



French lawyer seeks expanded Beijing-Paris relations

Updated: 2014-02-17 02:50

By Li Xiang in Paris (China Daily USA)

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Eight years ago when Daniel Kahn, a French lawyer, worked to assist in the two-way business between Europe and the United States, he felt a strong urge to go to China to find out what was happening in the emerging Asian market.

Today, Kahn has shifted the focus of his law firm to the Chinese market, and he has become a frequent traveler to China, helping both French and Chinese companies identify potential investment and acquisition opportunities in each other's markets.

Reflecting on his experience dealing with the Chinese market and companies, Kahn, president of French law firm Kahn & Associates, said he believes that both Europe and China should update their mutual perception and seize this year — which marks the 50th anniversary of Sino-French diplomatic relations — to expand business relations between Beijing and Paris.



Daniel Kahn

"People in Europe tend to have the wrong image about China," he said. "China has changed dramatically in the past 20 years and it is no longer a place where you go for basic manufacturing."

Kahn said that China has transformed into a country with high technological capability and a growing number of private companies with true entrepreneurial spirit and are serious about making investments and developing markets abroad.

"China is no longer simply a manufacturing factory of basic goods as the country has been able to build high-speed railways and to send rocket to the moon," he said.

"Similarly, France is not just a tourist destination and place of great food," he said, noting that France possesses extensive resources of technology in industries including nuclear energy, aviation, food-processing and agricultural sector as well as the treatment of water and air pollution.

Kahn said that it will be a win-win relationship when French companies can benefit from access to the Chinese market and Chinese companies can gain technical know-how offered by the French side.

"I believe we are at the beginning of an era of strong cooperation between our two countries," he said.

Kahn suggested that both China and France should introduce more cultural exchange involving the latest technology, such as the Internet, television and social media to improve mutual understanding at the grassroots level.

"People need to understand each other better which is the key to a better cooperation between China and Europe," he said.

Kahn said the two countries also should establish a long-term alliance for business cooperation and build a framework for frequent high-level dialogue between politicians and business leaders.

In addition to improving mutual communication and understanding, Kahn also said that Beijing and Paris should work to simplify the visa application procedure for businessmen to better facilitate two-way trade and investment.

"I believe the future Europe-China business relation will be the key for the two continents. It will be the largest trade and investment combination in the world," he said.

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