

# Foreword

China is going through remarkable times, and the ongoing judicial and legislative reforms are something that China has much to be proud about. It has developed, and continues to develop, a legal system from scratch in just over thirty years. But the ongoing developments make China a business environment that is perceived by many to be complex, uncertain, and, in short, a work in progress. Having lived and worked in China since 1998, I have had the unique and rewarding opportunity of witnessing the extraordinary development of China's legal and economic systems, and have come to appreciate this country's efforts to elevate itself to a position as a respected member of the international community.

Recognizing the complexities and uncertainty created by the ongoing legal developments, I wrote the original *China Law Deskbook* in the mid-1990s, and it was published in 1999, as a tool for practitioners involved with trade and investment in China. Today, much has happened in China since the original *Deskbook* was published, and keeping up with all of the changes to the laws has been a challenge. My objective in writing the second and third editions, as with the original edition, is to create a treatise that, in simple language and backed by supporting research materials, highlights the key laws and regulations that may be of interest to foreign investors, corporate lawyers, and private practitioners involved or interested in China on behalf of their clients. The goal of the *Deskbook* is to be one tool in the China law toolbox of resources that can ease the research needs of practitioners.

I am grateful to many people I have worked with over the years—partners, associates, legal assistants, colleagues in the legal and business communities, and clients—who have supported this writing project, and there are too many individuals to include everyone by name. I am also grateful to the leadership of the American Bar Association's International Section and members of the Chinese bar who have offered encouragement with

respect to the *Deskbook*, as well as those who have played vital roles in law exchanges between the foreign lawyers in China and the Chinese bar. These legal exchanges have done much to improve and enhance the relationship and understanding between Chinese and American lawyers, and they will continue to help us improve upon our respective legal systems.

I welcome the comments, insights, and thoughts of my colleagues in the business and legal communities. If you have questions concerning the *Deskbook*, or wish to view updates and new materials, please visit the Web site of the Deskbook at [www.chinalawdeskbook.com](http://www.chinalawdeskbook.com).

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