



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO ITALO • MONGOLA
ИТАЛИ МОНГОЛЫН ХУДАЛДААНЫ ТАНХИМ
ITALIAN • MONGOLIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Associm Event June 22nd 2010 – Interview to Michele De Gasperis, President of Associm – Italian Mongolian Chamber of Commerce.

Yesterday has been a very important day for Associm that, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the institution of diplomatic relations between Italy and Mongolia, has shown the achievements of these years of work.

On the first event organized by the Italian Mongolian Chamber of Commerce we established an award, the “Associm Award for Social, Economic and Cultural Relation between Italy and Mongolia” with the goal to reward the effort of those who have demonstrated a key role in the improvement of diplomatic, trade and cultural relations between our two countries. The award has been delivered to Mr. Gombojav Zandanshatar, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Mongolia, who, since the beginning of his mandate in December 2009, has promoted several initiatives to intensify the relations of Mongolia with Europe and Italy. This has been also the purpose of Associm – Italian Mongolian Chamber of Commerce – since 2002, when we started our activities to encourage economic, cultural and trade relations between Italy and Mongolia.

Mongolia’s potential needs to be well described. Its territory is rich of mineral resources and this has brought in the latest years to a development of the mining industry. The milestone of this activity has been the agreement about the Oyu Tolgoi project, the largest untapped copper and gold deposit in the world; another very important project is about the Tavan Tolgoi deposit, which is now waiting for the parliamentary approval, one of the largest untapped coal deposit in the world.

The presence at our event of the whole Mongolian delegation which has come to Italy has been an honour for us: in particular, I would like to mention the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Mongolia, Mr. Gombojav Zandanshatar; of FIFTA’s (the Mongolian Government Agency which promotes foreign investments and international trade) Chairman, Mr. Baasankhuu Ganzorig; of the Ambassador of Mongolia to



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Italy, Mr. Enkhsaikhan Jargalsaikhan, and of the Honorary President of Associm – Italian Mongolian Chamber of Commerce – Mr. Gombo Byambadorj. The success of our event confirms the importance assumed by our institution during these years, becoming a reference point both in Italy and Mongolia: we are in fact the one and only institution to have a seat both in Rome and in UlaanBaatar. Since I have been appointed President of the Italian Mongolian Chamber of Commerce we have accomplished a lot of achievements: we have organized some missions regarding Italian companies to Mongolia and vice versa; our participation to event and fairs in Mongolia and in Europe; the visit of the Ambassador of Mongolia for Italy, Mr. Enkhsaikhan Jargalsaikhan, to our office in Rome; our participation to the mission to Mongolia of the Deputy Minister of Economic Development, Mr. Adolfo Urso, during which I was part of the delegation; and, least but not last, this event.

All things considered, I am really satisfied for the outcome of the event, both for the enthusiasm shown by the participants and because we have had the occasion to sign a three-year agreement for cooperation and promotion between Associm and Fifta in front of our guests. The trust from the Chairman of FIFTA is the achievement of another important goal for me and the Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber presented the first report on Mongolia in Italian language. Tell us something about it.

The first report on Mongolia in Italian language has been published to explain the potential of Mongolia and describe its strong economic growth. There are really few information about Mongolia, and none in Italian until now. This report is the first documentation in Italian language that fully talks about this country situated between China and Russia with an extraordinary geopolitical and strategic position. Mongolia is rich of natural resources. Breeding and agriculture have been for many years the main item for the economy and still offer today big opportunities: today in Mongolia live more than 40 millions of livestock, for 90% sheeps and goats, which makes Mongolia the second producer of cashmere in the



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world. The mining industry, the sector with the main borrower quota of foreign direct investments (FDI) with a share of the 80% in 2009 and a growth of 33% compared to 2008, and represents today a big share of the GDP. There are 6.000 known mineral deposit and the total national territory is one of the most prolific minerals treasure in the world, mapped and explored until today only for its 25%. Besides, we can't underestimate the infrastructure sector, a big opportunity for Italy. Mongolia can become a hub transit between Russia and Europe. Almost 86% of the goods moved in Mongolia is transported by railway nowadays: only 3,5% of the road are paved. The infrastructure sector will grow a lot in the immediate future, when Mongolia will rapidly need to transport the huge amount of minerals and other products from its mines and the increased GDP pro capita will lead – it's already happening - to a strong need of housing, construction business, commercial and health buildings. Since the beginning of the year, Mongolia is out of the crisis caused by the global economy restraint of 2009. According to official esteem, real GDP growth should be of 7.2% in 2010 and of 7,1% in 2011, arriving to 12,8% in 2015 and making Mongolia the country with the highest % GDP growth in the world in that year. Besides, I should stress the fact that tax on individuals provide a single rate of 10%, while for societies there is one at 10% and one at 25% (both data are the lowest in the region). The custom system of Mongolia is very free: VAT and custom duties for all types of equipment, facilities and spare parts for small and medium enterprises are suspended until January 1, 2012. As everybody can see, the commercial exchange between Italy and Mongolia has a very wide margin for improvement.

The cultural project "Two great leaders of the past: Julius Caesar meets Chinggis Khan" has been presented during the june 22nd event. Please explain us this project.

This project is about the promotion of a cultural exchange between our two countries. The project has been thought to stress the parallelism between our two great leaders of the past that have characterized the history of Roman Empire (Julius Caesar), on one side, and Mongolian Empire (Chinggis Khan) on the other side. Both characters conquered huge

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territories and brought to their lands honour, victories and fame, and, most important thing, introduced culture, instruction, wealth, political reforms and appreciation of the arts. Our goal is to involve the highest institutions of our two countries in a project that will be describing each other country the greatness and the similarities of these two great leaders that fully represent the nations heirs of these two great empires, based on strong values as culture, instruction, political and social reforms. This cultural project will improve the mutual recognition and appreciation and friendship, and it will increase the knowledge which is at the base of every good relation in every field of the human exchange.

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