

## Press Release

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### **Bank of China to invigorate PH global trade relations**

Bank of China, Ltd. (BOC), the fourth largest bank in the world, is looking to strengthen economic ties between the Philippines and China as part of the 'Belt and Road Initiative'.

“Our partnership with the Philippines aims to open opportunities for local businesses and bridge markets across the globe,” said Deng Jun, BOC Country Head. “By promoting trade, we hope to accelerate growth for both our countries.”

The Belt and Road initiative of the Chinese government aims to link economic partners in Asia, Europe, and Africa along the Belt and Road trade routes. The routes consist of two parts: the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) which runs through Central Asia, West Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, and the Maritime Silk Road (MSR), which fosters collaboration in Southeast Asia, Oceania, and North Africa through the South China Sea, South Pacific Ocean, and Indian Ocean.

In recent years, BOC actively responded to the B&R by leveraging on its strength in branches in 19 countries along the way, increasing credit extension, speeding up institution expansion, and going all out to build the "Belt and Road" financial artery, so as to support Chinese enterprises in "Going Global". In supporting the B&R, BOC has become an important window facilitating exchanges of peoples and enterprises between China and countries along the way.

As a first step for the Philippines to enhance participation in the Maritime Silk Road trade, BOC is working with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), and the International Chamber of Commerce, Philippines (ICCP) to connect local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with counterparts in China.

A global leader in trade facilitation, BOC recognizes the role of SMEs in economic growth and national development. In 2014 alone, small and medium enterprises numbered 91,169 in the country, generating up to 2,519,158 jobs or 32.3 percent of total employment according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). Despite these economic contributions, SMEs continue to have limited access to capital, technology, and markets.

In support of Philippine SMEs, Bank of China will host a series of Global SME Cross-Border Trade and Investment Conferences starting March 2017 to provide a venue that will help them tap into international business opportunities.

“Bank of China envisions a world that builds mutually beneficial relationships that meet the interest of all,” added Deng Jun “Stronger trade and investment will instill vigor and vitality across the Belt and Road, bringing cooperation among Asian, European, and African countries to new heights and new forms.”

The event will serve as a matchmaking platform that will help lower barriers for cross-border business between Philippine and Chinese SMEs. This will enable enterprises of any size to have better access to markets beyond national boundaries and join the global value chain—a goal that helps realize China’s One Belt, One Road initiative that will benefit partner economies.

As a matchmaking service, BOC will employ an innovative “one-on-one” or “one-to-more” approach to negotiation and connection instead of traditional methods of attracting investments. This will involve a six-step process including establishing a database, customer matching, remote online matchmaking, one-to-one meeting, onsite survey, and banking service.

Participating industries will include food processing, building materials, furniture, agriculture, fisheries, e-commerce and IT, construction, construction equipment, textile and garments, iron and steel, tourism, and real estate.

BOC along with partner Philippine institutions recently hosted several road shows to pave the way for the upcoming conference.

Bank of China’s initiatives fall under the signed Strategic Cooperation Agreement with DTI, PCCI, and ICCP, as witnessed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in Beijing last October 21, 2016. The agreement comes together with BOC’s pledge to open a \$3 billion credit facility to aid in the development of Philippine industries and infrastructure.

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