

Foreign firms 'too emotional'

**By Malcolm Moore
in Shanghai**

CHINA has told foreign companies to stop complaining about the difficulties of doing business on the mainland, and to cease being so "emotional".

"It is OK to complain from time to time," said Liu Yajun, head of the Foreign Investment department at the Chinese Ministry of Commerce. "But you have to be practical and realistic. Some of the comments about China being closed to foreign business are exaggerated and hyperbolic. It is a little emotional."

In the past year, a number of foreign companies have accused the Chinese govern-

ment of tilting the playing field against them in order to help Chinese firms.

"I'm not sure they want any of us to be successful," said Jeffrey Immelt, chief executive of General Electric, earlier this year.

In addition, foreign companies have been repeatedly blocked from making acquisitions and investments on the Chinese mainland.

"The situation is still getting worse," said Jacques de Boisseson, the head of the European Chamber of Commerce and the chairman of Total, the French oil company, in China.

However, at a conference of European businessmen in Shanghai, Mr Liu dismissed

the complaints as "small issues" and said foreign direct investment in China continued to rise. This year, China expects to attract \$100bn (£64bn) of foreign money.

"If the environment is not good, why have so many people come to China? It is not logical," said Mr Liu. "We want to listen to your ideas but we do not want you to exaggerate a small issue. If China closes its doors to the world, its economy would collapse. We will open our doors wider and wider."

Meanwhile, at a conference in Tianjin, Wen Jiabao, the prime minister, repeated that China would not penalise companies based on their nationality.