

Monthly Roundup: U.K.-China announcements by government, partners, and other stakeholders

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2015 Queen's Birthday Party in Shanghai

British Acting Consul-General Shanghai Matthew Forbes, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Deputy



Secretary-General of Shanghai Jin Xingming, and other special guests attended the British Consulate General's 2015 Queen's Birthday Party. Around 400 guests enjoyed an evening themed around Magna Carta. Magna Carta was signed 800 years ago and remains a centrepiece of the U.K.'s legal system. It has also influenced many jurisdictions around the world. Matthew Forbes also introduced John Edwards, the new British Consul-General in Shanghai, who will be taking up his post this summer. (June) Read more [here](#).



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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British Centre Guangzhou opens

A reception was held on 18 June to celebrate the opening of the British Centre Guangzhou, located at the International Finance Centre, which the China-Britain Business Council (CBBC) shares with the British Consulate-General and the British Chamber of Commerce Guangdong. The new centre includes meeting rooms, a waiting area for visitors, and a Consulate-General reception area for meetings and “invitation only” events. A motorcade of famous British cars paraded through Guangzhou on the day of the launch, setting off from the old Consulate and passing through all the city’s major landmarks before reaching the new British Centre, where they were displayed throughout the evening. The British Centre Guangzhou follows similar centres which were



launched in North China (Beijing), West China (Chengdu), and East China (Shanghai) in 2014. Tom Simpson, Chief Representative of the CBBC in Guangzhou, said, “Guangzhou now has its very own British Centre to sit alongside Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, and Wuhan providing a convenient platform for both British and Chinese companies to connect with the CBBC, BritCham Guangdong, and the various sections of the British Consulate. It is certainly a big boost to the U.K.’s profile in Guangzhou and wider South China, and we are now looking forward to putting it to use!” (June) Read more [here](#).

British Chamber of Commerce in China elects new Executive Committee

The new Executive Committee of the British Chamber of Commerce in China was elected at the Annual General Meeting on 17 June. The new members were welcomed by British Ambassador to China Barbara Woodward at the Chamber’s annual Summer Garden Party at the Ambassador’s Residence, which was attended by over a hundred British and Chinese guests. The Ambassador congratulated the Committee on their election in a “golden year” for Sino-British relations. [Clare Pearson](#), CSR Manager for Asia at DLA Piper, was elected as the new Chair of the British Chamber, succeeding Paul Atherley, who just completed a very successful one-year tenure as Chair. (June) Read more [here](#).



British Consul General to Hong Kong speaks at LSE’s Greater China Forum

British Consul General to Hong Kong Caroline Wilson addressed the London Stock Exchange’s (LSE) Greater China Forum for the second year running. She reflected on a busy year since she last spoke to the Forum for the RMB market and China’s capital market reforms, stressing that this remains a key priority for the U.K. government. The Consul General said, “The RMB market continues to grow, and has grown somewhere in the region of 50% since this time last year. From a U.K. perspective, our story as an RMB hub is still very positive, and the new British Government as committed as ever.



The same Chancellor—who recognises the importance of Hong Kong to London’s success as an RMB market and sees that market’s growth as the most important event in global capital markets of the 21st century—still sits in No. 11 Downing Street.” (June) Read more [here](#).

Chinese Ambassador to U.K. speaks at 50th anniversary celebration for SACU



Chinese Ambassador to the U.K. Liu Xiaoming spoke at the 50th anniversary celebration for the Society of Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU), a registered U.K. charity and the only friendship society of its kind in the country. (May) Read more [here](#).

Chinese Consulate-General in Belfast opens

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Chinese Ambassador to the U.K. Liu Xiaoming, Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson, and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness attended the inauguration of the Chinese Consulate-General in Belfast, China’s third consulate in the U.K. following those in Manchester and Edinburgh. The new Chinese Consulate-General in Belfast will be led by Madam Consul-General Wang Shuying. Speaking after a meeting with Minister Wang Yi, First Minister Peter Robinson said, “I am delighted to welcome Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Belfast. Over recent years, Northern Ireland has developed a strong and increasingly positive relationship and bond with partners in China. This will be further enhanced with the establishment of the Consulate in Belfast.



“In April 2012, Vice-Premier Madame Liu Yandong visited Belfast and launched the Confucius Institute which has flourished and developed remarkably. As a result, eight classroom hubs have been established and

thousands of local children in over one hundred schools are learning the Mandarin language and about Chinese culture, as part of the Confucius programme. These relationships have brought considerable mutual benefit to students and teachers in both our regions.

We are hopeful that this will extend to agriculture, economic cooperation, and increased trade. The potential for Northern Ireland companies to prosper in the Chinese marketplace is endless. Invest NI recognises this opportunity and has established offices in Beijing and Shanghai. Along with the Executive Bureau in Beijing, this represents a long-term commitment by the Northern Ireland Executive to develop and grow our relationship with China.” (June) Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

EUCCC releases its Business Confidence Survey 2015



[The European Union Chamber of Commerce in China \(EUCCC\)](#) released its Business Confidence Survey 2015, which compiled responses from 541 EUCCC member companies and was produced in partnership with Roland Berger Strategy Consultants. According to this year’s survey, the protracted Chinese economic slowdown remains the top business challenge. Pessimism about growth and profitability has forced European businesses to cut back significantly, particularly through headcount reduction: 39% are planning to cut costs—a large jump from just 24% in 2014—with most of them planning employee lay-offs. China remains a key market and thus European companies want the ‘new normal’, much like China wants to move its economy up the value chain. However, the regulatory framework has yet to come into place. In particular, a better implementation of the rule of law is seen as the top driver for China’s economic development going forward. (June) Read more [here](#).

New pilot scheme to streamline visa process for Chinese visitors

The U.K. and Belgian governments announced a new pilot scheme to further streamline visa application processes for Chinese visitors to the U.K., Belgium, and the wider Schengen area. Under the new U.K.-Belgian Visitor Service, Chinese customers will be able to submit visa applications for both countries during a single visit to a U.K. visa application centre (VAC). The new scheme means visitors from China will be able to obtain a visa for both the U.K. and the Schengen area, of which the U.K. is not a part, without having to visit two different application centres. The new process will be introduced as a pilot scheme at the U.K.’s Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai VACs and will be available from 01 July. (June) Read more [here](#).

U.K. Business Secretary meets Chinese entrepreneurs in London

Sajid Javid, the U.K. Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, and Skills, met with Chinese and British companies in London to help strengthen U.K.-China commercial collaborations across trade and investment. The Business Secretary welcomed the growing presence of Beijing firms in the U.K. and encouraged further inward investment. He also highlighted the U.K.'s involvement in major projects in China, including the building of Beijing's new International Airport. Mr. Javid and Mr. Guo Jinlong, Secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee and Member of the Political Bureau, also witnessed the signing of four memorandums of understanding and contracts worth a total of £30 million. (June) Read more [here](#).

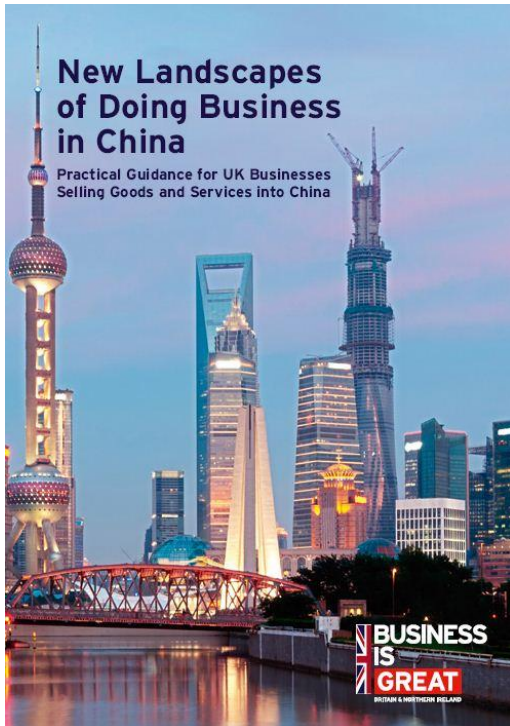


U.K. celebrates 15 years of its diplomatic presence in Southwest China

In early June, the British Consulate-General in Chongqing hosted receptions in Chongqing and Chengdu to mark the Queen's Birthday and the 15th anniversary of the British Consulate-General in Southwest China. The British Consulate-General in Chongqing was established on 01 March 2000. Throughout the past 15 years, it has been actively engaged in a wide spectrum of areas, playing a vital role in overseas exchanges in the region. Since the establishment of the Consulate-General, it has worked closely with local partners to strengthen links in trade and investment, culture and art, science and innovation, climate change and energy, achieving great success. In December 2013, Prime Minister David Cameron led a business delegation to visit Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province, helping British business leaders better understand the region, and thus promoting closer relationships between the U.K. and Southwest China. In recent years, British companies have done well in Southwest China, particularly in the urbanisation sector and in architectural and engineering design, with a number landmark buildings in the region having been designed by British companies. Famous local companies, such as Chang'an and Chongqing Machinery and Electric Co. Ltd. (CQME) have established themselves in the U.K. The U.K. has also worked with local partners to promote carbon capture and storage technology, carbon trading, and collaboration on shale gas. In 2014, the U.K. signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Chongqing Development and Reform Commission on strengthening co-operation in climate change and energy, which has laid a solid foundation for future collaborative work in this area. The U.K. government's cultural and education section has also achieved great success in the region through a range of teachers' training, school link-ups, arts and cultural exchange projects and social entrepreneur training schemes. 2015 marks a flagship year for U.K.-China relations, with the first ever bilaterally agreed U.K.-China Year of Cultural Exchange. Southwest China will host a series of events across different art disciplines, with headliner events including Mother River – Yan Wang Preston 2015 China Tour Exhibition, The Selector, U.K. Music on the Go, etc. (June) Read more [here](#).



UKTI publishes new guide to selling goods and services in China



U.K. Trade and Investment (UKTI) published a new guide aiming to help U.K. businesses access opportunities and win export business in the Chinese market. Aimed mainly at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the publication provides information on:

- UKTI and its services
- China-Britain Business Council (CBBC)
- U.K. Export Finance (UKEF)
- Using the Renminbi
- Selling online
- Visiting the market
- Researching the market
- Establishing a local presence
- Shanghai Free Trade Zone
- Investment environment
- Protecting investments

The guide was published with contributions from the following organisations: Bank of China, HSBC, Deloitte, King & Wood Mallesons, Scottish Development International, Scottish Enterprise, UKTI, UKEF, and the CBBC. Read more [here](#).

Queen Elizabeth II confirms Chinese President Xi Jinping's upcoming state visit

Queen Elizabeth II delivered the Queen's Speech to both Houses of Parliament at the State Opening of Parliament 2015. The Queen's Speech sets out the government's policies and proposed legislative programme for the new parliamentary session. In her speech, the Queen stated that her government "looks forward to an enhanced partnership with India and China". In addition, the Queen confirmed Chinese President Xi Jinping's upcoming visit to the U.K. this autumn, stating that she and Prince Philip "look forward to welcoming His Excellency the President of the People's Republic of China and Madame Peng on a State Visit in October". (May) Read the full text of the Queen's Speech 2015 [here](#).



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