

Sino-US solar power deal generates optimism

China and the US will work together on \$12.38-billion of agreements and contracts - including the largest solar power project between the two countries - deals that illuminate the healthy state of bilateral trade ties.

The 41 projects, many centered on investment as well as economic and technological cooperation, were signed in the presence of China's National People's Congress Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo while he attended the one-day US-China Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum in Phoenix on Tuesday.

Wu is the most senior Chinese official to visit the US since President Barack Obama took office.

He traveled to the country at the invitation of Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

In addition to meeting Pelosi, Wu was expected to sit down with President Obama.

He told delegates at the forum that bilateral trade ties were strong.

"Although no clear signs of world economic recovery have emerged and the long-term impact of the international financial crisis cannot be overlooked, we can be confident about a bright future for China-US economic cooperation and trade," he said.

Related readings:

- ◆ [First Solar to build huge Chinese solar plant](#)
- ◆ [Chengdu hosts New Energy Int'l Forum & Solar Energy Fair](#)
- ◆ [New Energy Int'l Forum & Solar Energy Fair held in Chengdu](#)
- ◆ [Large solar power project starts in Central China](#)

Among the deals signed was one with First Solar Inc, the world's largest thin-film solar module manufacturer. The company will build a two-gigawatt solar power plant in Ordos, Inner Mongolia.

While touring First Solar, Wu said the Chinese government is seeking a legislature guarantee for the development of renewable energy and he suggested joint research and development efforts, pilot projects and the expansion of mutual investment as ways to increase both countries' solar energy capacity.

Shi Yinong, an expert in international studies at Renmin University of China in Beijing, said Wu's visit had a "green focus".

"This is also an opportunity to follow up on some issues of mutual interest, such as the adjustment of trade and financial mechanisms to encourage the world economic recovery," he said. Also among the agreements signed in Wu's presence was a \$607-million purchase deal between the restructured General Motors and its China joint-venture Shanghai GM.

The Chinese venture will import complete vehicles, vehicle kits, machinery and equipment from its parent company in the US. Buick, Chevrolet and Cadillac vehicles are part of the deal.

Wu also paid a visit to Honeywell International's aerospace headquarters in Phoenix, where he said he would like to see further development "of technological and industrial cooperation between Honeywell and Chinese enterprises".

Gong Li, deputy director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in Central Party School, pointed out that Wu was the first top legislator to visit the US for many years. "Wu's visit to the US is a breakthrough and a first in the last two decades because inter-congressional exchanges between China and the US have been frozen during the past 20 years because of differences on certain nation-level issues," Gong said.

In 2008, bilateral trade between the nations amounted to \$333.74 billion, making China and the US each other's second-largest trading partners. In the first seven months of the year, China and the US signed 888 technology contracts, worth \$3.26 billion, up 41.3 percent on last year.

Xinhua contributed to the story