Honorable Ambassador Wu, distinguished guests, dear fellow students, ladies and gentlemen:

My name is Weiwei Cheng. I am a Ph.D. student from University of Marburg.

I am indeed truly humbled to be standing here today to receive this year's China National Award for Outstanding Self-Financed Students Abroad. I am unbelievably happy to receive this honor from my beloved country. It is so hard to explain my feeling of this moment.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Education and the Scholarship Council for establishing this award for the students studying abroad. I think of this award not only as praise and honor, but also inspiration and encouragement. It reminds us to keep the hard working, to keep the high standard, in order to live up to the ideals behind this award.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the education section of the China embassy in Germany and the evaluation committee in China. Thank you for your trust and support by considering me for this award. I will always keep this trust and support in my heart and let it encourage me to do what I can to contribute. Thanks to your appreciation, I am presented together with the other 36 fellow award winners here today. It is my great pleasure and privilege to stand along with such an amazing group.

There is a long list of people I owe my gratitude for receiving this award. They are my mentors, friends, and family. My world is different because of them.

First and foremost, I would like to express my greatest gratitude to my Ph.D. advisor Prof. Eyke Hüllermeier at University of Marburg. Thank him for introducing me to the field of machine learning. He has taught me how good research is done. From his inspiring ideas and the fruitful discussions I have learned a lot.

I would also like to thank my colleagues in the Knowledge Engineering and Bioinformatics lab in Marburg. Thank them for the joyful cooperation and the heartwarming assistance. It is my honor to be a member of them and it is a wonderful experience to study and work in such an active and productive research atmosphere.

And of course, my parents. They give me great love and support. Knowing I have received this award, my mom and dad are probably even happier than I am. This award also belongs to them. Mom and Dad, you are the best parents in the world!

I am a Ph.D. student in computer science. My everyday work is aiming to analyze and understand the data around us and make use of it to improve the quality of life. To this end, I conduct my research on machine learning. The task of machine learning, simply speaking, is to design the computer program that can learn from experience. We design the algorithm that can extract knowledge from data. Over the past 50 years the study of machine learning has grown to a broad

discipline that has produced fundamental statistical-computational theories of learning processes. It has designed learning algorithms that are routinely used in commercial systems for speech recognition, computer vision, and a variety of other tasks. It has become one of the key technologies that have been applied in the revolution of Internet. I feel extremely lucky that I am involved in such a great revolution.

The award winners today come from very diverse research backgrounds. Indeed, every research discipline has its own focus. However, meaningful and influential achievements can only be accomplished with a broad perspective. We should actively communicate with the researchers from different fields, including natural science, social science, engineering, medicine, and so on. We should exchange ideas and experiences with open minds. I do believe, the event of this annual China National Award actually offers us such a great opportunity: Finest young scientists are gathering together due to this event. We should seize this opportunity to communicate with each other. We should build networks for better research outcomes.

Dear fellow students, I know behind each award it is days and nights of hard work. And winning this award is such a memorable moment in our life. But please remember, here is not our destination. We are living in an age full of challenges and opportunities. We have great responsibility for research, for science, for China, and for the world. We must look forward. Keep looking, don't settle.

Just in a blink of an eye, I have been in Germany for already 6 years. Sometimes, it feels like yesterday when I got off that plane. Recently, I always keep asking a question to myself, and my dear fellow students, now I am asking this question to you: What change has occurred since you first arrived here in Germany? Today's ceremony is a celebration of the changes that have occurred to us. Sometimes, changes are not predictable and not all of them are awesome: When I left China 6 years ago, the world economy was enjoying a boom, and now we are struggling with a major financial crisis. Life can be scary. There are times of frustration and misunderstanding. But yes, disappointment can be turned into success. A world renowned doctor and writer, M. Scott Peck, once said: "The truth is that our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different ways or truer answers." Dear fellow students, we are young men and women, trained with the tools to bring positive changes. Combining knowledge and good will, we are able to make a better future. We are ready to act. We can and we will.

Thank you all very much!