

China and Italy to bolster bilateral relations thanks to trade and investments.

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4 febbraio 2019

Italy-China relations are going to present opportunities never seen before thanks to the increased cooperation between the two countries. On Friday 25 January, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Wang Yi, presided over the ninth plenary session of the Italy-China Government Committee together with his Italian counterpart, Enzo Moavero Milanesi. At the end of the meeting, the Ministers adopted a specific and detailed Joint Communiqué. One hundred delegates took part in the Committee meeting, 46 of them representing 23 Chinese administrations.

Both Ministers underlined how the two countries, as old friends and cradles of civilization in the East and the West, share a strong affinity that makes Italy a natural partner for the Belt and Road Initiative. Moavero also recognized the potential for further development of bilateral relations resting squarely on the "efforts of the two governments and on the activism of the companies and the institutions of the two countries". The two Ministers then had a long working meeting at Villa Madama, during which they discussed various profiles of bilateral relations. In particular, trade grew by 4.5% over the previous year. Industrial collaboration is also expanding, encompassing various sectors such as the agro-food industry and food safety, human and animal health. Issues related to Euro-Asian connectivity and access to the respective markets were addressed, with full protection of intellectual property rights and designations of origin.

On the same day, Wang met with Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte. During the Palazzo Chigi meeting, the latter stressed the great importance of Italian-Chinese relations: high-level exchanges with China should not only be maintained but deepened especially through cooperation in such areas as economy, trade, investment, and energy.

Wang hoped that, as this year marks the 15th anniversary of the China-Italy comprehensive strategic partnership, while the next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations, both sides will seize the opportunity to bring bilateral relations to a new high. In fact, a long-lasting comprehensive strategic partnership should be established regardless of how the international situation changes, as the Chinese and Italian economies enjoy a high degree of complementarity. Wang said that enhancing cooperation in such fields as manufacturing, agriculture, and innovation would surely bring tangible benefits to the two countries. Wang also noted that China is willing to encourage qualified Chinese companies to invest in Italy and believes that Italy will provide them with a fair commercial environment.

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Sources: Ministero degli affari esteri, Global Times