

Weekly China Insight

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China tightens guidance for automakers expanding overseas, warning against price wars abroad

On 1 September, China's commerce ministry (MofCom), industrial regulator (MIIT), and the market regulator (SAMR) jointly published a 20-article guideline regulating the overseas conduct and compliance of Chinese automotive companies, as the industry shifts from exporting vehicles to building factories, supply chains, and service networks abroad. The guideline urges automakers to base pricing on costs and international supply-demand conditions, avoid frequent or steep price changes that could harm consumers or brand image, respect dealers' pricing autonomy, and ensure transparent promotions and truthful marketing. The guideline also extends regulation over conduct related to workplace safety, labor protection, product quality, antitrust, intellectual property, autonomous-driving data, and green supply chains. Importantly, the document is framed as general guidance rather than an administrative ban on overseas price cuts.

In 2025, Chinese auto companies exported 8.32 million vehicles to more than 200 countries, while Chinese companies have invested in automotive manufacturing in over 80 markets. In the first seven months of 2026, China's passenger-vehicle exports reached 5.18 million units, including roughly 2.77 million new-energy vehicles.

The guideline marks a shift in China's automobile globalization strategy from maximizing export volume toward building durable multinational operations. Although the guideline is not a mandatory ban on price wars overseas, it clearly signals regulators' concern that aggressive domestic practices such as repeated discounting and unsustainable pricing should not be replicated abroad.

China leads world's first international standard for legged robots

On 1 September, China's national standards authorities announced the release of the world's first international standard for legged robots, developed under the leadership of Chinese industry experts. The standard establishes a common global framework for assessing humanoid robots, robot dogs, and other legged machines, moving beyond basic measures of whether a robot can walk or run to evaluating performance on stairs, slopes, and obstacles that more closely reflect real operating environments. The standard also broadens assessment from locomotion alone to overall task execution by incorporating capabilities such as perception, interaction, and decision-making, which are increasingly important in applications including inspection, logistics, and search and rescue. The standard is intended to give global manufacturers a clearer basis for product development and performance improvement, enable testing organizations to apply consistent methodologies, and allow users to compare competing products more objectively.

By taking the lead in defining the first global benchmark for legged-robot performance, China is seeking to shape not only the technological development of humanoids, but also the testing criteria that could influence how products compete internationally.

Daraxonrasib wins US FDA approval, but China rollout timeline remains uncertain

On 26 August, the US Food and Drug Administration approved Revolution Medicines' oral pan-RAS inhibitor daraxonrasib (Rasonque) for certain adults with metastatic pancreatic adenocarcinoma, following phase III data showing that median overall survival in previously treated metastatic pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma rose from 6.7 months to 13.2 months.

Early in the month, BeiGene announced a strategic partnership with Revolution Medicines that gives it exclusive development and commercialization rights for daraxonrasib in selected Asian markets, including China. However, according to BeiGene, as of 1 September there has been no registration clinical trials in China.

The potential demand for the drug is substantial, with a study projecting 119,000 pancreatic cancer cases and 106,000 deaths in China in 2022, with those figures projected to rise to 216,000 and 204,000 respectively by 2050, increases of 81.5% and 92.5% respectively.

Treatment options are also constrained, particularly in the second-line setting, where precise targeted therapies have long been lacking and chemotherapy remains the mainstay.

Chinese domestic drug-makers are also pursuing pan-RAS inhibitors in response to the unmet clinical need in pancreatic cancer, but domestic candidates remain at an early clinical stage and no human clinical trial data have yet been disclosed.

Xi positions SCO as platform for China's Eurasian engagement

On 1 September, President Xi Jinping used the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)'s 25th-anniversary summit in Bishkek to call for the bloc to assume a larger role in regional development, security, and global governance. Xi argued the SCO's defining collective experience has been cooperation based on "non-alliance, non-confrontation, and not targeting any third party." Xi proposed four priorities for the SCO, namely development, security, people-to-people ties, and continued dialogue, and backed them up with concrete Chinese initiatives, including an international AI application cooperation center, a China-SCO port economic cooperation center in Tianjin, 100 joint science and technology projects over the next three years, further large-scale solar and wind projects, and a basic education cooperation center.

At the "SCO Plus" meeting later the same day, Xi widened the focus beyond Eurasia, calling for an "equal and orderly multipolar world", greater representation for the Global South, a stronger United Nations, and deeper use of the Belt and Road Initiative to connect growth centers across Eurasia. Security also featured prominently, with Xi supporting the early activation of four SCO security centers and stronger cooperation on terrorism, cyber, biological, space, and nuclear security. This year's SCO summit adopted 28 outcome

documents, including a dedicated declaration on nuclear safety and security and the Bishkek Declaration, which supported Iran's sovereignty, opposed attacks on peaceful nuclear facilities, and called for political solutions to regional conflicts.

Xi's engagement at SCO showed China seeking to turn the SCO from a primarily regional security forum into a broader vehicle for economic integration, technology cooperation, and global governance reform. Xi hopes to expand the SCO platform with concrete Chinese-led projects and a political narrative centered around multi-polarity, sovereignty, and a stronger voice for the Global South.

