

SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

CHINESE ENTERPRISES GOING ABROAD IN 2024: ROLE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION

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In recent years, Chinese enterprises have increasingly recognized the importance of corporate international image building as an essential component of global communication and competitiveness. With the acceleration of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the growing emphasis on “environmental, social, and governance” (ESG), sustainability, and cultural exchange, corporate practices abroad are no longer evaluated solely in terms of economic contribution, but also in terms of their social, environmental, and cultural impact. To assess and promote best practices in this field, national-level platforms have been established to collect, review, and showcase exemplary cases of Chinese enterprises’ overseas engagement.

The “7th China Corporate International Image Building Case Collection Activity” officially announced its results on December 12, 2024 [国际传播发展中心, 2024]. Out of nearly 400 cases submitted by central enterprises, local state-owned enterprises, and private enterprises, 44 outstanding cases were shortlisted in four thematic categories: “Cultural Integration and Civilizational Mutual Learning,” “ESG and Green Development,” “Innovation in International Communication,” and “Inspiring Personal Stories.” Based on this selection, the “Top Ten Outstanding Cases” were further chosen.

An analysis of the 2024 Top-10 demonstrates that certain industries are especially successful in shaping China’s international image, particularly in regions along the BRI.

The energy and infrastructure sectors stand out most prominently. Out of the ten cases, seven are directly connected to energy, construction, transportation, and large-scale engineering projects (Cases 1–6, 8). These projects often emphasize green development, ESG practices, and infrastructure connectivity, aligning with global sustainability narratives and host country

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development needs. Such visibility and tangible contributions to local economies make these sectors central to China’s image-building abroad.

Table 1

**2024 Top Ten Outstanding Cases
of Chinese Enterprises’ International Image Building**

Ranking	Case	Enterprise
1	Running the “Hushan Cup” Marathon to Build a Bridge of Friendship Between China and Africa [中国广核集团有限公司第, 2024]	China General Nuclear Power Corporation
2	Connecting the World, CNNC Fulfills Its Responsibility and Commitment under the Belt and Road Initiative [中国核工业华兴建设有限公司, 2024]	China National Nuclear Corporation
3	Bridging a Green Future: Achievements of China Energy Construction in Building Ecological Symbiosis in the UAE [中国电建, 2024]	China Electric Power Construction Group Co., Ltd.
4	Practicing the Concept of International ESG Development: Promoting Global Energy Cooperation with “Green Synergy” [中国石油新闻中心, 2024]	China National Petroleum Corporation
5	Green Construction: Rebuilding the “First Long Tunnel in Africa” [中交一公局集团有限公司, 2024]	China Communications Construction Group Co., Ltd.
6	Using “Smart Construction” to Create a New International Communication IP of the “China Story” [中国建筑股份有限公司, 2024]	China State Construction Engineering Corporation
7	Expanding Overseas Broadcasting: China Eastern Airlines Spreads Its “Wings” to Unfold a Chapter of Revitalization [中国东方航空, 2024]	China Eastern Airlines Corporation Limited
8	A “Copper Heart” Beating on the African Continent [中铁资源集团有限公司, 2024]	China Railway Engineering Corporation
9	Promoting Mutual Learning of Civilizations: Shenmo Education Promotes Chinese Abacus Heritage Worldwide [神墨教育, 2025]	Beijing Shenmo Cultural Communication Co., Ltd.
10	The Dream of Sihanouk: From International Students to Brilliant Builders – A Glorious Transformation [中国民营经济国际合作商会, 2024]	Hongdou Group Co., Ltd

The aviation sector also gained recognition, as shown by the inclusion of Case 7. Civil aviation represents mobility, connectivity, and cultural exchange, offering a softer but equally significant contribution to China's international presence. The industry enhances China's reputation not only as a global builder but also as a service provider linking markets and people.

The cultural and educational sectors achieved recognition through Case 9, which focuses on promoting abacus heritage worldwide. This demonstrates that cultural soft power initiatives complement hard infrastructure by highlighting China's traditions, educational innovations, and contribution to civilizational dialogue.

Finally, Case 10 covers the only national-level economic and trade cooperation zone between China and Cambodia, which actively cultivates local talents and encourages Cambodian youth to study in China. Its focus on overseas students transforming into local builders highlights not only commercial success but also the human dimension of China's international engagement.

While energy, construction, transportation, and special economic zones form the core drivers of China's international image-building – reflecting the country's global strength in infrastructure and industrial capacity – aviation, cultural education, and consumer industries provide important complementary soft power dimensions. Together, these sectors demonstrate a dual strategy: material contributions through large-scale projects and symbolic contributions through culture, education, and individual narratives.

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