

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is a great pleasure for me and I am very much delighted that today we are signing a **memorandum of understanding on cooperation** between the Hong Kong Public Libraries and the Bavarian State Library.

We all are living in a **globalized world**. Globalized not only in the political and economical, but also in the **cultural** realm. In school and in higher education, in teaching and in research, in lifelong-learning and in leisure-time we access **globally distributed** and **globally connected** information via the Internet. And we all are used to get the information we want **wherever** we are and **whenever** we need it.

Large libraries like the Hong Kong Public Libraries and the Bavarian State Library are **major information hubs** on a national and international level. They act as driving forces for research, education, and culture. Both of us play an **essential role** in the **new global information ecosystem**. And we are eagerly exploiting the fascinating technologies of the digital age to expose our services on a **global level** and to **users worldwide**.

With respect to our **rich collections** as well as to **the broad and inclusive range of our services** both of our libraries have **much** in common. Therefore, we are **ideal partners** for the cooperation agreement we are about to sign. **We both** serve as multimedia information providers for scholarly research as well as for the general public. **And we both** act as innovative forces in the field of digital technologies and services.

So, I am **firmly** convinced that our future cooperation will be of **high and sustainable mutual benefit** to our two institutions, both in the sphere of library and information services as well as in the field of technological innovation. First **operative steps** will be taken soon: We are exploring right now the possibilities of an **exchange of digital collections**, and further joint projects and activities will be developed in the near future.

Libraries are facing fascinating challenges and opportunities in the new digital landscape. **Together** both of our libraries **can contribute so much** to the needs of the global knowledge society. Together we can make **a perfect job** in connecting people to **knowledge** and – through knowledge – to **personal success** and – finally – to **wisdom!**

Thank you very much!