

3

EXTERNAL RELATIONS



External Relations

The Central People's Government is responsible for the foreign affairs of the Macao SAR. When the MSAR was established, the Central People's Government set up the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Macao Special Administrative Region, to handle foreign affairs issues related to Macao.

The Central People's Government also authorised Macao to manage certain external affairs in accordance with the regulatory framework stipulated in Chapter 7 of the Macao Basic Law.

As a non-sovereign region, Macao enjoys wide-ranging and close relationships with most countries and regions throughout the world. This is an advantage for Macao in its longstanding, extensive, direct, friendly and beneficial relationships, particularly those with European Union (EU) member states and Romance language-speaking countries.

To facilitate Macao's further development, the Government frequently conducts external activities and makes great efforts to foster interactions and collaboration with countries and regions around the world, in areas such as economics, trade and culture.

Mutual Exemption from Visa Requirements

One of the Government's major tasks is to promote the Macao Passport and other travel permits. With the Central People's Government's support and assistance, it has made substantial progress in negotiating with other countries and regions to grant visa-free access to holders of Macao Passports and travel permits. By March 2021, a total of 144 countries and regions had agreed to grant visa-free access or visas on arrival to holders of Macao SAR Passports (see Appendix 9, "Visa-free Access for Holders of Macao SAR Passports and Travel Permits", for more details). In addition, 14 countries have agreed to grant visa-free access or visas on arrival to holders of MSAR travel permits.

The Government also grants visa-free access to nationals or citizens of 81 countries and regions (see Appendix 10, "Countries/Territories Granted Visa-free Access by the Macao SAR", for more details). Nationals or citizens of these countries and territories who are in possession of valid passports can stay in Macao for periods of 14-90 days. Visitors from certain countries, such as the United Kingdom, may be given permission to stay for up to six months.

Consulates in Macao

Under the provisions of Article 142 of the Macao Basic Law, the establishment of foreign consular and other official or semi-official missions in the MSAR is subject to approval by the Central People's Government. Consular and other official missions established in Macao before the Handover by states with formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China were allowed to remain. According to individual circumstances, consular and other official missions established in Macao by states with no formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China were allowed either to remain, or to change to semi-official missions. States not recognised by the People's Republic of China were only allowed to establish non-governmental institutions in the MSAR.

By the end of December 2020, a total of 90 countries had reached agreements with the Macao SAR on establishing consular services in Macao or had extended the duties of their consulates general in Hong Kong to include Macao, or had empowered them to execute consular duties in Macao (see Appendix 8, “Countries Exercising Consular Jurisdiction in the Macao SAR”).

Angola, Mozambique, the Philippines and Portugal are the four countries (in alphabetical order, similarly hereinafter) that have established a consulate general in Macao.

Sixty other countries have assigned their consulates general in Hong Kong to cover consular affairs in Macao, including several countries that may execute consular duties in Macao. These are: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Egypt, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, the State of Kuwait, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Republic of Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. (Note: Antigua, Barbuda, Samoa, the Bahamas and Denmark have not yet established consulates general in Hong Kong, but their agreements with China on provision or expansion of consulate services are still in force.)

Nine countries have appointed honorary consuls to Macao: Cape Verde, Estonia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Peru, Tanzania and the United Kingdom.

Seventeen countries with honorary consulates in Hong Kong cover or extend services to Macao: Côte d’Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iceland, Kenya, Lithuania, Maldives, Morocco, Namibia, Norway, Rwanda, San Marino, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan and Uruguay.

International Organisations and Multilateral Treaties

As a modern international city, Macao participates in various international organisations and multilateral treaties. This helps it to maintain its unique position in the world and to develop external relations in areas such as economics, trade, finance, aviation, transportation, culture, education, environmental protection and health.

International Organisations

The principles contained in Articles 136 and 137 of the Macao Basic Law regarding the appropriate participation of Macao in international activities form the legal bases on which the Central People’s Government and the MSAR Government handle issues relating to Macao’s participation in international activities.

Since the establishment of the MSAR, the Central People’s Government has assisted and supported Macao’s participation in relevant international conferences and activities in accordance with the Macao Basic Law, and has also shown concern for and safeguarded Macao’s rights and interests in these international organisations.

The Government participates in intergovernmental organisations in one of two ways: 1. As a

full member of the organisation concerned, with the identity of a separate region that undertakes international obligations and enjoys corresponding rights and interests; or 2. As an associate member (or affiliate member) or member without voting rights that speaks as “Macao, China”. In such circumstances, Macao undertakes its international obligations and enjoys corresponding rights and interests, subject to certain conditions.

In addition, Macao attends meetings of other intergovernmental organisations as a delegation member of the Central People’s Government. Its delegates may express opinions on matters relevant to the MSAR in the name of “Macao, China”. Macao may also attend non-governmental, regional and specialist meetings of international organisations.

Following the establishment of the MSAR, Macao’s participation in international activities of non-governmental organisations should fall within the sphere of Macao’s autonomous affairs. Hence, such participation is left to Macao’s own discretion, and according to its needs.

During 2020, Macao attended several international virtual conferences as a member of Central People’s Government delegations, including:

- The 73rd Session of the World Health Assembly;
- Thematic Discussion Meeting on WHO Advice Regarding Cannabis and Cannabis-related Substance Recommendations by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs;
- The 2020 Asian-Pacific Postal Union (APPU) Executive Council Meeting;
- The Second Session of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) Assembly; and
- The 31st Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group of the ICAO.

Also, under the name “Macao, China”, Macao attended virtual international conferences including:

- The Fifth Trade Policy Review of Macao, China;
- The 43rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission;
- The 76th Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP);
- The Belt and Road Initiative Tax Administration Cooperation Forum (BRITACOF);
- The 32nd Joint Meeting and Regional Conference of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the UNWTO Commission for South Asia;
- The WorldSkills General Assembly 2020;
- The Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2020;
- The Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group;
- The 16th APEC Policy Partnership on Science, Technology, and Innovation (PPSTI) Meeting;

- The 15th Representative Conference and the 20th Session of Technical Committees Meeting of the Asian Schools Sports Federation in 2020;
- The 52nd Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) / World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Typhoon Committee;
- The Sixth World Metropolitan Transport Development Forum;
- The Sixth Asia-Pacific Spectrum Management Conference; and
- The Eco Expo Asia 2019.

International Treaties

Article 138 of the Basic Law stipulates the applicability of multilateral treaties to Macao; and this forms the legal and regulatory framework for the Central People's Government and MSAR Government to implement multinational treaties applicable to Macao.

As of 2020, 711 multilateral treaties were applicable to Macao: 61 treaties on foreign affairs and national defence; 15 on civil aviation; 10 on customs; 18 on drugs; eight on economics and finance; seven on education, science and technology, culture and sport; 39 on the environment and conservation; six on health; 17 on human rights; nine on intellectual property; 16 on international crime; two on international trade; 36 on labour; 400 on maritime affairs; 10 on private international law; three on road traffic; nine on postal affairs and telecommunications; and 45 on the establishment of international governmental organisations (see Appendix 11, "Multilateral Treaties Applicable to the Macao SAR", for details).

In 2020, the Law Reform and International Law Bureau commented on 21 international treaties or amendments. The bureau also received notifications from the Central People's Government regarding 95 international instruments applicable to the MSAR: 68 multilateral treaties and 27 UN Security Council resolutions and/or sanction lists.

The Law Reform and International Law Bureau announced 28 international documents: nine multilateral treaties (with one instrument translated into Portuguese), four bilateral treaties and 17 UN Security Council resolutions.

In addition, the Law Reform and International Law Bureau submitted regular compliance reports or follow-up reports on human rights treaties applicable to Macao to the United Nations human rights treaty bodies, and responses to questionnaires from international and / or regional organisations. It also provided information to other departments, assisting them in writing the reports required by the international organisations.

The Law Reform and International Law Bureau took part in the virtual conference on The Fifth Trade Policy Review of Macao, China, under the name of "Macao, China".

Macao and the European Union

Official relations between Macao and the EU have been steadily built on the foundation of the Macao-EC Trade and Cooperation Agreement signed in 1992. Macao has maintained good relations

with the EU in terms of economic and trade affairs ever since the establishment of the MSAR. The Macao Economic and Trade Office at the Brussels headquarters of the EU seeks to enhance Macao's relationship with the organisation.

Under their agreement, Macao and the EU may cooperate in industry, investment, science and technology, energy, information, training and other areas. A joint committee established by both parties holds an annual meeting to review the implementation of the agreement and discuss its future development. The meeting venue alternates between Macao and Brussels, and 23 such sessions have been held to date.

Cooperative projects between EU and Macao included: Training for the Tourism Industry (1999-2001); European Programme Scheme (1999-2001); Services Development Programme (1999-2001); Asia-Invest Programme (2001 and 2002); EU-Macao Legal Cooperation Programme: Phase One (2002-2007), Phase Two (2010-2013) and Phase Three (2016-2019); Immigration Services Training Programme (2006-2007); EU Business Information Cooperative Programme (2009-2012); Chinese-Portuguese Translation and Interpretation Training Programme (2010-2014); the EU Academic Programme (2012-2016); Chinese-Portuguese Translation and Interpretation Training Programme (2013-2016); Chinese-Portuguese Translation and Interpretation Training Cooperation (2016-2020); and Horizon 2020 (2016-2020).

Other joint projects inaugurated by Macao and the EU were: the Macao-Europe Centre for Advanced Tourism Studies (ME-CATS) and the Institute of European Studies of Macao.

The Business Cooperation Centre of Enterprise Europe Network Central China Macao Office (EENCC Macao Office) has provided useful information about Europe to SMEs in Macao, Hong Kong, the Pearl River Delta and neighbouring regions.

In 2020, the total value of Macao's exports to the EU was 1.8 million patacas, while imports from the EU were worth 28.54 billion patacas.

Visa-free Access

Currently, MSAR Passport holders are allowed to remain for 90 days or six months without a visa in the 28 EU member countries. These countries are: Denmark, Belgium, Lithuania, Spain, Hungary, Greece, Croatia, Poland, Finland, France, Latvia, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Ireland, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Slovakia, Austria, Italy, Cyprus, Estonia, Sweden, Portugal, Germany, Luxembourg, Romania and Malta.

To enhance relations with EU member countries and increase economic and trade relations with them, the first- and second-term Chief Executive Edmund Ho Hau Wah led delegations to visit Portugal, France, Belgium and Germany in 2000, 2001 and 2004. During 2006, Edmund Ho Hau Wah led a delegation to Portugal and Belgium, including the EU headquarters in Brussels. In 2012, Chief Executive Chui Sai On led a delegation to visit the EU.

Macao and Portugal

Macao has remained on good terms with Portugal since the establishment of the MSAR. It has

established the Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon, further strengthening the relationship between Portugal and Macao.

The Agreement on the Mutual Encouragement and Protection of Investment between the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and the Portuguese Republic, the Cooperation Framework Agreement between the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and the Portuguese Republic, as well as the series of specific cooperation protocols with Portugal, covering administration and justice, medicine and hygiene, science and technology, sports and auditing have enhanced cooperation and communication between the two sides and promoted greater cooperation between Macao and Portugal in the areas of economics, finance, science, technology, culture, internal public security and justice.

In May 2014, Portuguese President Anibal Cavaco Silva visited Macao and signed the Amendment of the Cooperation Framework Agreement between the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and the Portuguese Republic, to further enhance the mechanism for cooperation between the two places by changing the biennial bilateral meeting to an annual one.

In 2010, 2016 and 2019, Chief Executive Chui Sai On led delegations to visit Portugal.

Macao's imports from Portugal during 2020 totalled 263 million patacas. Its exports to Portugal totalled 10.54 million patacas.

Macao and the United States

Since the Handover, both Macao and the United States have expressed readiness to promote trade and investment. The value of Macao's gross exports to the United States during 2020 accounted for 554 million patacas, while Macao's total imports from the United States were valued at 8.319 billion patacas.

Three US-based companies were granted casino concessions or sub-concessions after the liberalisation of the gaming industry.

Macao and Portuguese-speaking Countries

Besides its historical close links with Portugal, Macao also has traditional and special relationships with other members of the community. It is the only Chinese city capable of developing special relationships with the Portuguese-speaking countries on four continents. As a result, Macao has the unique advantage of serving as an economic and trading cooperation platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

In the 12th and 13th Five-Year Plans, mainland China expressed explicit support for Macao's establishment of "One Centre, One Platform", the latter of which refers to a business and trade cooperation and services platform for China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

The Central People's Government also attaches importance to this role. It arranged for Macao to host the Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries. The first forum was held in October 2003. During the

forum, ministerial-level officials of China and seven Portuguese-speaking countries signed the Economic and Trade Cooperation Action Plan. They agreed to establish a permanent secretariat for the forum in Macao.

In September 2006, the Second Ministerial Meeting of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries was held in Macao, with the theme “Deepening cooperation and developing together”. Ministerial-level officials from China and seven Portuguese-speaking countries adopted and signed the Economic and Trade Cooperation Action Plan 2007-2009.

In November 2010, the third Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries was held in Macao under the theme of “Advance Common Development Through Diversified Cooperation”. Premier Wen Jiabao attended the event and delivered a keynote speech. Attendees representing different countries jointly signed the 2010-2013 Action Plan on Trade and Economic Cooperation.

In November 2013, the fourth Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries was held in Macao under the theme of “New Cycle, New Opportunities”. Attendees representing different countries jointly signed the 2014-2016 Action Plan for Economic and Trade Cooperation at the conference. The action plan further reiterates the importance of Macao as a platform; proposes a professional development exhibition in Macao targeting markets in Portuguese-speaking countries; explores the establishment of a commercial and trade service centre in Macao for small and medium enterprises from the countries that attended the forum, as well as a food trading and distribution centre for Portuguese-speaking countries; and promotes Macao as a commercial arbitration centre for handling disputes between enterprises in China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

In October 2016, the fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries was held in Macao, with the theme “Working towards Stronger Sino-Portuguese-speaking Countries’ Trade and Economic Relations – Combining Efforts, Jointly Building a Platform, Sharing Fruits of Development”. Premier Li Keqiang attended the event, and delivered a keynote speech in which he announced 18 new measures for strengthening and deepening the economic and trade cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. Attendees representing different countries jointly signed the Strategic Plan for Economic and Trade Co-operation (2017-2019) and the Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Co-operation in Production Capacity.

To strengthen sporting exchanges between Macao and Portuguese-speaking countries, Macao hosted the First Lusofonia Games in October 2006.

The first- and second-term Chief Executive, Edmund Ho Hau Wah, paid official visits to Mozambique and Brazil.

During 2020, the value of Macao’s exports to Portuguese-speaking countries was 12.3 million patacas, while imports from Portuguese-speaking countries were worth 700 million patacas.

The Government also remained committed to strengthening its relations with East Asia, particularly Southeast Asian countries. The first- and second-term Chief Executive, Edmund Ho

Hau Wah, led delegations to countries including Singapore, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, and Malaysia. The Chief Executive of the third and fourth MSAR Governments, Chui Sai On, led Government delegations for visits to Singapore, Cambodia and Thailand.



Anti-pandemic support for Africa

Five members of the China International Emergency Medical Team (Macao) were selected to join the Chinese anti-pandemic medical expert team that otherwise comprised medical experts from Chongqing, and took on the mission of anti-pandemic support for Africa in May 2020. The expedition takes them to Algeria and Sudan to participate in the local anti-pandemic efforts, marking the China International Emergency Medical Team (Macao)'s first overseas mission to provide onsite emergency medical assistance.

With a strong sense of responsibility and mission, the team is fully devoted to paying onsite visits, conducting seminars, and setting up online video connections to share experiences in anti-pandemic measures with local health department officials, medical organisations, and World Health Organization (WHO) representatives, helping to raise the standards of pandemic prevention and control. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends a letter expressing gratitude for the efforts made by the MSAR Government.

The China International Emergency Medical Team (Macao) is China's fifth and the world's 25th team recognised by the WHO, and is one of the few that can provide support using Cantonese, Mandarin, English, and Portuguese languages.



