



Committee of the Regions

The Secretary General

08.06.2009

10 JUN 2009

Mr Pierre Calame
 Forum China-Europa
 38, rue Saint Sabin
 75011 Paris
 France

08.06.2009* 1256

Brussels,

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Dear Mr Calame,

Please allow me to congratulate the *Forum China-Europa* for its valuable contribution in stepping up the EU-China dialogue so as to improve mutual understanding. For when considering the global challenges we are confronted with today, none of them is likely to see a constructive solution without strong cooperation – and therefore mutual understanding, also on the level of our civil societies – between the EU and China. **I thoroughly believe this can only happen by going beyond ordinary diplomatic and trade relations and setting up genuine dialogue and partnership between the two societies, on all levels.**

With this in mind, the Committee of the Regions and the *Forum China Europa* have worked together – and will continue to do so – in identifying the existing forms of partnership between European and Chinese regions as an important step in a multi level dialogue. **We noticed that already today many European regions directly cooperate with their Chinese counterparts. This is the best basis for a flourishing EU China partnership** as European regions and Chinese local and regional authorities have a decisive role to play in this dialogue between societies. Via the regions we can work in a very concrete manner, increase people-to-people exchanges, particularly among students and young professionals. Academic, scientific, social, cultural exchanges should help give a solid foundation to the EU China relations. Local and regional authorities are to be seen as **a stabilising element in international relations**, as they represent interpersonal contact on a daily basis.

It is in the “mission statement” of the Committee of Regions to contribute to multi-level governance, based on partnership. **Multi-level governance is the right answer for a globalized world where we need networks bringing together all Europeans, including public authorities, the private sector and individual citizens, to share responsibility for global development issues.** And that is exactly what the Forum China Europa is aiming at.

The Committee of the Regions promotes global multilevel governance, and therefore the activities of the *Forum China Europa* which are an excellent example thereof.

I wish you all the best with your future work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gerhard Stahl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'G'.

Gerhard Stahl