

WORLD

Diplomat urges China and EU to bridge gaps

Fu Cong calls for collaboration to resolve differences, warns against protectionism

By CHEN WEIHUA in Brussels
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China and the European Union should redouble their collective efforts to bridge gaps and differences instead of erecting walls, digging holes or creating small yards, China's top diplomat to the bloc has said.

Fu Cong, head of the Chinese Mission to the EU, made the remarks at his farewell party in Brussels on Wednesday evening.

Fu said it is not surprising that the two sides may sometimes disagree with each other on certain issues.

"The most important thing is to deal with our differences in a friendly and collaborative way. As two major powers, there is so much at stake in what we do or fail to do together," he said.

China has long proved to be a trustworthy partner with countries around the world, he said, adding that economic security will only be strengthened through more cooperation.

"Protective trade policies or instruments such as the frequent use of anti-subsidy and anti-dumping measures, under the banner of de-risking, will not advance the China-EU relationship. Neither will they benefit the long-term interests of the EU," he said.

Fu was referring to protectionist trade measures launched by the European Commission against Chinese products, notably anti-subsidy investigations into Chinese electric vehicles.

He reiterated that the EU's tripartite description of China as a partner, competitor and systemic rival is



Fu Cong

"inappropriate and does not correspond to reality".

Fu quoted Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi as saying that such characterization is

"like driving to a crossroads and finding the red, yellow and green lights all on at the same time, and it can only cause confusion and distraction".

Fu described the past 15 months as China's 15th ambassador to the EU as "a rewarding experience".

He said he felt fortunate to be personally involved in expanding the cooperation across different priority areas with much success despite many challenges and hurdles. China's commitment to the comprehensive strategic partnership with the EU remains unchanged, he said.

Mutual trust

"I am very pleased to see that we have built many bridges of understanding and mutual trust, win-win cooperation and close exchanges," Fu said.

European Commission Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis, who met Fu on Tuesday, said in a message on X, "Thank you very much for your constructive cooperation and contribution to strengthening EU-China relations."

On the political front, Fu noted the several visits to China by European Council President Charles

Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and said the 24th China-EU Summit in Beijing in December was a highlight.

"The relationship has shown a strong momentum of growth since the resumption of exchanges and dialogues at all levels in 2023," he said.

On the multilateral front, Fu said China and the EU have worked closely in communication and coordination with the United Nations, the World Trade Organization and the Group of 20.

"We are making joint efforts in upholding multilateralism and improving global governance."

Fu said he was proud of the practical cooperation between the two sides, citing his first event after arriving in Brussels was to meet representatives from the Chinese and EU business communities.

China and the EU are each other's major trade partners, with \$100 million worth of goods being traded every hour.

Fu said people-to-people exchanges are a key pillar of the relationship, recalling his participation in a Chinese tea culture event in Brussels, discussion on China-EU relations with scholars and journalists, and conversations with students and faculty members at Belgian universities.

China has recently offered visa-free entry for more than 10 European countries to enhance people-to-people ties, he said.

"On Friday, a new round of the China-EU High-level People-to-People Dialogue will take place in Beijing, which is bound to add new momentum to the enhancement of contracts between the people of both sides," Fu said.

Time travel



A viewer looks at *The Railway* (1873) by French painter Edouard Manet at the Orsay Museum in Paris on Tuesday. The museum is marking 150 years of impressionism with an unprecedented reassembling of the masterpieces that launched the movement, and a virtual reality experience that takes visitors back in time. LI YANG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Briefly

UNITED NATIONS Terrorist attack in Pakistan condemned

The United Nations Security Council on Wednesday condemned the heinous and cowardly terrorist attack in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province on Tuesday that resulted in the deaths of five Chinese nationals and one Pakistani. The members of the council expressed their deepest sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families and to the governments of Pakistan and China. They also wished a speedy and full recovery to those who were injured, the council said. Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, the members reaffirmed.

COLOMBIA Argentine diplomats expelled over Milei words

Colombia has ordered the expulsion of Argentine diplomats from their embassy in the Andean country, its Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday, citing "denigrating" comments by Argentine President Javier Milei about his Colombian counterpart Gustavo Petro. In an interview with CNN, which has not yet been aired in full, Milei called Petro a "terrorist" and "murderer". "The Argentine president's comments have deteriorated the trust of our nation, in addition to offending the dignity of President Petro, who was democratically elected," the ministry said. It did not specify how many diplomats would be expelled.

JAPAN Two more deaths in supplement pill scare

A Japanese drugmaker whose dietary supplements are at the center of a growing health scare reported on Thursday two more deaths potentially related to its tablets. Last week, Kobayashi Pharmaceutical recalled three supplement brands after customer complaints of kidney problems. The over-the-counter products contain an ingredient called red yeast rice, which is supposed to help lower cholesterol. Thursday's announcement brings the total number of deaths under investigation by the company and Health Ministry to four, with more than 100 others hospitalized.

AGENCIES—XINHUA



A seminar showcasing Weichai Power's development over the past 20 years is held on Tuesday in Weifang. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Success story of Weichai Power aims to inspire

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Weichai Power, a notable Chinese powertrain manufacturer based in Weifang, Shandong province, shared its experience of achieving a 30-time increase in market value compared to its initial public offering during an academic seminar held on Tuesday to showcase the 20-year reform, innovation and development achievements.

The company said its current total market value exceeds 140 billion yuan (\$19.4 billion). At its highest, the market value was 40 times that of its IPO. The company's operating income has grown from 6.2 billion yuan in 2004 to 214 billion yuan in 2023, a 33-fold increase, with a cumulative income of 1.87 trillion yuan. The net profit attributable to the parent company has grown from 540 million yuan in 2004 to 9.01 billion yuan in 2023, a 16-fold increase. Its cumulative net profit hit 93.6 billion yuan.

Tan Xuguang, chairman of Weichai Power, said such figures show its comprehensive strength, investment value and brand influence have been recognized by the capital market worldwide.

On March 11, 2004, Weichai Power was listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, becoming the first

Chinese company engaged in the internal combustion engine industry to be listed in Hong Kong. With an oversubscription of 928 times for the IPO and 52 times for international placements, it raised \$170 million. The figures broke the record, held since 1998, for H-share market IPOs on the main board of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

On April 30, 2007, Weichai Power acquired Xiang Torch — now known as Weichai Torch Technology — by stock absorption. The company was then listed on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange, becoming a blockbuster case realizing a dual listing in Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

Repeating this merger and acquisition model, Weichai Power made the Italian luxury yacht manufacturer Ferretti Group become the first company in the world to achieve dual listings in Hong Kong and Milan.

In Tan's view, Weichai Power's success can be attributed to a number of main factors. First, the dual-drive strategy focusing both on product and capital operation is the key to promoting its expansion.

Tan said that without good products, there is nothing. Capital operation enables rapid industrial expansion, serving as a powerful means to magnify competitiveness.

Each merger and acquisition has improved Weichai Power's products, technology and industry chain, which fundamentally upgraded its industrial structure and development model.

Weichai Power refuses to do non-core business, low value-added products or repetitive scale expansion as it focuses on the power engine field. With the determination to "excel in one type of product for a lifetime" and the strategy of "dedicating itself to its core business and pursuing excellence", Weichai Power has made the Chinese internal combustion engine industry truly outstanding on the global stage, Tan said.

Core technologies that cannot be replicated are another competitive edge of Weichai Power. According to Tan, winning global competition relies on first-class products, technology and talent, and the company regards cutting-edge technology as a top priority.

Tan also emphasized Weichai's advantage in having an industrial structure with a highly consistent development pattern for its overall layout. Besides Ferretti, the structure includes Shaanxi Heavy Duty Automobile, Weichai Lovol Intelligent Agricultural Technology and German forklift manufactur-

er Kion Group. The collaborative research and development of these companies has extended Weichai Power's core competitiveness.

Shandong is a major economic province in China with a high proportion of its economy being State-owned. In recent years, its government has placed great significance on utilizing the capital market to promote the high-quality development of provincial State-owned enterprises.

Man Sheng'ang, director of the Shandong Provincial State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, described Weichai Power's sustained high-quality development over the 20 years as a "miracle" as it started as an engine manufacturer and now covers multiple business sectors. These include power systems, commercial vehicles, agricultural equipment and intelligent logistics. Weichai Power will continue to integrate high-quality resources globally through the capital market.

Weichai Power's case provides a reference for linking the capital market with Shandong's SOEs. Man said he hopes that the company will create a distinctive development paradigm for SOEs and promote economic and social development throughout the province.

Global network boosts profile and expertise

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The year 2009 marked an important milestone for Weichai Power, a leading internal combustion engine manufacturer in Weifang, Shandong province.

In 2009, five years after its public listing in Hong Kong, the company completed its first overseas acquisition — the French diesel engine maker Baudouin.

With large-bore engine products and technologies from Baudouin, Weichai Power managed to make headway in the European and Middle Eastern markets.

After that, Weichai Power quickened its pace of "going global". In 2012, it acquired 70 percent of Linde Hydraulics, a modular drive systems provider from Germany, and in 2018, it bought a 19.9 percent stake in Ballard Power Systems to become the largest shareholder of the Canadian fuel cell company.

Through international acquisitions, the enterprise has entered overseas high-end manufacturing markets, its technologies in many key fields have been enhanced and its business portfolio has diversified, said a staff member of Weichai Power.

Today, Weichai Holding Group, the parent company of Weichai Power, has established a network of 11 foreign companies, including Baudouin, Ballard, Ferretti from Italy and Aradex from Germany.



Tan Xuguang, chairman of Weichai Power, shares his experience on international acquisitions at the Weifang seminar.