

High-Level Symposium on Sustainable Cities and Sustainable Urbanization

Yangzhou, China

16-18 December 2013

Statement by

Irene Giner-Reichl

Austrian Ambassador to the PR of China at

The recently concluded Summit between the EU and China agreed on a “EU China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation”. Under the major heading “Sustainable Development”, next to sections on “Science, technology and innovation”, “Space and aerospace”, “Energy”, “Climate change and environmental protection” and other important topics, a substantial section on “Urbanisation” is included. It reads as follows:

- 1. Carry out cooperation and promote advanced technology and managerial experience in sustainable urban development planning, urban infrastructure and management and urban-rural integration, including transparent and equitable consultative procedures with public and business stakeholders.

- 2. Ensure the success of the EU-China Urbanisation Partnership Forum, the EU-China City Expo and the EU-China Mayors’ Forum, improve the governing framework of the EU-China Partnership, support the development of numerous relevant city pairings and steer EU-China urbanization cooperation by the Joint Steering Committee of the EU-China Urbanisation Partnership. Support the development of EC-Link as a co-operation platform to enhance the impact of the Partnership.

-

- 3. Conduct dialogues and share experience on urban planning and design, urban socio-economic issues, good administration, natural and cultural heritage preservation, green and low-carbon development, disaster prevention and control, urban mobility and eco-buildings and construction standards in the building sector.

-

- 4. Actively build demonstration cities, support EU-China urban cooperation projects, promote cooperation between cities, and between cities and industrial parks and enterprises, creating a level playing field for all stakeholders involved, and reinforcing cooperation in the fields of finance and innovation to elevate the quality and level of urban development.”

These recommendations in the Summit-Outcome document build on a successful and ongoing cooperation between the EU and China in the area of urbanisation and energy security. The overarching goal of this cooperation is to progress towards a low carbon economy. In this context it is important to remember that China's current Five Year Plan (12th FYP – 2010 – 2015) includes the following goals:

- 1) To increase the proportion of non-fossil fuels of China's energy mix to 15 % by 2020;
- 2) To reduce carbon intensity per unit GDP by 17 % until 2015; and
- 3) To lower energy intensity per unit GDP by 16 % until 2015.

In line with these targets, China's Energy Policy, published by the State Council in October 2012, stressed that its energy development must reflect high-technology advancements, low consumption of resources, reduced environmental pollution, enhanced energy security and satisfactory economic returns.

The EU shares many similar challenges to China in addressing its energy needs, including: expanding the (high-voltage) electricity grid; increasing the energy efficiency (EE) of cities and energy-intensive industries; and developing a competitive emissions trading system (ETS). The European Commission's (EC) Europe 2020 strategy includes the EU's 20-20-20 headline targets; which comprise three precise goals to be achieved by 2020:

- 1) Reducing EU GHG emissions to at least 20 % below 1990 levels;
- 2) Ensuring 20 % of energy consumed within the EU comes from renewable sources; and
- 3) Reducing primary energy use by 20 % in comparison with projected levels – to be achieved through improvements in EE.

Given that the EU's and China's approaches are highly compatible, a close cooperation with the view of creating win-win-solutions is very realistic. Hence the EU-China High-Level Meeting on Energy in May 2012 delivered the “EU-China Joint Declaration on Energy Security” and the “Joint Declaration on EU-China Partnership on Urbanisation”, dealing primarily with energy consumption issues in urban areas, covering EE in buildings, energy conservation in transport, smart cities, the use of clean coal in cities and district heating. Several bilaterally-run technical assistance projects underpin these joint declarations.

The EU-China Strategic Partnership on Energy Security and Urbanisation supports policy-makers and incentivizes industries; addresses fossil fuels in the energy mix; optimizes renewables and ensures nuclear safety; enhances the power sector (markets, smart grids, demand-side-management); promotes energy-efficiency in industry, buildings, transport. With regard to urbanization issues in a more narrow sense, the EU-China Partnership on Urbanisation focuses on so-called “Smart cities” and “New Energy Cities” and has identified joint priorities for Research and Innovation in Sustainable Cities.

From the beginning, Austria has been actively engaged in the Strategic partnership between China and the EU in the field of urbanization. We have contributions to make in the area of urban development proper, through the promotion of the Smart Cities Approach. This approach is supported by our know-how in environmental technologies, in particular renewable energy, integrated water management, building codes, materials and technologies and state-of-the art transportation systems.

On the ground, the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT) developed a Low Carbon Action Plan for the City of Nanchang (Jiangxi) which included a status quo analysis of the city’s carbon emissions, recommendations for the implementation of the national energy & climate policies at the local level, development of a masterplan and “actions” for 2012-2015 and recommendations for the improvement of existing city strategy and planning documents.

The Austrian Institute of Technology was also commissioned to develop an energy concept for the Sino-Austrian Sutong Ecological Park at Nantong. AIT carried out an output-benefit and implementation analysis of different energy measures. The comparison and analysis of different scenarios resulted in concrete suggestions and recommendations. These included photovoltaic systems on the roofs of residential and industrial buildings, solar thermal systems for domestic hot water supply, a district heating network solution as well as combined heat and power generation based on gas boilers for industrial areas. Target scenario calculations have shown that a combination of these measures has the potential to reduce the primary energy demand of the Sino-Austrian Sutong Ecological Park by 29 % to 48 % and CO₂ emissions by 34 % to 52 % as compared to the current control plan. To implement the efficiency measures the AIT experts recommended to set up mandatory requirements and to provide economic incentives for advanced technology and renewable energy such as local feed-in tariffs, net metering or direct investment subsidies.

Since buildings account for a large proportion of energy demand, AIT also developed design guidelines for four different building types to be located in the Sino-Austrian Sutong Ecological Park – residential, office, industrial and public buildings. Furthermore, since a part of the Sino-Austrian Sutong Ecological Park is reserved for a circular economy cluster, AIT developed a general concept focusing on industrial recycling, energy cascading and waste water treatment for six strategic industries

(precision machinery, eco-industries, advanced IT, materials, biotech pharmacy and services).

In all this, AIT followed the “smart city approach” which stipulates that energy and urban planning need to be integrated to achieve optimal results. AIT developed urban design guidelines concerning ecological planning aimed at ensuring that the overall spatial arrangement of buildings, green spaces and streets also complies with the principles of sustainable development. The recommendations for urban design improvement range from the introduction of mixed-use sub-centres and pocket parks, pedestrian friendly street proportions to reduce traffic impact to a variety of building types that capture solar energy and entrance gates highlighting the Park’s eco-friendly commitment.

Vienna’s most important urban development venture which at the same time is one of the largest of its kind in all of Europe is called “**Aspern** Vienna’s Urban Lakeside”.

The planning area covers 240 hectares, roughly equalling the combined 7th and 8th municipal districts of Vienna or 340 football pitches. The city is to be built in several construction phases over a period of at least two decades.

aspern boasts both urban and country appeal, offering lots of public zones and ample open spaces. The centre and tranquil heart of **aspern** is the **Lakeside Park**, which links all other sections of the project.

Vienna’s Urban Lakeside will be, offer and connect many things: economic hub, business and high-tech centre, science, research and education quarter as well as recreational zone; city and nature, alternative energy resources and modern architecture; innovative “townhouses” instead of anonymous blocks of flats, ground-floor zones with shops, cafés and restaurants instead of mono-structures, quality of design instead of random growth. **aspern will unite many generations and lifestyles in one spot.**

As part of Donaustadt, the 22nd municipal district of Vienna, **aspern** is also part of the metropolis Vienna, one of the cities with the highest quality of living worldwide. As a result, both “old” and “new” stand to benefit from each other. Just as **aspern** will attract people, enterprises, and capital to Vienna, Vienna will enable these newcomers to enjoy its myriad attractions, e.g. by extending the Underground network to the former airfield or providing for an exchange of culture and education.

aspern keeps abreast of the latest developments and is excellently networked due to smooth transport and traffic links: it is easy to reach the city centre of Vienna or the airport. The city of the future is an **open-minded city** that meets a great variety of functions. The objective lies in planning a place that is vibrant and of high experience value. With its interplay of different factors, such as targeted mixed-use concepts, the courage to embrace small-scale structures, but also creativity and openness of planning, **aspern** appeals to people who prefer an urban yet sustainability-conscious lifestyle, who enjoy the present and look forward to tomorrow.

Since Transport issues go to the heart of successful, sustainable urban development I should like to mention ITS, the yearly World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems. In 2012, the Congress was held in Vienna, Austria, with some 10 000 participants from 90 countries and 300 exhibitors from 25 nations. During the Ministerial level meeting the high-ranking officials committed to more systematically integrate the outcomes of future ITS World Congresses into policy and operational decisions.

Distinguished Delegates, let me conclude by saying that I am convinced that urban issues should be dealt with very thoroughly within the deliberations on the post 2015 development paradigm. I trust that our deliberations here in Yangzhou will make a very valuable contribution to this process.

Finally, I should like to extend a very warm invitation to the Austrian side-event, later today at 6.00 p.m. I look forward to discussing with you Austrian and Urban solutions and to share video and printed materials on these with you.