



By: TA | AP Brief

China and Spain signed new agreements during King Felipe VI's visit to Beijing



Spanish King Felipe VI and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed agreements on language exchanges and other areas Wednesday as both sides vowed to strengthen their cooperation.

The monarch's visit comes as Spain, the eurozone's fourth-largest economy, continues its courtship of China and **Chinese investment** while the relationship with the United States is strained under President Donald Trump.

In April, Spanish Prime Minister **Pedro Sánchez**, head of the country's government, made his third visit to China in as many years.

Spain is one of the more friendly countries to China relative to others in the **European Union** in recent years.

Felipe and Queen Letizia were met by Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan in front of Beijing's Great Hall of the People, and were greeted with a performance by the military band and a 21-gun salute. This is the first state visit for the Spanish king to China, and he was also accompanied by Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel Albares.

"China stands ready to work hand in hand with Spain to build a comprehensive strategic partnership that is more strategically steady, more dynamic in development, and more influential internationally," said Xi in his opening remarks, particularly while the international situation is "complex and volatile."

He said that China would also import more Spanish products, without specifying, according to a readout of the meeting from the official Xinhua news.

Felipe and Xi signed agreements promoting cooperation in language exchanges, economic issues, and exporting aquatic products to China.

Felipe is also scheduled to meet with Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Zhao Leji, chairman of China's top legislative body.

More balanced relations

The monarch's first stop in China was the city of Chengdu, where alongside Spain's foreign minister and economy minister, he attended a Spain-China business forum with several Spanish business leaders.

Spain has taken a less adversarial stance toward China, and has sought to reposition trade relations with the country, whose exports to Spain are far greater than those of the Iberian nation of 49.4 million people to China, which has a population of more than 1.4 billion.

After meeting with Xi in April, Sánchez said Spain was in favor of "more balanced relations between the European Union and China." The EU negotiates trade terms on behalf of all 27 member countries.

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The last time a Spanish monarch visited China on an official state trip was in 2007. Xi last visited Spain in 2018.

Spain generated more than half of its electricity last year from renewable sources, and needs Chinese critical raw materials, solar panels and green technologies in its transition away from fossil fuels, similar to other EU countries. Xi said both sides could further explore cooperation in renewable energy and artificial intelligence.

Last year, Chinese electric battery company **CATL** announced a joint venture with automaker Stellantis to build a battery factory in northern Spain. That followed deals between Spain and Chinese companies Envision and Hygreen Energy to build green hydrogen infrastructure in the country.