

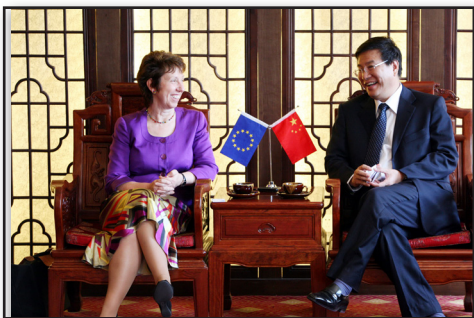


UIBE News

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by Alex Goldsborough

The European Trade Commission Visits UIBE to Discuss Trade Issues with UIBE Students

The European Commissioner for Trade, Mrs. Catherine Ashton, and her delegation, visited UIBE and delivered a speech entitled “The EU-China trade relationship going forward”. This was Commissioner Ashton’s first visit to China at the invitation of China’s Vice-Premier Wang Qishan. She came to continue building the unique relationship existing between the EU and China.



UIBE’s President Shi Jianjun meets with EU Commissioner Ashton

Commissioner Ashton, “firmly believe[s] that the future of international trade lies in relationships rather than in the mathematical formulae used to crunch tariffs, as in the past.”

The international conference room on the third floor of the Ningyuan Building was packed, mostly with UIBE students, as can be expected when the trade commissioner of the world’s largest economic region gives a speech outlining, in the words of Commissioner Ashton, “Europe’s determination to continue to build the unique relationship that exists between the EU and China.”

The EU delegation was welcomed by UIBE’s President Shi Jianjun, and Vice-President Lin Guijun. Taking



UIBE students hanging on every word

place within a University context, from the outset Mrs. Ashton encouraged UIBE’s students to ask questions, pointing out that as one of China’s leading Universities in the fields of business, economics, trade, and law, “UIBE’s students are in a position to use every opportunity that comes their way to experience other cultures, and make friends.”



The EU delegation invited to UIBE

Following an introduction by UIBE’s vice-president Lin Guijun, the conference kicked off with a speech by UIBE’s new President Shi Jianjun who underlined the importance of deepening the exchange and cooperation of students and research between the two trade partners.

UIBE already boasts several joint programmes, such as the Research Center for China-EU Economic Cooperation, the EU-Chains Entrepreneur Training Center, EU (SCIC)-China Interpreter Training Center, the METP program; UIBE has also already established



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cooperation and exchange programs with more than 20 EU Universities.

University exchanges are vital in building relationships, UIBE's programmes of cooperation and exchange with the European Union through programs like the Managers Exchange and Training Programme (METP), are precisely the mechanisms for building a future together.



The EU's Managers Exchange and Training Programme (METP) located at UIBE

Mrs. Ashton directed her speech at the students, encouraging them to find mentors and learn from them. She emphasized the importance of UIBE as an international environment, bringing together students from different cultural backgrounds, sharing a common goal of global prosperity.

"Building international relationships for mutual understanding is vital if we are to keep tomorrow's trade flowing, generating the resulting wealth," offered Mrs. Ashton.

She had been in Beijing for several days already, meeting with Vice-Premier Wang Qishan for the High-level Economic Dialogue (HED), which she said "proved invaluable in allowing us to think more strategically about our relationship and our common goals, and allowing us to coordinate our policies more closely in response to the current global economic and trade challenges."

"Relations between the EU and China have come a

long way since bilateral ties were established over thirty years ago," commented Mrs. Ashton.

Living in an increasingly globalized world, trade relations have become ever more intertwined. Trade between the EU and China reached EUR 326 billion in 2008, making the EU-China trade relationship one of the most valuable in the world.

More crucially on the issue of protectionism, "this relationship is essential because the obstacles to EU-China trade are increasingly intangible - they are non-tariff barriers arising from different traditions and standards. These are harder to identify and solving them requires mutual trust, cooperation and understanding."

Commissioner Ashton was careful to leave enough time for questions from UIBE students. Questions ranged from defining the low carbon economy and the economic opportunities this presented; to why did the EU decide to grant "Market Economy" status to Russia and not to China; and general questions about trade, IP, and investments between the two economic partners. In response Commissioner Ashton said it was important to "understand how European businesses work, and how the global economy works;" furthermore, "you cannot compare two countries - we need to solve the problems - we don't want to hold this up but we cannot do it until we're ready;" finally she reiterated that "China's relationship with Europe was a priority."

The conference ended, and was true to the concluding remarks of UIBE's Vice-President Dr. Lin Guijun, "there's no better place than UIBE to discuss trade issues, in an open and constructive way."

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