

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to this, the inaugural Euromoney China Global Debt Capital Markets Congress. We are especially grateful to Mr. Shi and the National Association of Financial Market Institutional Investors. Without the support, hard work and cooperation of NAFMII, this groundbreaking conference never would have taken place. It is truly an honor to work alongside such an esteemed and dedicated organization. We are also extremely honoured that Dr Zhou Xiaochuan, Governor of the People's Bank of China, will deliver the opening keynote address of this conference. I first came to Beijing years ago, and the transformation of this country since then is truly astonishing. It is normal for visitors to this country to comment on how quickly this country has developed – and that, of course, is true. But what I think is sometimes missed is how there is another, steadier, more measured, rhythm at play in China. Policymakers and regulators have taken great care to plan in detail the most important elements of change in the financial and economic structure of the country. Nowhere is that more evident than in the development of the bond market. The Chinese fixed income market has been over 20 years in the making – from the first sale of government bonds across bank counters in 1988 to the situation we have today: a diverse range of instruments with differing profiles of risk and return. At every stage of development, the next step has been carefully examined in order to produce a market that matches the needs of borrowers and investors.

That has been achieved against the backdrop of remarkable changes within the Chinese economy itself – and in the economy of the wider world.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Renminbi market stands today at a historic moment in time. China has emerged as a world power – with all that that means in terms of its place in the wider economic and political international order. If the people's currency is to take its rightful place as a reliable store of value for its country's citizens – and for overseas investors – then a fully functioning bond market is an essential part of that process.

This helps explain why more than 1,000 delegates, representing 29 countries and territories around the world, have registered to attend this event over the next two days. Among the international attendees, we are honored to have large delegations here from Japan, South Korea and across Southeast Asia.

The potential of this market also explains why, for the first time ever, more than 30 of the world's most important issuers have gathered together in Beijing. In the next two days we will be hearing from senior representatives of global borrowers, some of whom who have already contributed to this surging market - including the IFC, ADB and Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UJF. A number of the largest borrowers in the world, including the US Treasury and the World Bank, are here, as are many of the main Chinese issuers, such as the China Development Bank.

The opening of the offshore RMB funding market in February this year will have a profound impact on both the ability of foreign entities to fund their activities in China and on the promotion of the Yuan as a currency.

Still, there are many challenges ahead for everyone who is active in developing this market. We need more tools for risk management. We need more instruments for Chinese savers to manage their finances. We need a proper credit culture.

The potential of this market is, however, unbounded, and I think I share the enthusiasm and optimism of many of the people in this room, both Chinese and foreign, when I say that the next ten years have the potential to transform the global fixed income landscape.

Since our beginnings in 1969, we at Euromoney have tracked, analysed, encouraged the development of bond markets across the globe. We are honoured to be a part of that process here, today, in China.

Before I introduce our opening keynote speaker, I would like to thank each and every one of our sponsors for making this important conference possible. Their commitment to this forum, and to the continued development of China's bond markets, has been remarkable and unwavering.

And now, it is my great pleasure to introduce Dr Zhou Xiaochuan, Governor of the People's Bank of China.

Governor Zhou is a modest and measured man and he would not say this; but I can. Please welcome the world's most important central banker. Xiexie.