

"Florence Should Celebrate Ningbo Day"

Striving towards a modern
coastal metropolis
建设现代化滨海大都市



"Florence should celebrate Ningbo Day," said Mario Razzannelli, a former Florence city councillor in his 80s. On the morning of December 19 (local time), he walked into the City Hall of Florence and submitted a proposal calling for the establishment of an annual Ningbo Day.

“佛罗伦萨要有一个‘宁波日’。”当地时间12月19日上午,80多岁的佛罗伦萨市前议员马里奥·拉扎尼里走进市政厅,郑重提交“设立‘宁波日’”的倡议。

"I suggest October 21, a date etched into the memory of both cities," Razzannelli added.

“建议设在每年10月21日,这是刻在两座城市记忆里的日子。”马里奥建议。

Nineteen years ago, on October 21, a replica of David, the iconic masterpiece by Florentine Renaissance artist Michelangelo, was installed in Ningbo. The installation quickly sparked a sensation in both China and Italy and became a cultural bridge between the two cities.

19年前的这一天,意大利文艺复兴时期艺术巨匠·佛罗伦萨人米开朗基罗的代表作大卫雕像的复制品落户宁波,一时轰动中意两国,成为两城友好交往的文化之桥。

Razzannelli played a key role in bringing David to Ningbo. In 2003, then a Florence city councillor and president of the city's menswear association, he traveled to China for the Ningbo International Fashion Festival. It was his first visit to China, and he was immediately struck by what he called "an exceptional Ningbo," vowing to introduce the city to the people of Florence.

促成“大卫”落户宁波的正是马里奥。2003年,时任佛罗伦萨市议员、佛罗伦萨男装协会主席的他,受邀参加宁波国际服装节,第一次踏上中国大地,就被一个“极好的宁波”深深打动,并许下“让佛罗伦萨人认识宁波”的诺言。

Thanks to Razzannelli's constant contribution, the friendship between the two cities blossomed over the years. In 2006, the replica of David crossed the oceans and the seas to



Mario Razzannelli (left) at Florence's City Hall.

Ningbo. Two years later, the cities formalized their friendship city relationship, with Ningbo reciprocating by sending replicas of Southern Song Dynasty stone carvings depicting ancient civil and military talents to Florence. In 2011, a bronze statue of Dante was installed in Ningbo Book City, and in 2014, the China (Ningbo) - Italy Industrial Park officially opened, cementing economic as well as cultural collaboration.

在马里奥的穿针引线下,两市友谊开枝散叶:2006年,“大卫”远渡重洋来到宁波;2008年,两市缔结友好城市关系,宁波回赠的南宋石刻“文臣武将”复制品启程西行;2011年,但丁青铜雕像“定居”宁波书城;2014年,中国(宁波)意大利产业园开园……

Over the past 22 years, Razzannelli has made 68 long-haul journeys to strengthen the bonds between the two cities. In recognition of his efforts, he was awarded the honorary citizenship of Ningbo and is affectionately recognized as a modern-day Marco Polo—a bridge between East and West, forged through his vision, perseverance, and personal dedication to fostering friendship.

22年间,马里奥用68次万里之行,推动两座城市跨越山海、相识相知。他也因此被授予“宁波荣誉市民”,人们亲切地称他为当代“马可·波罗”。



The map at Florence's City Hall.

The roots of this friendship stretch back centuries. Florence's City Hall preserves a hand-drawn Chinese map from the 13th century, with "Ninbo" clearly marked in Latin.

这份友谊,早已埋下千年伏笔——承载厚重历史的佛罗伦萨市政厅,珍藏着一幅制作于13世纪、由意大利人手绘的中国古地图,上面赫然标注着拉丁文“宁波”。

"That alone is reason enough to devote a lifetime to this cause, making countless journeys back and forth worthwhile," Razzannelli said. This year marks the 55th anniversary of China - Italy diplomatic relations and the 50th anniversary of China - EU ties, while next year will mark 20 years since David arrived in Ningbo.

“仅此一点,就值得我倾注一生,无数次往返。”马里奥动情地说,今年是中意建交55周年、中欧建交50周年,而明年“大卫”落户宁波就满20年了。

Razzannelli proposed that Ningbo Day feature a mayoral forum to encourage high-level cooperation; cultural exhibitions highlighting Ningbo's intangible cultural heritage, including bone- and wood inlay, alongside joint performances by artists from both cities; and platforms to promote trade and collaboration in green technology and fashion design.

马里奥建议,围绕每年“宁波日”,设立市长论坛,开展高层级合作与交流;举办文化展演,展示宁波骨木镶嵌等非遗项目,推动两地艺术机构联袂演出;搭建对接平台,在绿色科技、时尚设计领域推动经贸合作。

"This is an idea worth pursuing," said Giovanni Bettarini, Councillor for Culture of the Municipality of Florence. "A Ningbo Day would further introduce Ningbo to Florence, and Florence to Ningbo."

“这是一个我们值得为之努力的好主意。”佛罗伦萨市文化局局长乔瓦尼·贝塔里尼称赞道,“设立‘宁波日’,能够进一步把宁波介绍给佛罗伦萨,也把佛罗伦萨介绍给宁波。”

Massimo Manetti, President of the Chamber of Commerce of Florence, said the two cities had already fostered meaningful exchanges and added that he was "ready at any time to support friendly cooperation."

佛罗伦萨商会主席马西莫·马内蒂表示,两个城市的相遇,会带来更深入的交流,“愿意随时为友好合作效劳”。

A local official in Ningbo said that establishing an annual celebration of the friendship between cities would inject fresh momentum into exchanges between Chinese cities and their international counterparts in the new era.

“设立‘友好城市日’,将让中外友城交流在新时代焕发更强活力。”宁波市外办负责人称。

Journalists: Cheng Liangtian,
Wu Yidan, Sun Yuzhuo,
Ke Shanlu, Lin Jiaying
Translator: Pan Wenjie