

Notarization for Foreign-related Matters Plays Three Key Roles and Promotes Reform and Innovation

On March 30, by the Huangpu River, the China-France Notarial Business Exchange Conference was held in Shanghai. The China Notaries Association and the Superior Council of French Notaries renewed their cooperation agreement, defining areas for further exchanges and cooperation in the next three years. This is the latest achievement in deepening cooperation between the Chinese and French notarial sectors, and a vivid example of China's notarial industry actively integrating into the overall development of foreign-related rule of law and serving high-level opening up.

In recent years, to meet the needs of high-quality development and high-level opening up, the notarial sector has continuously promoted the innovative development of foreign-related notarization. It has played an irreplaceable role in supporting enterprises to “go global”, attracting foreign trade and investment, and protecting citizens' rights and interests overseas.

Serving as Three Key Roles

“Without the professional support of the Fano Notary Public Office, our equity registration in Kyrgyzstan would have been stuck for a long time.” At the Fano Notary Public Office in Urumqi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the person in charge of an industrial company sighed with relief while holding the newly issued notarial certificate.

The company acquired all equity of a bankrupt enterprise, but was required to have the bankrupt former legal representative complete notarization when applying for change of registration in Kyrgyzstan. Faced with the dual challenges of difficulty in obtaining authorization from a bankrupt entity and strict standards for cross-border documents, notaries repeatedly verified the legality of authorization and polished every word of the documents. The notarial certificate was finally recognized across borders, clearing the “last mile” for the enterprise to enter the Kyrgyz market.

This case vividly demonstrates the role of foreign-related notarization as a “legal passport” in cross-border business operations. With the in-depth advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative, cross-border commercial activities have surged, and the accompanying legal relations have become increasingly complex. This places higher demands on notarial services

featuring prevention, certification and international credibility. Notary offices across the country have taken the initiative to integrate into the overall opening-up strategy, deepened services for the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative, and actively served as three key roles.

First, acting as the “cornerstone of trust” for commercial activities.

As a universally recognized legal language, notarial documents effectively remove trust barriers caused by legal differences and information asymmetry between countries. Whether for cross-border trade contracts or intellectual property licensing, notarized documents provide reliable legal protection for “Made in China” products going global.

Second, building a “front-end defense line” for dispute resolution.

Relying on diversified dispute resolution models such as “mediation + notarization”, notarization resolves numerous potential cross-border disputes at an early stage through evidence preservation and conferring enforcement effect on creditor’s rights documents, shifting the dispute resolution model from “terminal adjudication” to “source governance”.

Third, serving as a “connecting bridge” for institutional opening up.

In Yunnan’s efforts to build a radiation center facing South Asia and Southeast Asia, and Xinjiang’s development as a core area of the Silk Road Economic Belt, notarization plays a unique role in connecting different legal jurisdictions and promoting mutual recognition of rules.

Meanwhile, notary offices across the country have strengthened notarial cooperation with countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, improving convenient channels for document exchange and evidence investigation to support the collaborative foundation of foreign-related rule of law. At present, there are more than 2,900 notary offices nationwide with over 15,000 practicing notaries. Notarial documents are used in more than 180 countries and regions, making notarization an indispensable “rule of law bridge” in international civil and commercial exchanges.

Improving Service Quality and Efficiency

“In the past, I had to go to the foreign affairs department for authentication after getting a notarial certificate. Now the ‘notarization + authentication’ one-stop joint service is so convenient.” At the Hangzhou Guoli Notary Public Office in Zhejiang Province, Li, a person in charge from

Hikvision, expressed a feeling shared by many clients of foreign-related notarization.

In recent years, the Ministry of Justice has vigorously promoted people-friendly notarial services and launched the “Three-Year Action for Improving Notarization Quality and Efficiency”. All localities have explored ways to further deliver streamlined, efficient and high-quality foreign-related notarial services.

Focusing on streamlining certification for public convenience, local foreign-related notarization services have reduced required documents and optimized procedures, shifting from “repeated trips” to “one-time handling”. Zhejiang has integrated 81 items of foreign-related notarization data from 13 departments onto a single platform, letting “data run” instead of “people run”. In 2025, 97.2% of foreign-related notarization cases were completed with “at most one visit”. Heilongjiang has actively promoted remote video notarization and a “green channel” for foreign-related notarization, effectively easing inconveniences caused by geographical distance and language barriers.

Focusing on speed and efficiency, localities have fully shortened processing times and expanded service scenarios based on the standard of “efficiently completing one matter”, effectively improving the quality and efficiency of notarial services. Yunnan has established an integrated “foreign-related notarization + consular authentication” mechanism, cutting the processing time for general documents from 7–8 working days to 3–4 days, with urgent cases completed within one day. Xinjiang has launched a one-stop solution of “pre-review, expedited notarization and seamless authentication” to greatly shorten the processing cycle of foreign-related notarization.

Focusing on standardization and quality, localities have continuously improved the quality and credibility of foreign-related notarial services by strengthening regulation, standardizing procedures and ensuring excellence, driving continuous optimization of service methods, business areas, practice supervision and professional conduct. Shanghai has issued the *Guidelines on Exclusive Notarial Services for Shipping Enterprises*, providing comprehensive, professional and

international notarial legal services to enhance enterprises' ability to address cross-border legal risks. Guangdong has launched the *Notarial Service Manual for Enterprises Going Global*, unifying service standards, standardizing processing procedures and integrating service resources to comprehensively improve the industry's overall service quality, professional capacity and social credibility.

Practice shows that the value of notarial services is ultimately reflected in the sense of gain of enterprises and the public. Adhering to a problem-oriented approach, local notary offices have started from the issues of greatest public concern and enterprise needs, promoting foreign-related notarial services toward higher quality, better service and greater public satisfaction through process reengineering, digital empowerment and functional restructuring.

Projecting China's Voice on the Global Stage

An inheritance case involved a legal puzzle spanning three jurisdictions: the deceased Ms. P, a Hong Kong resident, made a will in Hong Kong during her lifetime, stipulating that her share of a Shanghai property be inherited by her elder brother. However, how could the grant of letters of administration from the High Court of Hong Kong take effect in the Chinese mainland? Could the separate property agreement she signed with her Swiss ex-husband rebut the presumption of community property in China? The cross-border network of heirs formed after her mother's death further complicated the case.

Facing these difficulties, Shanghai Jing'an Notary Public Office quickly connected with Swiss notaries through the International Union of Notaries to confirm property ownership, and launched a collaborative mechanism to obtain Hong Kong legal documents to strengthen the validity of the will. When the validity of the Swiss agreement hit a deadlock, notaries promptly matched a Swiss notary specializing in family law. **Such precise connectivity is not just a result of personal connections, but a vivid reflection of China's notarial industry striding onto the international notarial stage.**

Today, more and more Chinese notaries hold positions in the International Union of Notaries. China's notarial industry has hosted relevant conferences of the International Union of Notaries in due course, deeply

participated in international notarial affairs and rule-making, **and integrated Chinese wisdom into the global notarial governance system.**

Meanwhile, China's notarial industry has actively built high-end exchange platforms and cultivated a talent pool for foreign-related notarization. Taking the China-France Notarial Legal Exchange and Training Center in Shanghai as an example, over the past 25 years, the center has received many important figures in the international notarial sector, organized 26 groups of more than 500 notaries to receive training in France, held 55 international seminars and 34 special lectures, and facilitated joint university training for 80 French master's students and 7 doctoral students in law.

Relying on such platforms, **China's notarial industry is accelerating the training of high-level foreign-related notarial talents who are politically firm, professionally proficient, familiar with international rules and globally minded. Systematically tracking, researching and applying cutting-edge international notarial theories and practices has also become an important task for China's notarial industry.**