

China-Finland Committee for Innovative Business Cooperation

The 4th China-Finland Committee for Innovative Business Cooperation is meeting in Helsinki on December 12-13, 2019. The Committee meeting is coinciding with the China-Finland Economic and Trade Joint Commission, bilateral meeting between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM).

The Committee meeting is arranged during **Finland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union** which Finland is currently chairing. Finland's Presidency program is focusing around the theme **Sustainable Europe - Sustainable Future** and also, the same themes are highlighted in the program of this 4th China-Finland Committee for Innovative Business Cooperation.

During the state visit to Finland by Chinese President Xi Jinping on April 2017, the Minister of Economic Affairs Mika Lintilä and China's Trade Minister Zhong Shan signed a joint declaration to establish a Sino-Finnish Committee for Innovative Business Cooperation with the aim to encourage cooperation between Chinese and Finnish companies.

Leading companies from both countries have been involved in the work of the Committee and its four working groups: Energy, Maritime Logistics, Forestry and Clean Air. The Committee has a dual chairmanship: Mr. Risto Siilasmaa, Chair of Nokia from Finland and Mr. Zhao Changshan, Chairman of Zhongguancun Development Group (ZGC) from the Chinese side. The Finnish Committee Secretariat is comprised of Confederation of Finnish Industries EK and Business Finland, and in China of China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products CCCME.

The Committee's guiding principles are pragmatism and strong company-orientation. The goal is to open new business opportunities for businesses and to bring positive visibility for these in both China and Finland. The aim is that the Committee should also serve as a platform for submission of proposals, success stories as well as challenges for the development of business environment and economic cooperation between the companies concerned (including trade policy).

MOFCOM has worked actively with the support of the sector ministries and state-owned companies like CCCME, NEA, COSCO, State Grid Corporation and recruited participants to come to Finland for this year's meeting. The response has been positive and well received, and some **90 Chinese representatives** of companies, agencies and organization are now in Helsinki to discuss fields of common interests and to find partners from Finnish companies. Also, the **Finnish companies** especially from the focus sectors - Energy, Maritime Logistics, Forestry and Clean Air - have found the cooperation with Chinese companies in the working groups beneficial. Over **150 Finnish participants and hosts** are taking part in the events organized in Helsinki, Espoo and Vaasa in connection with this year's Committee meeting. The cooperation possibilities with Chinese counterparts are valued by SMEs as well as publicly listed Finnish companies. One half of the Finnish companies participating in the events are SMEs, 20% large companies and the rest universities, research institutions or industry federations.

This year's committee program has included e.g.

- A special one-day excursion to Vaasa on Wednesday, December 11, 2019. A 35-member Chinese delegation visited EnergyVaasa, the leading energy hub in the Nordic countries.
- Visits to Aalto University, VTT and Nokia Executive Experience Center
- 4 separate Working Group meetings with the aim to deepen the cooperation through company presentations, discussions and making plans for common projects in the future
- A networking reception hosted by the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China
- The official Committee Meeting and Networking Luncheon
- Media Briefing and
- Meeting with Santa Claus.

The high-level commitment to the Committee initiative is continuing in both countries and has been discussed in several high-level meetings also during this year, e.g. by President Niinistö with Minister Zhong Shan and Premier Li Keqiang in China. Last year the Committee met in Kunshan China with over 200 participants in connection with China International Import Expo in Shanghai, in 2017 meetings were held in Helsinki and in 2017 in the first opening meeting of the Committee was held in Beijing.