



EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project
支持中欧人员往来和移民领域对话项目

Training on document verification (bank statements) for
Visa Section Officials

Beijing, 21 March, 2017

Summary Report



On 21 March 2017, the International Organization Migration (IOM) organized a training seminar for staff members of European Union (EU) Member States (MS) and non-EU Schengen Zone countries visa sections in Beijing on document verification techniques, specifically on detection techniques of fake, or fraudulent, Chinese bank statements. This training, held in Beijing, built on the rationale and proposed activities of the Anti-Fraud component within the Partnership Instrument (PI) funded programme “EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project”.



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The training gathered 54 participants from almost all EU MS Embassies' and all non-EU Schengen Zone States visa sections. This strong representation from European Embassies demonstrates the great interest they have in detecting fake or fraudulent visa supporting documents provided by Chinese visa applicants.

During the opening remarks, Mr Juan Jose Almagro Herrador (EU Delegation to China) and Captain Thomas Milone (Embassy of Italy) both emphasized the need for European Embassies to be able to recognize fake or fraudulent supporting documents when it comes to visa application. Both of them mentioned the importance of information-sharing among the visa staff on detecting fraudulent documents.

A general presentation of the “*EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project*” and of IOM’s work and projects in China was also made by Mr Etienne Micallef. In particular, he introduced IOM’s verification services in China and emphasized a crucial role of the visa processing stage played in detecting possible risk travelers, including irregular migrants and potential victims of trafficking.

The training was provided by two staff members of the visa section of the Italian Embassy, Ms Valentina Liberatore and Ms Sara Iaia, who have developed specific expertise and techniques to detect fraudulent bank statements.

- Firstly, they presented the major banks in China (Bank of China, ICBC, Construction Bank and Bank of Agriculture), their different characteristics and gave an overview of bank statements and their features.
- Secondly, they trained participants to recognize fraudulent bank statements by providing many examples of fake and genuine documents and pointing out the features that must be scrutinized thoroughly.
- Thirdly, they explained how to check bank statement information online as well as, when necessary, by calling the bank, and gave tips to the participants on how to make the bank collaborate to track down fraudulent statements.

This training created a very good and unique platform for visa section officials to share and exchange its expertise and practical experience on detecting fraudulent documents, such as Chinese bank statements. It also strengthened the network of visa section staff regarding working on fraudulent documents of Chinese applicants. Through this activity, the involved participants improved their techniques and skills on detecting fraudulent bank statements. In addition, it identified possible areas of having a depth discussion and



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commination for future similar activities.

The evaluation form revealed that they found the training particularly interesting and helpful for their daily work. They generally appreciated the opportunity to work on actual examples of fake and genuine bank statements which should enable them to better recognize future fraudulent statements they might encounter. They also felt that the information received regarding specific features of different banks, as well as on how to use online tools and make the banks collaborate when calling them will facilitate their daily work.

Recommendations for way forward:

If some participants felt that further training on detection of fraudulent bank statements might be useful (especially when new techniques arise); most of them asked for future trainings of this kind on other visa supporting documents such as hukou, work certificate and business license, marriage certificate, property certificate, student certificate and even on passports (and ID documents) and visas themselves.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Agenda

Annex 2: List of participants