

# **Action Plan Between Helsinki and Beijing on promoting the Sister-City Cooperation 2019-2023**

**The City of Helsinki of the Republic of Finland**

**and**

**The City of Beijing of the People's Republic of China**

**GIVEN** the friendship and excellent cooperation relationship that ties Finland and China;

**GIVEN** the Agreement between the City of Beijing of the People's Republic of China and the City of Helsinki of the Republic of Finland on the Establishment of Sister-City Relationship that was signed on July 14th, 2006;

**GIVEN** the Action Plan for Sister-City Cooperation in 2017 to 2019 between Beijing Municipality and the City of Helsinki that was signed on August 29th, 2017;

**GIVEN** the desire of both parties to promote exchanges and to jointly lead actions aimed at bringing people and economic stakeholders closer;

**HAVE REACHED AN AGREEMENT ON THE FOLLOWING:**

## **PREAMBLE**

Following the 13th anniversary of the sister-city agreement signed on July 14th, 2006, the two parties have decided to further their relationship by drafting a joint action plan from 2019 to 2023 in order to strengthen their international profiles as well as their economic & business relationship, expertise sharing and people-to-people exchanges.

## **ARTICLE ONE**

The goal of the action plan is to carry out mutual actions in order to develop and strengthen the relationship between the two parties, by deepening the existing ties, serving citizens, economic stakeholders and institutions of both cities.

The two parties decided to promote, within a partnership framework, the development of their cooperation relationship in sectors in which they have expertise or that are among their priorities and interests.

This development will take the shape of exchange of information, experiences and expertise, as well as through the implementation of common projects and mutual consulting.

## **ARTICLE TWO**

The parties decided to promote joint actions by focusing on the following topics:

- Diplomatic Exchanges: exchanges between Helsinki International Affairs and Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Beijing Municipality will be strengthened. The two parties will actively promote high-level bilateral visits to

discuss and coordinate views on issues of mutual interest, as well as encouraging regular exchanges between governments and government agencies of the two cities. The City Executive Office of the City of Helsinki and Beijing Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Beijing Municipality will host one "Helsinki Week" in Beijing and one "Beijing Week" in Helsinki during the Action Plan period.

- Science & Technology and Startups: the two parties support the Economic Development Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Science & Technology Commission in technology cooperation, especially in the areas of healthcare, smart energy, smart mobility, 5G and etc. The two parties encourage and support funding mechanism for joint research and development programs between the two cities. The two parties will utilize the "Helsinki Week in Beijing/ Beijing Week in Helsinki" series event as an important channel to reach these goals. In addition, the two parties support the Economic Development Division of Helsinki and the Administrative Committee of Zhongguancun Science Park to jointly conduct Startup Exchange activities, helping private and public incubators and accelerators etc.
- Business and Investments: the two parties welcome the establishment of regular communication mechanism among the Economic Development Division of Helsinki, and Beijing Municipal Bureau of Commerce, Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform so as to boost innovation cooperation and business opportunities. Both parties will step up cooperation in increasing bilateral trade and improving business environment. Furthermore, the two parties support the Economic Development Division of Helsinki and Beijing Investment Promotion Service Center in hosting economic and trade promotion activities to facilitate the implementation of investment projects. The two parties will utilize the "Helsinki Week in Beijing/ Beijing Week in Helsinki" series event as an important channel to reach these goals.
- City Planning: the two parties support the Urban Environment Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Commission of Planning & Natural Resources in exchanging knowledge and experience in terms of city planning and urban design, underground space development, functional multi-modal transit stations and improvement of City–Airport connections within Helsinki and Beijing. The two parties will benchmark and learn from each other's best practices so as to enhance both cities' competitiveness in urban planning and designing.
- Education and Training: in order to strengthen academic cooperation and student mobility between our two cities, the two parties support the Education Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Commission of Education in establishing an annual substantive dialogue, developing teacher in-service training programs (K-12, vocational, higher education), and organizing partner school activities. The two parties welcome the exchanges of best practices under the theme of "Future School" (including pedagogy, educational technology and use of artificial intelligence in education), and examine possible pilot projects accordingly. Moreover, the two parties will explore the possibility of developing joint programs between the education institutions in Helsinki and Beijing.
- Environmental Protection: in the face of common challenges of environment pollution and climate change, the two parties encourage exchanges between the Urban Environment Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Ecological Environmental

Bureau. Focused on improving air quality, Helsinki and Beijing will discuss specific cooperation areas in air quality monitoring, and will encourage relevant enterprises, universities and organizations in our two cities to participate in related projects.

- Culture and Tourism: The two parties support the Culture & Leisure Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Bureau of Culture & Tourism in strengthening cultural exchanges and cooperation. Helsinki and Beijing enjoy fruitful cooperation in cultural front. “Helsinki Chinese New Year” has been held for 13 years in a row. The two parties will continue to support projects such as “Helsinki Chinese New Year” and “Reading Beijing”, and actively promote cooperation between libraries in the two cities. Furthermore, both as members of World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF), the two parties will enhance cooperation in training and information exchange through WTCF. The two parties will encourage the Culture & Leisure Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Bureau of Cultural Relics to seek opportunities to strengthen cooperation in fields such as museums.
- Winter Sports: the two parties encourage the Culture & Leisure Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Bureau of Sports to ramp up cooperation in personnel exchanges, talent creation, events management, youth sports and winter sports know-how and networking. The two parties will also discuss collaboration in the context of Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games and the possibility of continuing the collaboration after Beijing 2022. The city of Helsinki is willing to share its experience in the preparation and organization of events under the framework of 2019 Finland - China Year of Winter Sports, and provide business contacts and assistance to Beijing.
- Television and Film: the two parties encourage the Economic Development Division of Helsinki to intensify exchanges and cooperation with Beijing Municipal Radio & Television Bureau and relevant departments. The two parties support TV and Film co-productions, and Helsinki can offer the city as a location for film and TV production. The two parties will explore the opportunities to hold events related to TV and Film in both cities, such as the Beijing Top TV Dramas & Movies Overseas Broadcasting Season.
- Healthcare: the two parties encourage the Social Services & Health Care Division of Helsinki and Beijing Municipal Health Commission to enhance exchanges in medical technology, expertise and practice. The two parties also encourage medical institutions to design pilot projects based on respective strength and resources so as to benefit citizens in the two cities.

Both parties agree to add, if needed, other themes of cooperation to the current roadmap.

### **ARTICLE THREE**

The two parties agree on ensuring the consistency and the proper implementation of this plan thanks to the coordination of both parties’ representatives which are in charge of this agreement:

-for Helsinki, the International Affairs Unit, City of Helsinki

-for Beijing, Foreign Affairs Office of the People’s Government of Beijing Municipality

Both parties can rely on the expertise of their associated institutions for the implementation of specific projects.

As far as possible, projects that will be implemented within the agreement framework will be funded by both parties and a joint endeavor will be mobilized in order to find a third party funding.

The two parties will coordinate their actions with their respective national authorities, while respecting Finland's and China's international commitments as well as international laws.

#### **ARTICLE FOUR**

Signed on 11th October 2019 in Helsinki, the action plan is done in duplicate in English and Chinese, with all texts being equally authentic. The Action Plan extends over a timeframe from 2019-2023 and will come into effect after being signed by both parties.

The contracting parties will update the document as necessary, with a formal review to take place in the middle of the timeframe in 2021. An evaluation will be carried out by the two parties before 2023 on the implementation of the plan and achievements made with a view to renewing or revising the action plan.

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