knowledge Forum.

According to Dr. Hu, Dean of the Institute for Contemporary China Studies at Tsinghua University, China has grown from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy to an international heavy-weight super power capable of rivaling the United States in almost every field. The China of the future will be stronger, richer, and a source of prosperity for the rest of the world.

Dr. Hu began his talk by presenting the latest data on China's economy. China's greatest strength lies in its human resources, and Dr. Hu was relentless in his description of the many benefits of this vast resource.

He explained that Chinese workers are achieving higher levels of education than ever before. These newly educated workers jump into research and development fields. They help to build larger, more profitable companies, and Dr. Hu emphasized that they boost the generation of energy to fuel the growing Chinese demand for technology.

China has even out-stripped the United States in the number of patents registered.

"China is no longer a copy-cat nation," he said, "but a nation of innovation."

Some observers might find China's emergence alarming, but Dr. Hu emphasized that this growth is quite good for the world. He drew attention to China's 2013 policy of "One belt, One road", a term used to describe the importance of trade relationships with other Eurasian nations. Like the silk road of ancient times, these trade relationships will bring growth and prosperity to everyone involved.

"You may fear the giant living next to you," he admitted, "but when you flip the coin you can think of it as an opportunity, especially for Korea. Korean companies can use the Chinese market as if it were their own domestic market."

Dr. Hu also briefly touched upon the growing trend of Chinese tourism, which brings money into foreign economies, as well as the large number of international students studying abroad in China.

Commentators often criticize China on its environmental policy, citing high levels of pollution as a result of industrialization. However, Dr. Hu noted that the Chinese government's most recent 5-year plan takes into account the need for environmental reform and has already made moves to decrease its carbon emissions.

“China will no longer be the major pollutant of the world, but rather the greatest engine for green growth,” he said.

In the face of all this positivity, moderator Jae-Ho Chung, professor of International Relations at Seoul National University, couldn't help but ask if the Chinese economy would continue to grow, especially considering that its rate of GDP growth has decreased in the last few years.

Dr. Hu was not concerned. “When it comes to purchasing power, [we] have more than \$17 trillion...When it comes to economic growth, you have to look at economic growth engines.”

Of these engines, China has plenty. Dr. Hu mentioned China's highly urbanized population, its advances in manufacturing, and especially its “internet plus policy.” China's number of internet users has surpassed that of the United States, and companies such as Alibaba continue to perform beautifully.

Dr. Hu made one thing quite clear.

“If we call ourselves a super power, we need to pursue public good.”