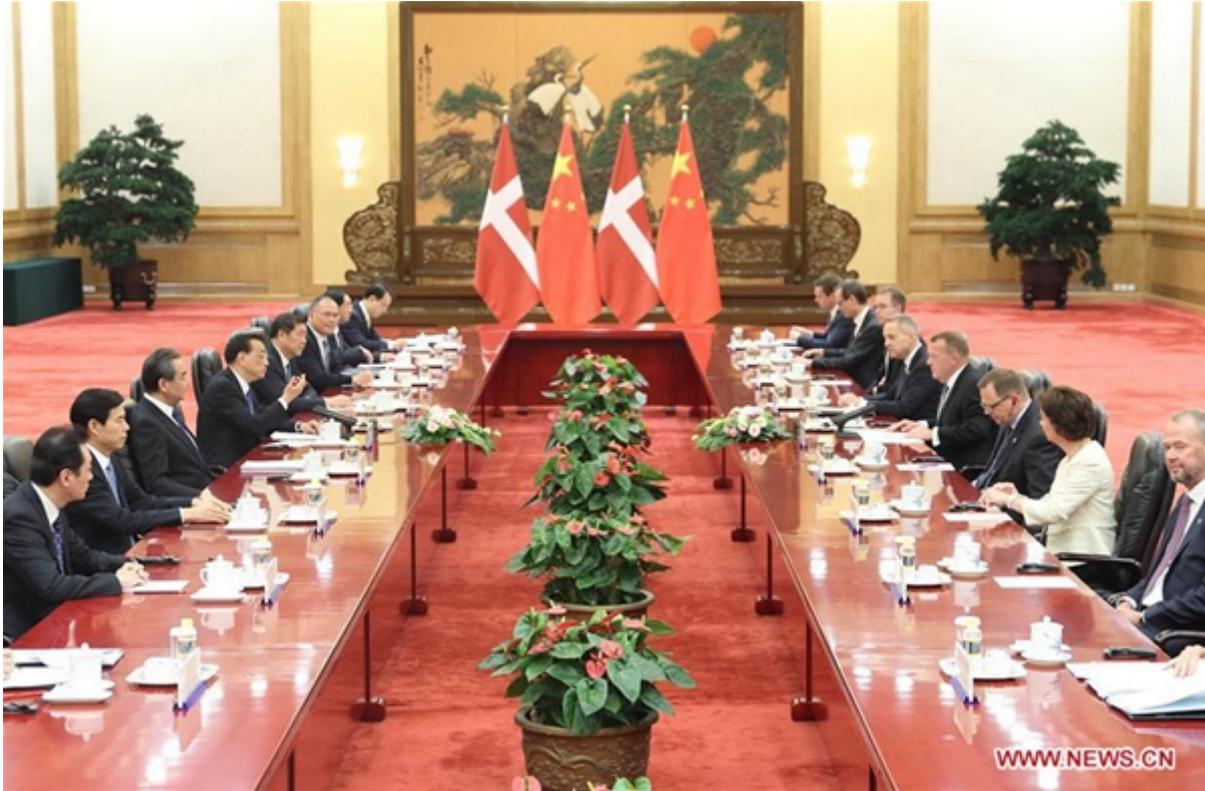


China to send two giant pandas to Denmark



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang holds talks with Danish Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen in Beijing, capital of China, May 3, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

China said on Wednesday it would send two giant pandas to Denmark and work on panda protection during Danish Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen's visit.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Rasmussen held talks on Wednesday afternoon and witnessed the signing of cooperation documents on food and drug supervision, quarantine and panda protection, among others.

It will be the first time China has sent pandas to Denmark.

"The Danish prime minister visited Chengdu to see the two giant pandas to be sent to the Copenhagen Zoo to live there for some time. But The arrival of the pandas in Denmark will depend on when Denmark gets (the Panda House) ready," Liu Weimin, an official with the Chinese Foreign Ministry told reporters after the talks.

"The giant pandas, as messengers of friendship, will play a positive role to our bilateral relations," Liu said.

Copenhagen Zoo revealed in March the design of the panda house. Construction will begin in November and take about a year, according to Copenhagen Zoo director and CEO Steffen Straede.

China and Denmark unveiled a plan to deepen cooperation from 2017 to 2020 and

agreed to expand two-way trade and investment. Both sides identified agriculture, fisheries, food security, health and tourism as major areas for cooperation.

“China hopes to work with Denmark to advance bilateral practical cooperation and guide the economic globalization towards more inclusiveness and fairness and promote liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment,” Li said.

Rasmussen said developing a comprehensive strategic partnership with China is a diplomatic priority for Denmark and invited Chinese investment to Denmark.

As a EU member, Denmark supports progress in the talks of EU-China investment treaty and contribute to the EU-China relations, Rasmussen said.

Before the talks, Li held a welcome ceremony for Rasmussen at the Great Hall of the People.