

Chile harbors sincerity to cooperate with China

By Pedro Reus

As the international director of the Federation of Chilean Industry, I believe China and Chile are free from competition in almost all fronts since their economies can completely complement each other. The industrial department in Chile has never treated China as a threat, but sincerely hopes to reinforce bilateral cooperation and exchanges, in a bid to improve the livelihood of the two peoples.

China secures a rapid development in the past 30 years, with remarkable achievements in economic growth, infrastructure construction and people's livelihood. Compared with China, though Chile is a remote and small country with less population, it can serve as the best platform for Chinese businesses to access the South American market since Chile, as a globalized market, has signed a number of free trade agreements with its South American partners.

As the bilateral trade exceeded \$30 billion, China has been one of Chile's top trade partners for years. The booming trade also gives a boost to bilateral investment.

Though China's investment in Chile is less than that in Brazil, Peru and other Latin American partners, there is great potential in the future.

In 2015, a milestone year for bilateral investment, China Construction Bank opened the first RMB clearing bank in South America, while Chinese agriculture companies also tested water in Chilean market by acquiring or cooperating with local producers and exploring export potential of local agricultural products.

Such cooperation not only brings Chinese people with quality Chilean food, but boosts the competitiveness and market share of Chilean businesses in global arena.

Chinese enterprises can also accumulate experience for overseas expansion through investing in Chile. Chile is an open economy that can ensure the maximum benefits for local and foreign companies, where market determines the "rules of the game" and investment environment lives up to international standards.

A number of Chinese telecommunication companies like Huawei have grown into pillars in the Chilean market. Chilean and Chinese enterprises can communicate more on marketing strategies, recruitment, employees and development experience, so that Chinese enterprises could better adapt to local investment environment.

At present, China-Chile cooperation is more than "mining industry and energy", but also expands to agriculture, infrastructure, electronic information technology and other sectors.

Though agricultural modernization in Chile is still in its early stage, we plan to double the export of agricultural products within five years. Chile requires China's assistance to realize this goal since it needs to optimize logistics, infrastructure, telecommunication and refrigeration. We cherish China's experience in advanced technologies.

To enhance the cooperation and communication with China, Chile has set up a bilateral investment and trade promotion committee. Many staff in the committee use Chinese as their working language.

Chile was the first country in South America to establish diplomatic ties with China. In the past 46 years, Chile has always been a Latin American pioneer in conducting exchanges with China. Bilateral political and economic cooperation has been intensified and the nongovernmental exchanges have yielded great achievements as well. I have seen great opportunity from bilateral cooperation in astronomy and climate change.

For example, Chile has received the most investment in astronomy in the world. Its astronomy industry accepted \$2 billion of investment from 2010 to 2015, and 70 percent to 80 percent of astronomical telescopes in the world are located in Chile.

As far as I know, China also has willingness to further cooperation with Chile in this area. The two countries can realize such cooperation through exchanges among research institutions and communications in new technologies.

Both countries should learn and share experiences with each other. In the future, Chile will support China's leading role in building Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), maximize the complementary advantages of both sides and build China-Chile cooperation into a model of China-Latin America collaboration.

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