



Belgian PM lauds China initiatives

Belgian Prime Minister Yves Leterme, on participating in the 7th ASEM, talks to China Daily about the meeting and shares his view on Sino-Belgian relations.

Q: What topics at this year's ASEM do you find particularly important or interesting?

A: Of course the international economic agenda has taken all our attention. I think the economic turmoil we are confronted with is an important test for ASEM and its credibility.

We consider ASEM to be a very important platform for both dialog and action. Comparisons are always hard to draw, but as far as the EU is concerned, it has been economic cooperation that turned into an engine for enhanced political cooperation. I believe that we can make this happen again since Asian and European economies are strongly intertwined.

Finding ways to formulate even the beginning of a common answer to the current economic crisis we all are confronted with, will be beneficial for further cooperation within ASEM. I myself will do my utmost to build on the results of the Chinese and French presidencies, when I host the next ASEM summit in Brussels in 2010.

Q: Given the increasing importance of Asia in the world, do you think that Europe and Asia can work together to tackle some of the global challenges such as financial stability, food security, climate change and sustainable development?

A: I am really appreciative of the new initiatives China has presented in the run-up

to the summit. I welcome the initiatives on a network of eco-cities and on a biannual ASEM cultural festival.

I think the Chinese initiative on enhanced ASEM cooperation for disaster relief is particularly needed. Vast experience in disaster relief exists among the ASEM member countries, including Belgium.

We established a so-called B-fast team which is on all-time stand-by for disaster relief all over the world and which was dispatched to Sichuan. It would be great if we can pool such experience to the benefit of all ASEM members, as natural disasters can happen to everyone. This is an example of how solidarity can go beyond political considerations.

Q: The current Wall Street-born financial crisis has been felt across Asia and Europe. How big an impact does it have on European financial institutions and banks? What do you think are the long-term influences on the European economy?

A: It is important to underline the European economy is still fundamentally sound. Certainly our companies hold balance sheets that are in far healthier shape than during previous crises, nor have households piled up excessive debts. Obviously the financial crisis is still working its way through the real economy, and this will take time. At least governments have contained global credit contraction by acting decisively, recapitalizing banks or taking on troubled debts. I am convinced this will minimize costs to tax payers in the long run. We will get over this.

The strength of emerging



Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao shakes hands with Belgian Prime Minister Yves Leterme who came to Beijing to attend the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games this summer.

markets, particularly China, has been quite encouraging. This crisis provides them with opportunities to pursue reforms that structurally increase domestic demand.

Q: What are the lessons that Asian and European countries can draw from the current financial crisis?

A: We will be reflecting on this during the summit and we may have to take the results of these and other deliberations to a multilateral framework, which is to put the international financial system under review. Indeed, what is clear for all to see is that financial innovation has outpaced supervisory regimes over the last few decades and that regulatory changes - and perhaps even a new financial architecture - are called for.

Q: How would you evaluate the current strategic partnership between China and Belgium? In what areas do you expect the two sides to cooperate more?

A: Belgium has always pushed for a strong, coherent voice for and within the European Union. This should benefit the relationship between the EU and China, which is one of the most important in the world.

As far as this relationship

is concerned, we expect a great deal from the high level mechanism that will be initiated next year. That should significantly deepen our work in regard to IPR, energy, trade flows and technology transfer, among other things.

As to Chinese-Belgian bilateral ties, I am excited by the rapidly expanding contacts between our people and institutions. Belgian top universities and business schools are setting up offices this year trying to promote cooperation and attracting the best students.

Our provinces and port authorities are following suit. In Belgium we are doing great work in sensitizing our citizens to Chinese art and culture. Next year will see the start of the Europalia festival which will focus on China and showcase over 100 theater, music and art events over four months. It will take China to the heart of Europe.

Q: Are you satisfied with the economic relations between the two countries and what is their growth potential?

A: Belgium is one of the top investors in China (369 million euros in FDIs in 2007). Trade flows are increasing exponentially, including in new sectors

such as IT and environmental technology. Belgium hosts a fair number of Chinese greenfield investments such as Cosco, China Shipping, Huawei, and Hainan Airlines. We are confident we will even do better in the future.

Belgium came in fourth place in attracting FDIs worldwide (2006) and remains the de facto logistic and R&D hub for Japanese multinationals in Europe. Our track record, as far as our Asian partners is concerned, is beyond doubt.

Q: From the European perspective, what does the rise of China mean?

A: China's rise goes beyond the economic realm. It can in my view only be possible in combination with reform and opening up. This is the key reason why we should all welcome it. Nevertheless, for its growth to be sustainable, China will have to become far more energy-efficient.

Crucially, China's rise on the international scene means it will have to join others in playing a leading role in global issues such as climate change, African development and governance. The world needs a strong, open and confident China. Having said this, I have no doubt China's able leaders are up to that task.

Europalia celebrates China

By JIA BIAN

On Oct 23, just as the Beijing ASEM summit was about to start, an agreement between the Ministry of Culture of China and europalia.china, organizer of Belgium's Europalia Festival, was signed in Beijing.

Europalia, a major cultural and arts festival in Europe, dedicates its 22nd edition to the culture of a truly fascinating country, China.

During four months, from Oct 2009 till Feb 2010, the festival will take a fresh look at China, to reveal an authentic, relatively unknown and contemporary country.

The program will include several hundred events, such as exhibitions, concerts, dance and theater performances, cinema, literary encounters and scientific conferences.

This ambitious festival will not only present masterpieces from Chinese history but also sketch a picture of the current artistic scene in China through visual arts and photography, and design, fashion, architecture and food.

The same exploration of past and present will run through the music and performing arts program. The festival is organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China and the main museums and cultural institutions in Brussels, elsewhere in Belgium, and in bordering regions.

Taste of things to come

Some 40 exhibitions will be held across Belgium and the neighboring countries.

In Brussels, three major exhibitions will be devoted to themes on Chinese history and culture.

The Emperors of China will be staged at the Center for Fine Arts. Unique pieces of inestimable historical value will reveal to visitors the importance of ritual in ancient

Chinese society. An indispensable element in the privileged relationship between the emperors and the heavens, ritual played an important role in Chinese life.

Writing and calligraphy will be featured at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium. Essential, fascinating and highly influential, these Chinese arts will be addressed through the poetic history of the Orchid Pavilion (4th century: a key moment in the history of Chinese calligraphy). Present-day creations will also be there to be admired - deeply rooted in the past, contemporary calligraphy is of a remarkable vitality.

The Silk Road will be the theme of a magnificent exhibition at the Royal Museums for Art and History. Stretching from the center of the country to its western borders, the Silk Road helps visitors grasp the vastness and diversity of China. Visitors will be plunged into fabulous scenery to discover the art and culture of the historic Silk Road trade route.

Feast of arts

Europalia has been held every two years in Belgium since 1969, featuring the culture and arts of a selected guest country.

During four months, Europalia places the cultural heritage of one invited country in the spotlight. Many hundreds of events take place in Brussels and throughout Belgium, as well as in bordering regions.

One of the aims of Europalia is to contribute to a better understanding between peoples, to promote the diversity of cultures that make up Europe and their dialogue with other great world cultures.

Regularly attracting over 1 million visitors, the Europalia festivals are under the patronage of and opened by His Royal Highness King of the Belgians and the head of state of the invited country.

chocolate · 巧克力

comics · 漫画

diamonds · 钻石

cuisine · 美食

beer · 啤酒

flanders
belgium

宠爱你自己 享趣比利时

www.visitflanders.com.cn

umicore
materials for a better life

Umicore's presence in China ...

...involves a total of 13 industrial plants-some of which are operated as joint ventures-6 commercial offices and 1 regional headquarters. Together these operations employ some 2,400 people.

The foundations for Umicore's presence in China were laid some 26 years ago when the company's commercial network established its first office in the country. Umicore's commercial offices market almost the entire range of Umicore's products to the Chinese market.

The first industrial partnership was started in 1995 in Shanghai. Since 1995 the company's presence has grown steadily in a number of different sectors. The industrial operations produce at present nickel and mixed metal hydroxides for rechargeable battery applications, thin film materials, cobalt powders and chemicals, fine zinc powders, germanium based materials, industrial diamond grits, contact materials, brazing alloys, automotive catalysts, and precious metal alloys and alloy solutions for jewellery and electronic industries.

Umicore is one of the world's biggest suppliers of automotive catalysts for passenger cars

Umicore is a ...

... materials technology group. Its activities are centred on four business areas: Advanced Materials, Precious Metals Products and Catalysts, Precious Metals Services and Zinc Specialties. Each business area is divided into market-focused business units, be it in products that are essential to everyday life or those at the cutting edge of new technological developments. Umicore focuses on application areas where it knows its expertise in materials science, chemistry and metallurgy can make a real difference. Umicore generates approximately 50% of its revenues and spends approximately 80% of its R&D budget in the area of clean technology, such as emission control catalysts, materials for rechargeable batteries and photovoltaics, fuel cells, and precious metals recycling. Umicore's overriding goal of sustainable value creation is based on this ambition to develop, produce and recycle materials in a way that fulfils its mission: materials for a better life. The Umicore Group has industrial operations on all continents and serves a global customer base. It generated a turnover of € 8.3 billion (€ 1.9 billion excluding metal) in 2007 and currently employs some 15,800 people.

Umicore Greater China (RHQ).
Unit E2, 18/F, Zao-Fong Universe Building, N° 1800 West Zhongshan Road, Shanghai, 200235 P.R. China
Phone: +86 21 2411 6883 - Fax: +86 21 6440 1319