



## INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

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## **President Xi Jinping`s Congratulatory Letter to the First Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum**

Nov. 21, 2017   Beijing

On the occasion of the opening of the First Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum, on behalf of the Chinese government and Chinese people, and also in my own name, I extend warm congratulations to the Forum! I also wish to extend sincere welcome to all the distinguished representatives of NGOs and people from all walks of life across the world attending the Forum!

Since the Belt and Road Initiative was proposed, its vision is increasingly becoming a reality and bearing rich fruit. The practice has proven that strengthening international cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative is providing new platforms for and injecting new impetus into the efforts to safeguard world peace and promote common development.

NGOs play an important role in promoting economic and social development as well as in international cooperation and global governance. Building the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network is an important step to enhance exchanges and cooperation among people of the Silk Road countries and facilitate people-to-people connectivity. I hope that all the delegates can take the Forum as an opportunity to discuss how to further promote people-to-people connectivity so as to make contributions to deepening the mutual understanding and friendship among people of different countries, promoting common development and helping build a community of shared future for mankind!

I wish the First Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum a great success!

Xi Jinping  
President of the People's Republic of China

**UNITED NATIONS**



**NATIONS UNIES**

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

—

**MESSAGE TO SILK ROAD NGO COOPERATION NETWORK**

Beijing, 21 November 2017

It is a pleasure to greet the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network.

Earlier this year, I attended the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing and learned about its immense potential to stitch countries together in networks of trade and mutual gain.

There are clear synergies between the Belt and Road Initiative and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world's agreed blueprint for building a future of peace and prosperity for all on a healthy planet. Both frameworks strive to create opportunities, global public goods and win-win cooperation, and both aim to deepen connectivity across countries and regions.

Civil society groups have a crucial role to play in implementing these plans. With their incomparable presence in communities and at the grass roots, non-governmental organizations are well-placed to serve as a bridge between people and to hold governments accountable for results. It is crucial that they have the space and freedom to make their contributions.

The United Nations looks forward to working with all partners in achieving sustainable and inclusive development, combating climate change, and fulfilling our shared commitment to leave no one behind. I wish the NGO Cooperation Network every success in its important work.

# Jointly Pursue the Belt and Road Initiative and Build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind

Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 1st Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum by Mr. Song Tao, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China



Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends:

In his keynote speech at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation which was held in May, President Xi Jinping told the world that China would take active steps towards building up the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (SIRONET). Thanks to the joint efforts of the NGOs of the Silk Road countries, SIRONET officially comes into being today. As a milestone in implementing the outcomes of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, the establishment of SIRONET will surely and significantly help pursue the Belt and Road

Initiative, especially enhance the people-to-people bonds.

The Belt and Road Initiative, which was proposed by President Xi Jinping in the autumn of the year 2013, has been widely recognized and positively echoed by the international community. During its evolution both in scale and scope, the Belt and Road Initiative has yielded progress and outcomes beyond expectations in the last four years. With more international consensus, deepened

practical cooperation and the implementation of milestone programs, the Initiative has significantly improved the connectivity among the countries along the Belt and Road, and played an active role in promoting the development of world economy. As it was adopted and written into important resolutions by the United Nations Assembly and the Security Council, its worldwide significance and global influence have emerged and kept increasing.

The world now is in an era featuring dramatic development, changes and adjustments, as interconnection and interdependence among

different countries are increasingly deepening and new global challenges keep emerging and spreading. As pointed out by President Xi Jinping, no single country can deal with the various challenges faced by the entire human race, and no country can recede to a self-isolated island. The concept of a Community of Shared Future for Mankind, with the pursuit of welfare of the entire human race and the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration, will pave a golden road of working together, helping each other and win-win cooperation for the countries all over the world.

The Belt and Road Initiative and the concept of a Community of Shared Future for Mankind share a common ideal, contain similar contents and supplement each other in many fields. We firmly believe that, the pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative will be the preliminary step of the building up of a Community of Shared Future for Mankind and will provide precious practical experiences for the latter. The Belt and Road will play the role of vanguard in achieving the grand goals set by the concept of a Community of Shared Future for Mankind.

In his congratulatory letter, President Xi Jinping highly appreciates NGOs' roles in improving national development and global governance, clearly identifies the importance of the Cooperation Network on people-to-people exchanges and bonds, and presents his high expectations on NGOs' participation in pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative and building up the Community of Shared Future for Mankind. Greatly pleased and motivated by his congratulatory letter, we become more encouraged, more ambitious, more determined, and more confident. In the process of pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative and building up the Community of Shared Future for Mankind, NGOs should consider themselves as the most critical stakeholders and contribute accordingly. I would

like to propose three recommendations here:

First, NGOs shall interconnect the beautiful dreams of the peoples from different countries. Regardless of their different locations and skin colors, pursuing beautiful lives is the common dream of peoples all over the world. In the path of pursuing beautiful lives, the peoples from different countries should support and help each other. As important carriers of communications and exchanges among peoples of different countries, NGOs should reflect the peoples' aspirations actively, respond to their concerns agilely, search for the greatest common factor of their interests, enhance their participation and sense of gains, and share the progress of development to more people. Efforts and endeavors will make the dream come true.

Second, NGOs shall help enhance true friendship among the peoples of different countries. People-to-people bonds serve as both the starting point and terminus of the Belt and Road Initiative. The mutual understanding and friendship among the peoples are the most dependable source of strength. NGOs should be committed to enhancing the mutual trust and understanding among the peoples, carrying out more confidence building and doubt clarifying tasks, holding more heart-touching events, so as to help the peoples accept and embrace each other from their hearts. Accordingly, the seed of a Community of Shared Future for Mankind will be planted, take root, blossom and yield fruits in the minds of the peoples.

Third, NGOs shall help converge the strength of the peoples of different countries. The pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative and the building up of the Community of Shared Future for Mankind are the common causes of the peoples of different countries. Only through the joint efforts and pooled wisdom of the peoples of different countries, can these common causes become successful. NGOs



should play effective roles in communications, policy interpretation, project coordination and mobilization to motivate and lead the cooperation of civil society, so that the dynamic strength of the peoples can be aggregated and transmitted to the great cause of building up the Common Community of Shared Future for Mankind continuously.

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

The Communist Party of China is a political party that strives both for the welfare of the Chinese people and for the cause of human progress. The pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative and the Community of Shared Future for Mankind have been included in the revised Constitution of the Communist Party of China in the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which presents the Party's commitment to more

and bigger contribution to the human race.

The Communist Party of China and the Chinese Government highly value NGOs' role in the pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative and the building up of the Community of Shared Future for Mankind, and support NGOs to help enhance mutual understanding and trust among the peoples of different countries and improve welfare of them through friendly exchanges and cooperation. Let's work together to construct the bridge for people-to-people bonds and make a better future for the mankind.

May the forum be a great success.

Thank you all.

(Translated by Xia Jiaoye)



# Pool the Strength of the Civil Society to Jointly Build the Belt and Road Initiative and a Community of Shared Future for Mankind

Speech at the opening ceremony of the First Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum by Mr. Sun Jiazheng, Vice-Chairman of the 11th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, President of China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE)



Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear Friends,

Good Morning! First of all, on behalf of the host of the forum, China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE), I would like to extend our warm welcome to all participants.

The first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum is opening today, thanks to joint efforts of various parties. Just now, Minister Song Tao of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China read to all the congratulatory letter of Chinese

President Xi Jinping, which is quite exciting and encouraging. The proposal of establishing the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (SIRONET) was put forward by President Xi Jinping at the opening session of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in May this year. By far, about 300 NGOs of over 60 countries have joined SIRONET. Today we invite our friends from various countries here to participate in the first SIRONET forum with the theme of Jointly Building the Belt and Road Initiative and a Community of Shared Future for Mankind: the Mission of NGOs, which marks that the building of SIRONET has entered a new historical stage.

The world today is undergoing major developments, transformation and adjustment. Reforms of the global governance system and the international order are accelerating. Human society has never before been sharing the same destiny and so closely connected with each other as today, neither have we been confronted with so many common challenges. Against the backdrop of sluggish global economic recovery and growing imbalanced development, China



proposed the Belt and Road Initiative which provided a new platform for international cooperation and offered a Chinese solution rooted in the Chinese culture to global problems. The Belt and Road Initiative, as an economic corridor across three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa, embodies the time-honored Silk Road spirit and aspirations of mankind for a community with shared future. By far, over 100 countries and international organizations have shown their favorable response and support to the Initiative. Relevant content of the Belt and Road Initiative was also incorporated in important resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Socialism with Chinese characteristics is entering into a new era. The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), at a critical juncture of the development of China and the world, regarded making new and greater contribution for mankind as the mission of CPC and called on people of all countries to make concerted efforts in building a community of shared future for mankind. This shows the international vision and humanitarian care of CPC. At the 19th National Congress of CPC, the Belt and Road Initiative was incorporated into the Constitution of the CPC, which fully demonstrates the confidence and resolution of China in steadfastly promoting international cooperation within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. The proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative is like opening a new curtain of history. We look forward to seeing grander visions translate into concrete actions, so that the idea of development, prosperity, fairness and justice can be deeply rooted in people's hearts and the dream of the Chinese people and the aspirations of people of other countries for better lives can add radiance and beauty to each other.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

The value of friendship lies in heart-to-heart

communication. People-to-people connectivity is the most fundamental and enduring connectivity and serves as social foundation and important pillar of the Belt and Road Initiative. The Belt and Road Initiative, at the end of the day, aims at bringing benefits to people of all countries and let ordinary people obtain tangible benefits. As a bridge between the government and the public, NGOs have become an important player in promoting economic and social development and strengthening international cooperation. Therefore, we need to play well our role in promoting the Belt and Road Initiative. On behalf of China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE) and other NGOs in China, I would like to make the following proposals:

Firstly, we should serve as disseminator and practitioner of the Belt and Road Initiative. Only when specific ideas and concepts of the Belt and Road Initiative are widely recognized by governments and whole society, can the initiative be smoothly implemented. We should do our utmost to explain the significance, purpose, principles and policy design of the Belt and Road Initiative to the public, forge wide consensus and create a sound atmosphere for public opinion. Before the start of major construction projects, we should carry out extensive research and studies to evaluate the feasibility of the projects, pool the wisdom of various parties and provide necessary intellectual support.

Secondly, we should serve as bridge and bond for people-to-people communication during the building of the Belt and Road Initiative. Comprehensive participation and supervision of NGOs is much needed if the Belt and Road Initiative is to make steady progress towards achieving long-term goals and bring more benefits to local peoples. In terms of possible issues concerning major construction projects including land expropriation, house demolition, disputes of interests and environmental protection, NGOs

need to play well the role of bridge between the government and the public, focus on public opinion guidance, mediation and evaluation, and accommodate and balance different interest appeals and claims.

Thirdly, we should serve as propeller of the Belt and Road Initiative. The Belt and Road Initiative is a path leading toward a community of shared future for mankind. On the one hand, NGOs should take concrete actions to participate in the building of the Belt and Road Initiative through carrying out livelihood cooperation projects in various areas such as poverty alleviation, medical care, education, humanitarian rescue and environmental protection, as an important supplement to major governmental projects. On the other hand, NGOs should carry forward the Silk Road spirit, advance mutual exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations and promote social justice and fairness so that countries along the Belt and Road can look beyond for greater interests and the Belt and Road Initiative become an important practice for building a community of shared future for mankind.

SIRONET is an umbrella organization formed by NGOs from different countries committed to promoting the building of the Belt and Road Initiative, serving as a platform for Silk Road NGOs to strengthen exchanges and cooperation. SIRONET will build on the consensus achieved at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, adhere to the idea of joint-building through consultation to meet the interests of all, better pool the wisdom and strength of various players, push for more tangible cooperation outcomes and make greater contribution to the Belt and Road Initiative. The ocean is vast because it is home

to hundreds of rivers. SIRONET will likewise invite more NGOs sharing the same vision to join in, further improve the overall plan of the network, expand its influence and strengthen its cooperation with governments of countries along the Belt and Road and international organizations like the United Nations. We will improve mechanism building including the International Steering Committee, give full play to the initiative and innovation of member organizations and make the SIRONET forum an institutional one. According to the SIRONET Constitution, CNIE will strengthen communication and coordination with relevant parties and make our due efforts in further improving the SIRONET.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

What we take on is a lofty mission. What we do will benefit generations to come. I hope we can all join hands, set up a bridge for people-to-people connectivity, build up a network for people-to-people cooperation, pave the way to creating more benefits for the people, so as to make unremitting efforts in jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative and a community of shared future for mankind.

I wish the first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum a full success!

Thank you all.

(Translated by Wang Zhiyun)



# Make Contribution of the People to build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind

Speech at the Closing Ceremony of the 1st SIRONET Forum by Mr. Wang Yajun, Assistant Minister of the International Department of CPC Central Committee and Advisor to CNIE



Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

With our joint contribution, the first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (SIRONET) Forum has completed all its agendas and will conclude today. First, on behalf of China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE), I would like to extend our sincere respect and gratitude to all the participants to the Forum as well as all members of SIRONET.

The Forum has won considerable support from various people. Xi Jinping, General-Secretary

of CPC Central Committee and President of China sent a letter of congratulation, Secretary-General Guterres of the UN sent a message of congratulation, President Sun Jiazheng of CNIE attended and addressed the opening ceremony, and nearly two hundred delegates had in-depth discussions at the plenary and parallel sessions. The moderators of the parallel sessions briefed us on the discussion outcomes, and Mr. Barbalic summed up the Forum. We had lively, open, practical and friendly discussions and exchanges of opinions at the Forum, which has presented fruitful results. We approved the Constitution of the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network and Beijing Consensus, announced the establishment of the International Steering Committee and Secretariat of SIRONET. The Chinese NGO and some enterprises also designed nearly 40 projects in areas such as livelihood cooperation, capacity building, development support and cultural exchanges in the next three years. What's more

important, this Forum offers us an opportunity to conduct in-depth discussions and look forward into the future. We have reached consensus in the following areas:

First, we will join hands to strengthen people-to-people bonds with our common goal. The congratulatory letter of General Secretary Xi Jinping has confirmed the importance of people-to-people bonds, and pinned high expectations on the role of NGOs in strengthening people-to-people bonds. We will follow the goal of the “Belt and Road” development with Beijing Consensus as the guidance, observe the Constitution of the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network, strengthen the communication, exchanges and dialogues among partner countries, boost the understanding and mutual trust among the people and develop people-to-people bonds for the Belt and Road initiative.

Second, we will join hands to build a community of shared future for mankind with our common dream. Being consistent with the fundamental interest of partner countries, the community of shared future for mankind cherishes the dream of all peoples for peace, development and prosperity and has been included into several UN resolutions. By relying on SIRONET, we will try to enhance the mutual understanding among the peoples as well as their sense of identity with the community of shared future for mankind, and aim to set a good example for others by building a community of shared future for the Belt and Road countries.

Third, we will join hands to push forward the cooperation in people’s livelihood with our common mission. NGOs have natural strength in their connection with the grassroots people and their mission is to improve their livelihood. At present, members of the SIRONET have made substantial achievements in areas such as education, hygiene, science and technology, women and youth development at both national and regional levels. We would like to continuously push forward our projects in people’s livelihood, and improve the sense of achievement with substantial results.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

With the implementation of the Belt and Road initiative, SIRONET has ushered in a bright future in all respects. We are willing to work together with all relevant sides and make concrete efforts to boost practical cooperation and the development of SIRONET. To this end, we would like to make the following three proposals:

First, the development of SIRONET should be intertwined with the Belt and Road initiative, and work for more early results in key areas and regions. The Belt and Road initiative has become the most popular international public goods and offers the largest cooperation platform for common development. At present, the Belt and Road initiative has witnessed closer cooperation and more achievements. We should follow the timetable and roadmap of the initiative, focus on the timeline of major projects and strategies,

strive for strengthening people-to-people bonds by relying on livelihood cooperation and people-to-people interaction, and bring the strength of NGOs into full play, in the hope of promoting people-to-people exchanges along the Belt and Road and building a bridge for friendship among the people.

Second, SIRONET should try to improve its capacity to influence, lead and shape, and take an active part in participating in the global agenda. The world is faced with problems such as insufficient growth incentives, widening wealth gap and high uncertainty, as well as global challenges such as terrorism, cyber security and climate change. We should take the initiative to encourage NGOs of other countries to take part in UN and other multi-lateral activities, improve their capacity of agenda setting, steering and shaping, face the challenges in real life, make blueprints for the future, offer ways of thinking and solutions to global governance and hotspot issues, and make more contribution from our side for human civilization and progress.

Third, SIRONET should uphold the principle of openness, inclusiveness and sharing, and promote the development of global partnership network. "Being single is easy to be broken, while being together are hard to conquer." Therefore, NGOs should strengthen information communication and sharing, expand exchanges of personnel and project cooperation, set up a new-type global

partnership, work together with a more friendly attitude and make more contribution to human civilization and progress. The International Steering Committee and Secretariat should adopt a general view and be inclusive and open-minded, look for ways to offer strategic links between SIRONET members, and make positive contribution to the development of SIRONET.

To substantially promote the development of SIRONET, I would like to announce that CNIE will host the 2nd SIRONET Forum in 2019. I look forward to seeing you all again at that time, and more fruitful results out of our cooperation!

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

The moment has come for us to ride the wind, cleave the waves, and set sail to cross the sea. SIRONET has carries the cultural relics of the Silk Road for thousands of years, as well as the expectations of people along the way. I hope that you will shoulder your due responsibilities and forge ahead, push forward the development of SIRONET with concrete actions, build a platform of new-type exchanges, and make more contribution to the road of cooperation, win-win progress and people-to-people friendship under the framework of the Belt and Road and building a community of shared future for mankind.

Thank you all!

(Translated by Ma Jingjing)

# Remarks by Hon. Essam Abdelaziz Ahmed Sharaf, Former Egyptian Prime Minister at the Opening Ceremony



Excellences,  
Honorable guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me at the outset, to extend my deepest gratitude for inviting me to address this distinguished gathering. I also, wish to thank our Chinese host for their excellent organization, warm reception and generous hospitality.

I selected a title for my brief speech “the road to a new form of civilization through Belt and Road Initiative and the vital Role of NGOs”.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When the great Greek philosopher Aristotle expressed his philosophy on how things are formed (Formation philosophy), he identified three phases. A goal or dream, an action or interaction between humankind and nature (material), and the outcome or the form (product or result).

Similarly, the quality of our civilization (or the outcome) depends on the degree of faithfulness of our dreams and the seriousness and honesty of the interactions between humans and between humanity and nature.

Following this concept, my talk consists of three elements: A dream, an action and the outcome. More specifically,

1-The first element: a dream of a global harmony.

2-The second element: an action of establishing commonalities through “Belt and Road Initiative (BRI),” and active role of NGOs.

3-The third element: the outcome; a new form of civilization, namely an ecological civilization.



Starting with the first element: The dream of a global harmony is becoming a universal and popular dream, derived from the fact that the world is now at crossroads, and has to select one of two alternatives. The first is to continue the same way (business as usual) or the second; to make a radical change in the world order and global governance, towards the establishment of a new form of civilization.

In fact, the destruction to humanity (moral values) and to nature (environment) under the current civilization should be the legitimate reason to have a more harmonious civilization, namely ecological civilization.

In addition, the current globalization, if compared to older forms of civilizations, we find that the degree of interdependency is much higher and more complicated, which means that a partial failure can put the human civilization at tremendous risk and may lead to a complete dissolution.

Therefore, a dream of a new world (or modified globalization) has become a global desire everywhere; a globalization that is:

- Cultural-based
- Maximizes the quality of life for all.
- Forgiving not hostile
- Recognizes the concept of one humanity – different cultures.
- Recognizes the concept of common destiny – common interests.
- Maximizes the harmony between people and between people and nature.
- Based on sustainable development
- Interdependency based

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One may ask, is it possible to have such modified

globalization? The simple answer is YES. One should remember that the formation of the current globalization is a result of the domination ideology, and the modified globalization, on the contrary, should be a result of a sharing and cooperation ideology. That is the form of globalization is a result of the predominant ideology.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me move to the second element: the action (or the process of establishing commonalities).

To achieve a significant change in the world order (or global governance), massive people support is necessary. Therefore, it is important to establish some vital commonalities, namely common trust and common security leading to a common development.

However, before proceeding, I would like to point out that I, intentionally, omitted the term “common culture”. In fact, culture diversity is a precious component of development and is not a hurdle to harmony.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Those commonalities (trust, security and development) are in the heart of the “Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)”, as it represents an umbrella for a massive assemblage of countries (more than two thirds of the world population).

When talking about the BRI, I prefer to differentiate between two sides. The first is the soft (or conceptual) side; which should be led by the NGOs. The second is the hard (or the projects) side led by professional institutions and companies.

Let me start by the conceptual side. To me, BRI

is a concept leading to Common or Synergy or Harmonious Development. The NGO's role is to promote this concept to the public, through some basic messages, including but not limited to:

- BRI is a concept not a project
- BRI is a cultural-based concept.
- BRI is a Chinese initiative but is a global multi-sector set of projects (industries), by all for all.
- BRI is to create an umbrella for One Network Environment.
- BRI is a development network not just a transportation network.
- BRI is a new universal bridge, bridging the development gaps and connecting cultures.
- BRI focuses on the concept of togetherness: think together, work together and gain together.

Moving to the other side;projects (or industries) side. These projects are the translation of concepts to reality, to achieve common development. Also, NGOs can play a vital role in the selection of the appropriate decisions on the type and extent of these projects to fulfill the sustainable development principles. Typical industries include:

- Infrastructure
- Energy
- Information
- Manufacturing
- Economic zones
- Residential environment, and
- Cultural

The BRI suggested development corridors (six main land corridors and the suggested Maritime Silk Road) should receive a higher priority in the NGOs promotion and selection procedure. The

selection procedure should adhere to the principles of sustainable development, which require the integration of economic, environmental and social objectives, across sectors, territories and generations.

Now let me move to the third element and final remarks: the outcome, ecological civilization

In this regard, I would like to mention three remarks:

- Ecological civilization should be preceded by a serious promotion of ecological culture. This is a vital role for the NGOs. It is the process of establishing the dream of a necessary change.
- The public support requires a feeling of belonging. This the basic feature of BRI and common development. The role of NGOs in this regard is crucial.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I want to take this chance to acknowledge the Chinese efforts in this regard. President Xi in his address indicated the necessity of establishing institutional frameworks appropriate for the ecological civilization.

Finally, I would like to say that fulfilling the dream of a global harmony and ecological civilization is an extremely difficult task. However, I stress on the fact that important and honest goals are usually difficult.

In this regard, I want to recall the say of the great musician “Beethoven”, when his orchestra maestro argued him about the difficulty of his music. Beethoven said,

“Difficult is Beautiful.”

Thank you very much.

# Remarks by Mr. Victor-Viorel Ponta, Former Prime Minister of Romania at the Opening Ceremony



Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Your Excellencies,  
Good morning.

I am very happy and honored to join you today in this first forum of the NGOs and I would like to start of course, by expressing my gratitude for our chinese hosts as always very warmly in organizing, receiving guest,s and Minister Song Tao mentioned friendship as the basis of the China relationship with all of us and I have a special and warm feeling regarding China, I have always felt here as among friends and because in China it is

said “Where you have friends it is your home” I feel at home in Beijing and I thank you very much for all of this.

I want to state very clearly that the Belt and Road Initiative is not only the greatest, major, initiative in the world today, but it is unfortunately the only one, it is the only one that offers a global vision, a global dream as my previous speaker was saying and this is needed more than ever.

I am coming from the European Union which is struggling everyday with local internal difficulties

and disputes, of course we all have followed United States of America as being more focused on its internal problems and internal disputes, have followed like all of you, last month in October, the decisions of the 19th CPC Congress and the fact that One Belt One Road Initiative has been one of the major decision of the CPC Congress, was a very positive message for all of us: from Europe, from Africa, from America and Asia.

Societies which have institutionalized a fear of the “Other” find it difficult to interact with representatives of other cultures and creeds. NGOs have the capacity of bridging this gap. NGOs have the capacity of connecting individuals across the divide of language, religion, identity or skin color. The increased interaction between NGOs can only lead to increased contact between different societies, thereby laying the foundation for mutual trust and understanding, meaningful cooperation and peace. I fully support the ambitious objectives undertaken by the organizers of this event, believing that their fulfillment can usher in a period of stability and respect of a mutually beneficial international order.

Undoubtedly, rebuilding the Silk Road is not an easy task. There are multiple challenges and they originate both in Europe and in Asia. There are many centrifugal tendencies and potential controversial issues. It is for this reason that we need increased international cooperation, a more responsible approach, more stability and predictability. Commerce is progress and it needs stability.

Visionary projects always require courage, determination and, above all, cooperation in order to become reality. I hope we can all be part of the extraordinary effort to make this extraordinary project into reality. Its significance goes beyond trade and economic development: it helps connect different worlds and cultures, promote peace and project a better future together.

I wish you a successful forum and workshops and I am sure that your endeavors will be rewarded accordingly.

# Remarks by Mr. Ivan Barbalic, Former Permanent Representative of Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations at the Closing Ceremony



Ladies and Gentleman, Distinguished Guests,  
Dear Colleagues,

As NGO delegates from three different continents gathered in Beijing on November 21-22, 2017 for the first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum, on the theme of “Advancing the Belt and Road Initiative and Building a Community of Shared Future for Mankind: the Mission of NGOs”, They have adopted major outcome documents, developed numerous new ideas and initiative platforms, created whole new network of personal and professional relations, and reached clear and common vision of road ahead.

This Conference has additionally strengthened the SIRONET. It further defined its purpose, goals and specific tasks. It developed major organizational documents and new structural solutions- such as new Constitution, International Steering Board, Secretariat, regional forums, etc. It widened SIRONET membership, developed communication and cooperation models and defined the path for further growth of this organization.

Allow me to make brief overview of the conference work. The first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum lasted two days, it started with plenary sessions and further split into separate groups, where participants were divided by regions, in order to discuss in depth specific aspects of cooperation. Each group, among other specific affairs, has discussed opportunities and challenges facing NGOs in advancing the Belt and

Road Initiative as well as Building the mechanism for Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network. Today, summary reports by moderators of four parallel sessions were presented, we were introduced to the Silk Road Livelihood Cooperation Outcomes and finally, the Outcome Documents were adopted and read. Just right after this session is over the First plenary session of the International Steering Committee of Silk Road NGO will take place.

The idea that connects us all here- The Belt and Road Initiative is proved once again as a great, global mobiliser. The picture of enthusiasts from three different continents at one place, supporting one idea, is picture of optimism and hope.

I firmly believe that our work and results, have contributed and in-built a small particle into this global idea and movement, growing each day. As it is stated in The Beijing Consensus Document, adopted today, the Silk Road Spirit, serves the interest of people along the route and reflects their aspirations for a better life.

One Belt One Road strongly communicates the idea of the development of "a community with a shared future for mankind", at times when the international arena seems deeply divided and lacking solutions,

It mobilizes potential and energy, boosts inter-connectivity, trade and people-to-people links.

As the Consensus Document notes The Belt and Road Initiative aims to foster new ideas for global governance, build new platforms for international

cooperation and create new engines for common development.

In its first four years, it has developed from idea into the action. The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation took place in May 2017 and had the important significance- it has proved to be the right moment to reflect back, recognize achieved results and define path forward.

How to move forward, what are the key steps, who are the actors... there are numerous challenges. Idea is still new in many places, including the region I come from. Great results require great synergy, and that synergy is possible if we approach each other, if we move away obstacles and enhance mutual understanding. In that light, the people-to-people connectivity has been recognized as *cine qua non*, the most important pillar and guarantee for developing the Belt and Road Initiative.

People-to-people connectivity cannot be achieved without the joint participation of people of different nationalities, and I would add, the best know-how is among the NGOs, as the key actors to steer connectivity to the unprecedented level. Previous two days, certainly, have proved this to be the right path and it pointed to NGOs as crucial bridge to connect government with society.

The Beijing Consensus suggests that member organizations conduct extensive cultural and people-to-people exchanges within SIRONET framework, focus on building a path of civilizations, on which civilizational exchanges



transcends separation, mutual learning transcends clashes and coexistence transcends superiority.

Adaption of the SIRONET Constitution is a strong sign of common understanding, voice and aspirations of member organizations.

The Constitution is based on the principles of openness, inclusiveness, equality, mutual learning and mutually beneficial cooperation. It defines the role of SIRONET enabling member organizations to maintain communication, keep each other informed, carry out researches and share experience about the public opinions and cooperation demand.

The Constitution defines models for cooperation and activities that include:

Carrying out projects and contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Carrying out various kinds of cultural and people-to-people exchange activities; and Strengthening the Network's exchanges and interaction with governments, media and enterprises.

The Constitution envisions the International Steering Committee, as well as the Secretariat, to be the permanent organs of SIRONET. China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE) shall fulfill the functions and

responsibility of the Secretariat. Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum shall be held every two years, while regional meetings attended by member organizations will be held on an annual basis.

At its conclusion the Beijing Consensus states that the destiny of the world rests in the hands of the people of all countries; the future of mankind hinges on the choices they make. It calls upon stakeholders to join hands in developing the Belt and Road Initiative and a community of shared future for mankind, forge a path of peace, prosperity, openness, innovation and civilization for people along the route, and create a bright future for mankind.

These are great goals and can be achieved only as result of intensive, structured and goal-oriented cooperation. The SIRONET, with its new institutional mechanisms, reached consensus, gathered ideas and dedication, can be the key factor in mobilizing great success.

I would like to thank our hosts for great hospitality and express deep appreciation for your lead and support. I believe that we are all going back to our countries energized with new ideas and prospects. In times of global despair and lack of common ideas and vision, this has been a great inspiration. So... let's deliver.

# Constitution of the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network

(Trial implementation)

## CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Article 1

The name of the network shall be Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (hereinafter referred to as the Network or SIRONET), abbreviated as SIRONET.

### Article 2

Initiated by China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE), SIRONET shall be a platform for Chinese NGOs and NGOs of other countries to strengthen exchanges and cooperation.

### Article 3

The purpose of building SIRONET is to uphold the Silk Road spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, promote exchanges and cooperation among NGOs in countries along the Belt and Road, enhance people-to-people connectivity and push forward the Belt and Road Initiative so as to make contribution to the peace, development and win-win cooperation in countries and regions along the Belt and Road.

## CHAPTER II BASIC PRINCIPLES

### Article 4

SIRONET shall observe the principle of openness and inclusiveness. All NGOs and social forces that have the will and qualification of joining the Network shall be welcomed and supported to actively participate in the joint-building of

SIRONET.

### Article 5

SIRONET shall observe the principle of mutual equality. Member organizations, regardless of their countries, professions or sizes, shall treat each other equally, respect each other and coexist harmoniously.

### Article 6

SIRONET shall observe the principle of mutual learning. Member organizations shall enhance exchanges and mutual learning and draw from each other's merits for common good and progress.

### Article 7

SIRONET shall observe the principle of mutually beneficial cooperation. The Network shall safeguard shared development interests and public benefits of countries along the Belt and Road to achieve win-win cooperation and common prosperity.

## CHAPTER III BASIC FUNCTIONS

### Article 8

SIRONET shall enable member organizations to maintain efficient communication, keep each other informed, carry out researches and share experience about the public opinions and cooperation demand of countries along the Belt and Road to contribute wisdom and strength to the Belt and Road Initiative.

**Article 9**

SIRONET shall encourage and support member organizations to

- 1) carry out livelihood projects to improve the well-being of peoples along the Belt and Road and promote sustainable development;
- 2) carry out various kinds of cultural and people-to-people exchange activities to promote mutual learning among different civilizations and cultures and enhance mutual understanding and friendship among peoples along the Belt and Road;
- 3) strengthen the Network's exchanges and interaction with governments along the Belt and Road, enhance cooperation with the media and push enterprises to better fulfill their corporate social responsibility so as to continuously increase the influence of SIRONET.

**Article 10**

SIRONET shall proactively disseminate information about the Belt and Road Initiative through various means to increase understanding and support of the international community about the Belt and Road Initiative.

## **CHAPTER IV ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

**Article 11**

Under the Network, an International Steering Committee and a Secretariat shall be established.

**Article 12**

To fully reflect its representativeness, the International Steering Committee shall be composed of nine members, elected from member organizations with strong regional representation and international influence. Term of office of the members shall be two years. The members may be re-elected. There shall be one President within the International Steering Committee.

**Article 13**

Main functions of the International Steering Committee shall include carrying out researches and discussions on the future development of the Network and other important issues, coordinating exchanges and cooperation among member organizations and strengthening cooperation with the United Nations and other international organizations.

**Article 14**

The Secretariat shall be the permanent executive organ of SIRONET. China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE) shall fulfill the functions and responsibility of the Secretariat. Secretary General of the Network shall be assumed by the Secretary General of CNIE. 1-2 Deputy Secretary General(s) shall be designated given necessary conditions. The work of the Secretariat shall be subject to the supervision of member organizations.

**Article 15**

Main functions of the Secretariat shall include holding conferences within the framework of SIRONET, drafting relevant documents, collecting and summing up information of important activities of member organizations, building and maintaining the official website of SIRONET through which important information about the Network and member organizations shall be timely released, and such other functions of the Secretariat.

**Article 16**

The building of specialty committees shall be actively promoted.

## **CHAPTER V OPERATION MECHANISM**

**Article 17**

Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum shall be held every two years and shall discuss important issues about the development of the Network and People-to-people connectivity along the Belt and Road and offer guidance

and suggestions. Theme of each forum shall be decided after fully soliciting opinions from member organizations.

#### **Article 18**

International Steering Committee shall meet every year.

#### **Article 19**

Organizations that members of the International Steering Committee belong to shall be in charge of convening regional meetings within the framework of SIRONET in light of regional needs attended by member organizations in the region .

#### **Article 20**

Specialty committees shall meet according to actual needs.

### **CHAPTER VI RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **Article 21**

NGOs that support the Belt and Road Initiative and this Constitution, register and practice in their countries by rule of law and hold certain national and international influence shall become member organizations of SIRONET after the organizations' voluntary application and approval of the Secretariat.

#### **Article 22**

Rights of member organizations of SIRONET shall include

- 1) participating in exchange activities, livelihood projects and various kinds of meetings and forums organized by SIRONET;
- 2) participating in discussions about future development of SIRONET;
- 3) proposing suggestions and advices to the International Steering Committee and the Secretariat;

- 4) other rights that are in accordance with the Constitution.

#### **Article 23**

Obligations of member organizations of SIRONET shall include

- 1) observing the Constitution and resolutions of SIRONET;
- 2) providing assistance to the work of the International Steering Committee and the Secretariat;
- 3) serving the interests of countries along the Belt and Road, maintaining friendly cooperation among member organizations and safeguarding legitimate rights and interests of the Network so as to promote joint building of the Belt and Road;
- 4) submitting annual report on activities taken according to the purposes and principles of the Network. Member organizations that fail to submit report for two consecutive years shall be regarded as automatically withdrawing from SIRONET;
- 5) the Secretariat shall be entitled the right to suggesting suspension of membership of member organizations that have seriously violated the Constitution or failed to fulfill the obligations.

### **CHAPTER VII SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 24**

The Constitution is approved at the first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum on November 22, 2017 after soliciting opinions of all member organizations. The term for trial implementation is two years.

#### **Article 25**

The Secretariat holds the right to interpretation of the Constitution.

# Beijing Consensus for the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (SIRONET)

NGO delegates from worldwide gather in Beijing on November 21-22, 2017 for the first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum (hereinafter referred to as SIRONET). On the theme of “Advancing the Belt and Road Initiative and Building a Community of Shared Future for Mankind: the Mission of NGOs”, in-depth discussions were held and broad consensus was reached on strengthening SIRONET, promoting cultural exchanges, enhancing livelihood cooperation, facilitating people-to-people connectivity and building a community of shared future for mankind.

We highly appreciate the international significance of the Belt and Road Initiative proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping. The congratulatory letter President Xi sent to SIRONET forum fully recognizes the important role of NGOs in advancing the Belt and Road Initiative and building a community of shared future for mankind. It gives us stronger confidence in fulfilling our responsibilities and missions.

We believe that the ancient Silk Road, which connects the East and the West and transcends thousands of years, has contributed to friendly exchanges among nations and human progress. Embodying the Silk Road Spirit of “peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit”, it is a precious treasure of human civilization. The Belt and Road Initiative inherits the Silk Road Spirit, gives new

dimensions to the ancient Silk Road, adapts to the tide of global economic development, serves the interest of people along the route and reflects their aspirations for a better life.

We have noted the rapid transformation of current global governance system and international order, deeper interdependency and interconnectivity among nations, as well as the irreversible trend of peace and development. Other problems include lackluster economic growth, wider poverty gap and intertwined traditional and non-traditional threats. The Belt and Road Initiative aims to foster new ideas for global governance, build new platforms for international cooperation and create new engines for common development. It will help people along the route jointly cope with challenges and realize their dream for a better life. It is a great exploration and practice to build a community of shared future for mankind. In the last 4 years, the Belt and Road Initiative is gradually turned from idea to action, from vision to reality. Solid steps have been taken and progress has been made to facilitate strategic alignment, inter-connectivity, exchanges of trade, people and culture. The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation convened in May 2017 has fruitful results with profound significance.

We believe that people-to-people connectivity is the most important pillar and guarantee for developing the Belt and Road Initiative. As the most solid and enduring form of inter-

connectivity, it contributes to a consolidated social basis for economic cooperation, exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations and regional peace and stability. The purpose is to let people along the route acquaint, trust and respect each other. People-to-people connectivity cannot be achieved without the joint participation of people of different nationalities.

We feel that NGOs are a crucial bridge to connect government with society, an important channel to reach out to the people and listen to their voices, and a strong force for people-to-people connectivity. The founding of SIRONET presents a good opportunity for NGOs to bring out their unique strength, build social consensus and facilitate people-to-people connectivity.

We wish this Forum a full success. We believe that the SIRONET Constitution adopted at this Forum represents the common voice of member organizations; the principles of openness, inclusiveness, equality, mutual learning and mutually beneficial cooperation advocated by the Constitution reflects the common aspirations of member organizations. Guided by the Constitution, member organizations should uphold the philosophy of joint consultation, joint building and sharing, carry forward the Silk Road Spirit of friendly cooperation, conduct extensive exchanges and cooperation, promote people-to-people connectivity and contribute to a open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world with enduring peace, universal security and common prosperity.

We decide to establish SIRONET International Steering Committee and Secretariat to improve SIRONET mechanism and make it an important platform for NGO exchanges and cooperation along the route.

We suggest that member organizations conduct

extensive cultural and people-to-people exchanges within SIRONET framework, focus on building a path of civilizations, on which civilizational exchanges transcends separation, mutual learning transcends clashes and coexistence transcends superiority. This will enhance stakeholders' understanding and consolidate the popular basis of the Belt and Road Initiative.

We suggest that member organizations actively carry out livelihood cooperation within SIRONET framework in key areas of poverty relief, education, health, environmental protection, youth training and job creation based on grassroots' demands, so that the Belt and Road development truly benefit people along the route.

We suggest that member organizations maintain communication over popular opinion and cooperation demands, work out problems and share experience, discuss major matters of common concern on a regular basis, and pool together people's wisdom and strength for the development of the Belt and Road Initiative.

We hope more countries, organizations, businesses and social sectors could support SIRONET to expand its coverage and influence, facilitate NGO exchanges and cooperation, and increase mutual understanding, respect and trust among people from different countries.

The destiny of the world rests in the hands of the people of all countries; the future of mankind hinges on the choices they make. Let's join hands in developing the Belt and Road Initiative and a community of shared future for mankind, forge a path of peace, prosperity, openness, innovation and civilization for people along the route, and create a bright future for mankind.



# Enhance the Belt and Road International Cooperation and Promote the Shared Development of Mankind – A Review on the 1<sup>st</sup> Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum

Mu Jinling

In May 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the launching of “Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network (SIRONET)” at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, which was widely echoed by countries along the Belt and Road Initiative. Nearly 300 Chinese and overseas NGOs from more than 60 countries have joined SIRONET. To further solidify the outcomes of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and effectively respond to the call of President Xi, the initiator of SIRONET, China NGO Network for International Exchanges

(CNIE), held the first Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum from November 21 to 22, 2017 in Beijing. On the theme of “NGO’s Mission in Jointly Developing the Belt and Road Initiative and a Community with Shared Future for Mankind”, one plenary session and four parallel sessions were convened. Moreover, paradigmatic cooperation programs of Chinese and Overseas NGOs were exhibited, the Constitution of the Silk Road Cooperation Network (The Trial Version) and Beijing Consensus for the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network were discussed and adopted, and the International Steering



Committee and Secretariat of the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network were established. The forum was fruitfully concluded.

### **Build an International Platform to Fulfill Trust and Expectations**

The forum kicked off on the morning of November 21st. Xi Jinping, President of China and Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, sent congratulatory letters to the Forum. Sun Jiazheng, Vice Chairman of the 11th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and President of CNIE, Song Tao, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), Wang Yajun, Assistant Minister and Adviser to CNIE, Dou Enyong, Vice President of CNIE, Essam Sharaf, former Prime Minister of Egypt, Victor-Viorel Ponta, former Primer Minister of Romania, Alexander Tomov, former Deputy Primer Minister of Bulgaria, Salma Rashid Kikwete, former first lady of Tanzania, as well as nearly 200 delegates from 51 Silk Road countries and international organizations attended the event.

President Xi Jinping gave his warm congratulations in his congratulatory letter. He pointed out that the Belt and Road Initiative had evolved from visions to realities and achieved constructive outcomes. He said that enhancing the Belt and Road international cooperation had provided a new platform and new dynamics for sustaining world peace and promoting common development, which has been proved by the realities. He appraised Non-governmental Organizations as an important force in promoting socio-economic development as well as participating in international cooperation and global governance. He said building SIRONET

is an important step to enhance exchanges and cooperation among peoples of the Silk Road countries and facilitate people-to-people connectivity. He hoped that all delegates could take the forum as an opportunity to discuss how to further promote people-to-people connectivity, enhance mutual understanding and friendship among the difference peoples, promote common development of difference countries, and contribute to the buildup of the community of Shared future of mankind.

Song Tao read the congratulatory letter from President Xi and delivered a speech. He emphasized that President Xi fully recognized the positive roles of NGOs in national development and global governance, clearly indicated SIRONET's importance for people-to-people exchanges and bonds, and gave his high expectations on NGOs' roles in participating in the Belt and Road Initiative and in promoting the buildup of the Community of Shared Future for Mankind. He pointed out that, the establishing of SIRONET was a big event for implementing the outcomes of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and SIRONET would surely play a positive role in promoting the Belt and Road construction, especially in enhancing people-to-people bonds.

Sun Jiazheng addressed on behalf of CNIE, the host of the Forum. He emphasized that the congratulatory letter from President Xi was highly motivating. He pointed out that SIRONET, as a consortium of NGOs from Silk Road countries committed to promoting the Belt and Road Initiative, was a platform for enhancing people-to-people exchanges and cooperation among the Silk Road countries. He reiterated that, SIRONET should be jointly built through consultation to



meet the interest of all, aggregate more wisdom and strength of different parties, and implement more practical programs, so as to make more contribution to the Belt and Road Initiative.

Guterres said in his congratulatory letter that both the Belt and Road Initiative and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda were meant to produce opportunities of development for the mankind and achieve cooperation and win-win solutions. He said that the United Nations was looking forward to working hand in hand with stakeholders and partners to realize sustainable development and inclusive development.

In their speeches, Sharaf and Ponta said that the congratulatory letter from President Xi Jinping

signified how NGOs and the people-to-people bonds were highly valued by the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government. They also expressed that, the congratulatory letter greatly motivated the NGO delegates and helped them deepen their awareness in NGOs' roles in promoting the Belt and Road Initiative and the buildup of the Community of Shared Future of Mankind and increase their confidence in fulfilling their commitment.

### **Contribute to the Implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative by Aggregating Wisdom of Stakeholders**

Through the plenary session and the four parallel sessions, the delegates highly appreciated the significance and influence of initiating

the SIRONET forum. They carried out deep discussions under the topics of “Opportunities and Challenges Faced by NGOs in Promoting the Belt and Road Initiative and the Community of Shared Future of Mankind”, “People-to-People Bonds and Livelihood Cooperation” and “The Institutionalization of SIRONET”. Moreover, they expressed their support to the Belt and Road Initiative and provided their views and suggestions accordingly.

According to the foreign delegates, the fact that Xi Jinping’s Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and the pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative were included in the Constitution of the Communist Party of China in the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has reflected China’s resolution in firmly sticking to path of peaceful development and continuously promoting the Belt and Road international cooperation, which has profound effect on the future of both China and the whole world.

Convened rightly one month after the closing of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Forum signified itself as it increased the confidence of Silk Road countries in sharing China’s development dividends and jointly pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, and provided more opportunities for NGOs to

participate in the cooperation. In the views of the foreign delegates, SIRONET, as an effective platform of enhancing the people-to-people bonds within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, could play the roles of leading, discussing, collaborating and sharing in the fields of participating in global governance, finding solutions for development difficulties, and enhancing livelihood cooperation.

Guided by the principles of openness, inclusiveness and equal participation, NGOs along the Silk Road would maximize SIRONET’s effect as a platform and hub to enhance exchanges and cooperation, facilitate the implementation of major programs and coordination of policy issues, achieve more outcomes in poverty alleviation, education, medical service, youth and women’s development, promote people-to-people friendship and bonds, and encourage the people along the Silk Road to actively participate in pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative.

A delegate from Armenia pointed out that, SIRONET meant “the arrow of love” in Armenian, which indicated that SIRONET would surely be a critical leader in aggregating wisdom of civil society and enhancing intimacy and cooperation among the peoples along the Silk Road. The metaphor of Armenian delegate was





loudly applauded.

### **Produce Rich Outcomes by Playing the Leading Roles**

The forum was successfully closed on November 22nd. At the closing ceremony, Wang Yajun, Assistant Minister of IDCPC and advisor to CNIE, and Ivan Barbalic, former permanent representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United States, delivered conclusive speeches respectively. The delegates adopted the Constitution of the Silk Road Cooperation Network (the Trail version), Beijing Consensus for the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network and the name list of the members of the first International Steering Committee of SIRONET. Dou Enyong, Vice President of CNIE, released the list of cooperation projects of livelihood and exchanges among SIRONET members in the next three years including 40 projects involved more than 50 Chinese and overseas NGOs. China Foundation for Peace and Development and China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation showcased the outcomes of their typical livelihood projects jointly implemented with overseas partners. All China Federation of Trade Unions, Chinese Association for International Understanding and China Foundation for Peace and Development respectively signed agreements of cooperation with Civil Society Alliance Forum of Cambodia, Alinyaung Foundation of Myanmar, Civic Association “Polish House” and Tanzania-China Friendship Association. Jiang Guangping, Vice Chairman of All China Federation of Trade Unions attended the signing session. Zhu Rui, Secretary-General of CNIE, moderated the closing ceremony and announced the establishment of SIRONET Secretariat.

Wang Yajun expressed his appreciation for the

contributions of the delegates and the members of SIRONET to the success of the Forum on behalf of CNIE. He announced that CNIE would hold the 2nd Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum in 2019. On further enhancing and leveraging the advantages of SIRONET, he presented three pieces of advice. The first was that SIRONET should stick to the pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative and the buildup of the Community of Shared Future for Mankind, and endeavor to achieve more early harvests through key regions and fields. The second was that SIRONET should strive to enhance its influence and leadership, actively participate in global agendas, so as to provide ideas and solutions for global governance and the hotspot international issues, and contribute more wisdom from the civil society to the progress of human civilization. The third was that SIRONET should stick to the concepts of openness, inclusiveness and sharing and facilitate the network of global partners, so that it could make more contributions to the Belt and Road Initiative and the Community of Shared Future of Mankind.

The International Steering Committee convened its first meeting after the closing ceremony. The members discussed how the Committee could play the leading and steering role to coordinate NGOs of different countries to act in an aligned manner in major fields related to enhancing people-to-people bonds within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. During the Forum, medias including Xinhua News Agency, China News Service, People.cn, China.com.cn, Takungpao of Hong Kong attended the press conference, interviewed officials of CNIE and the delegates, and reported the topics of the Forum and the experiences of the delegates actively and extensively.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network Forum was a grand gathering of people-to-people exchanges among the countries along the Silk Road. It was also a beneficial attempt of promoting the pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative through people's diplomacy. During the two days, the delegates exchanged experiences of development, discussed new ideas and concepts,

and present multiple constructive outcomes. Through the new platform provided by SIRONET and based on the new starting point created by the first forum, they have enhanced understanding, friendship and agreement, jointly contributed to the fruitful outcomes of the event, and laid a solid foundation for the progress of SIRONET.

(Translated by Xia Jiaoye)





# Speech by Mme. Yan Junqi, Vice Chairperson of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress of China, at the Reception in Celebration of the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between China and New Zealand

December 12, 2017

Dear Ambassadors, Members of Parliament, distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening! I'm very glad to attend this reception in celebration of the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and New Zealand. First of all, I would like to extend my warm welcome to all of you for

coming to the reception tonight.

On 22 December 1972, China and New Zealand formally established diplomatic relations. Over the past 45 years, with the joint efforts of the two governments and the two peoples, China–New Zealand relations have made great strides achieving multiple ‘firsts’. The relationship between China and New Zealand has become the model of China’s relations with Western

developed countries and brought tangible benefits to both peoples.

With increasing high-level visits between China and New Zealand, political mutual trusts continue to deepen. In November 2014, President Xi Jinping paid a state visit to New Zealand. During his visit, bilateral relations



were upgraded to a comprehensive strategic partnership, sketching a new blueprint for future development. In March this year, Premier Li Keqiang paid a successful visit to New Zealand, scaling new heights in China–New Zealand relations by injecting new impetus into bilateral relations and pragmatic cooperation in all areas. In November this year, Premier Li Keqiang met with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern during the East Asia Summit. The two sides agreed to further strengthen China–New Zealand relations on the basis of mutual respect and win-win results to benefit the two peoples.

China–New Zealand economic and trade cooperation is progressing smoothly on the basis of mutual benefit and win-win results. New Zealand is the first Western developed country to conclude bilateral negotiations with China on China's entry into World Trade Organization; to recognize China's full market economy status; to sign a bilateral free trade agreement with China; to engage in free trade agreement upgrading negotiations, and to sign cooperative documents with China on the 'One Belt, One Road' initiative. Today, China has become New Zealand's second largest trading partner and its largest export market. This year, the trade volume between China and New Zealand has reached NZ\$24billion. At present, the two countries are striving to realise the NZ\$30 billion goal for two-way trade by 2020.

Increasing bilateral cultural exchanges have strengthened friendship between the two countries. New Zealand is the first Western developed country with a national Chinese Language Week initiated by the Government. There are 3 Confucius Institutes and 30 Confucius Classrooms in New Zealand with more than 40,000 primary and secondary school students learning Chinese at school. The number of Chinese students studying in New Zealand schools at all levels is over 38,000. China is New

Zealand's second largest source of tourists and its fifth-largest tourist destination. In 2017, the number of Chinese tourists visiting New Zealand has reached 410,000. At present, there are 36 direct flights between the two countries every week with up to 80 direct flights in peak seasons. The number of sister provinces, sister states and sister cities between China and New Zealand has reached 35 pairs. Not long ago, the third New Zealand China Youth Leaders Forum and the second New Zealand China Mayoral Forum were successfully held, fully demonstrating the high level of people-to-people friendship between the two countries.

Reflecting on the glorious course of China–New Zealand relations over the past 45 years, we will never forget Rewi Alley, an old friend of the Chinese people who had devoted his whole life to China–New Zealand friendship; we will not forget the hard work and efforts made by New Zealand's previous administrations, government agencies and civil organisations in developing bilateral relations; nor will we forget the friendship between the two peoples and the contribution made by New Zealand people to this end. On behalf of the Chinese Government and people, I would like to express my heart-felt thanks to all New Zealand political parties, non-governmental organisations and the wider community, for your contribution to the development of China–New Zealand relations. Also, I would like to extend my best wishes to the people of New Zealand.

At the same time, I would also like to pay special tribute to the overseas Chinese in New Zealand for your positive contribution to bilateral relations over the years. I hope and believe that you will continue to abide by local laws and customs, enriching cultural diversity and actively contribute to the local economic and social development and the relationship between China and New Zealand.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

China and New Zealand differ greatly in political system, development level, history and culture. Today, bilateral relations are at an all-time high with significant cooperative accomplishments in all fields. The most important reason for these achievements is that both China and New Zealand are able to stick to the correct direction for the development of bilateral relations, respect the core interests and major concerns of each other, and adhere to the principle of mutual respect, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit. This is not only the successful experience in China-New Zealand relations, but also the fundamental guarantee for future development of bilateral relations.

Today, China-New Zealand relationship is at a new historic starting point, facing new historic development opportunities. In October, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Part of China was successfully held. China has entered a new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. China will continue to uphold the path of peaceful development, support the multilateral trade system and push forward the construction of an open world economy. China's development not only benefits itself, but also brings development opportunities to other countries in the world, including New Zealand. Facing new historic opportunities, China and New Zealand can join hands to continuously consolidate and deepen the comprehensive strategic partnership and further advance pragmatic cooperation in all fields to bring more benefits to both peoples.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The relationship between countries lies in the friendship between their peoples, and the friendship between peoples lies in understanding each other. This visit to New Zealand by me and the delegation from the Chinese Association for International Understanding, is aimed at hearing the opinions and suggestions from the New Zealand side by engaging with New Zealand

politicians, civil organizations, think tanks and media, and making our contribution to the development of China-New Zealand relationship. Yesterday in Auckland, we had a fruitful exchange of views with representatives of New Zealand China Council, New Zealand China Trade Association, New Zealand China Friendship Society; and scholars from Auckland University. Today in Wellington, I met with Rt Hon Trevor Mallard, Speaker of New Zealand Parliament. We also attended the roundtable discussion hosted by New Zealand Contemporary China Research Center. Through these interactions, I'm happy to see that China-New Zealand friendship has been deeply rooted in the hearts of New Zealand people and there is enough space for further development of people-to-people exchange between our two countries. More important, we have a great number of people from all walks of life who are committed to China-New Zealand friendship. By this visit, I become more confident about the development of China-New Zealand relationship.

I firmly believe that as long as China and New Zealand continue to stick to the correct direction for bilateral relations and adhere to the principles proved to be effective in practice, we will surely achieve greater development in bilateral relations and make more contributions to the prosperity and stability in the Asia Pacific region and the world at large.

Now, I would like to propose a toast,

For the friendship between the two peoples of China and New Zealand,

For a better tomorrow for China-New Zealand relations,

For the health of all the guests here and your families,

Cheers!

# China and the World: After the 19th CPC National Congress

Mme. Yan Junqi's Speech at Nanyang Technological University



Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

It gives me great pleasure to come to Nanyang Technological University, a world-renowned university, and exchange ideas with you. I'd like to say a few words about China's latest development and exchange views with you on China-Singapore relations and other topics.

Our bilateral relations have been developing rapidly ever since we established diplomatic ties in 1990. Singapore, among China's neighboring countries, has been the one most deeply involved in China's reform and opening-up, providing an important window for China to better understand the world. Apart from the multi-level exchange and cooperation mechanisms between our two governments, Chinese visitors are quite impressed by the natural landscape and order of this country. China-Singapore Suzhou Industrial

Park, Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-city and the China-Singapore (Chongqing) Demonstration Initiative on Strategic Connectivity are flagship projects of China's economic cooperation with foreign countries. More importantly, Singapore has been an important cooperative partner in China's talents exchange efforts. Since 1996, over 30,000 Chinese officials have come to Singapore for training, with the number reaching several thousands annually. Nanyang Technological University is also an important base for the training and further education of Chinese officials. It is an embodiment of the close and high-level cooperation between our two countries.

Singapore is one of the countries that Chinese people pay the most attention. I believe the Singaporean people also closely follow China's development, domestic and foreign policies. This year, China's most important event attracting

worldwide attention is the 19th CPC National Congress. I think the reason is that the 19th CPC National Congress is not only an important congress convened by the ruling party with over 80 million members, but also an important congress convened at a critical moment for development in a fast-developing major country which ranks first in population and second in GDP. The world pays close attention to it as they want to know what it can bring to China and the world at large.

This congress put forward the overarching and strategic guiding principle for the future development of China, amended the CPC Constitution and elected the new leadership of CPC at the first Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee. You've probably already gained an overall understanding of this congress from the media. I'd like to share my observations with you from the following perspectives.

1. New thought. This congress put forward clearly Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. The Thought provides a systematic answer to fundamental questions such as the general goals, tasks and arrangements in adhering to and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, as well as basic strategies of governance. It shows that the CPC follows the requirement of the time, keep the pulse of the development, and innovate the theory and practice. The congress pointed out the new direction for Chinese peoples' efforts towards the great renewal of the Chinese nation.

2. New achievements. During the five years after the 18th CPC National Congress, China's economic development entered the new normal against the backdrop of sluggish world economic recovery, frequent local conflicts and unrest, and deteriorating external environment. China scored

historic achievement in the reform and opening-up as well as socialist modernization drive in spite of such a complicated situation. Its economy maintained medium-to-high speed growth, ranking high among major countries in the world. Its GDP grew from RMB 54 trillion to RMB 80 trillion, ranking the second in the world. Meanwhile, huge progress has been made in democracy, rule of law, cultural development, people's well-being, environmental protection, anti-corruption drive, and major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. These are hard-won achievements.

3. New era. Since the modern times, China had suffered from poverty and weakness, losing its sovereignty. In 1949, Comrade Mao Zedong declared at the Tiananmen: "Chinese people have stood up". China thus became an independent country. Now, Chinese people are embracing the era of making concerted efforts for a better life and achieving common prosperity of all the people. Chinese people are also embarking on the road of prosperity, democracy, cultural development, harmony and beautiful environment. It is an era when China is building a community with a shared future for mankind. China has always made unrelenting efforts for the world peace, friendship and development, and will also make greater contribution to the humanity.

4. New journey. The coming three years will be a decisive moment for securing the victory of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Therefore we must fight three tough battles of preventing and containing major risks amid complex and changing situation, targeted poverty alleviation and treating pollution. We will realize the goal of building a moderately prosperous society by 2020 put forward in the 16th CPC National Congress in 2002. The 19th CPC National Congress made the strategic arrangements of comprehensively building the socialist modern country in two steps, i.e. realize



socialist modernization from 2020 to 2035, and build China into a socialist modern country that is strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful from 2035 to the middle of the century. It is the CPC's solemn promise to the Chinese people and the world.

5. New contribution. First, China's historic achievement itself is a huge contribution to the world. In the past five years, China has contributed over 30% to the world economic growth, ranking the first in the world. It has become the important driving force and stabilizer for the world economic growth. From 1978 to 2016, the number of poor people in rural areas dropped by 730 million, more than 70% of the total world population lifted out of poverty in this period of time. In 2016, China contributed over 30% to the world economic growth, and its import and export reached 3.69 trillion USD, exceeding 30% of its GDP. Second, China is dedicated to safeguarding world peace and promoting common development. China unswervingly develops friendly cooperation with all the countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, and promotes the building of a new type of international relations based on mutual respect, fairness and justice, and win-win cooperation. We call on peoples of all nations to work together to build a community with a shared future for mankind and build a world that features enduring peace, universal security, common prosperity, openness and inclusiveness, cleanliness and beauty. China will continue to play the role of a responsible major country, actively participate in the reform and development of the global governance system and continue to contribute China's wisdom and strengths. Third, we provide China's solution to problems facing the humanity. The continuous development of the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics has provided more ways for developing countries

to move toward modernization and also provided new possibilities for countries that wish to both accelerate their development and maintain their independence. Fourth, we make contribution full of China's wisdom to the progress of the political civilization of the mankind. The socialist political system with Chinese characteristics is a great creation of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people, including the democratic parties of China. In recent years, China has made major strides in the development of democracy and rule of law. We actively develop socialist democracy, push forward law-based governance of China in all respects, and strengthen the institutional construction of the combination of the leadership of the CPC, people being masters of the country and promoting law-based governance. The institution and system of the CPC has been constantly improved, the socialist democracy has kept on advancing, the CPC enjoys broader inner-party democracy, and socialist inner-party democracy has been developing in full swing. Fifth, we are committed to making new contribution to global environmental conservation. China has effectively promoted the saving of resources in all aspects and the intensity of energy resources consumption has dropped significantly. The major ecological protection and restoration projects are progressing well and the forest coverage rate continues to increase. The ecological environment has been better managed and the environmental conditions have been improved. We steer the international cooperation on climate change, becoming an important participant, contributor and leader of the global ecological conservation efforts. The 19th CPC National Congress pointed out that China must firmly follow the path of civilized development featuring the growth of production, affluent lives and eco-friendly society, build a beautiful China, create a favorable environment for the people, and make its contribution to global ecological



security.

I would like to particularly point out that the 19th CPC National Congress enshrined the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind into the Party Constitution, and proposed China's concept and plan as for "what kind of a world we should build and how to build it". It profoundly reflects that the CPC pursues happiness for the Chinese people and strive for the cause of human progress.

In today's world, with the continuous development of science and technology as well as globalization, lives of people in different parts of the world have been interconnected in an unprecedented way. However, the humanity also faces unprecedented problems on the global scale. The future and destiny of people from different countries in the world are becoming increasingly intertwined. Therefore, people of different countries must follow the development trend of the times, seize the historic opportunity, make the right choice and make concerted efforts in response to these challenges. The core of building a community with a shared future for mankind is "building a world featuring lasting peace, universal security, common prosperity, openness and inclusiveness, cleanness and beauty", i.e. to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind in five aspects: politics, security, economy, culture and ecology.

Looking back on the history of China's development, we find that it is also increasingly linked to the world. Facts have proven that China can only develop soundly if the world is good. And the world can only be better if China develops well. The Chinese dream of realizing the great renewal of the Chinese nation is closely linked with the beautiful dreams of all peoples and is inseparably connected with the world's dream of lasting peace and common prosperity. China's

reform and opening-up could not have been such a tremendous success without the support and cooperation with the world, including Singapore. And the rising China has every responsibility and ability to share the development opportunities with other countries. As China develops, it will be able to make greater contribution to the international community. Faced with a world full of hope and challenges, China will adhere to the path of peaceful development, and promote the establishment of a new type of international relations based on mutual respect, fairness and justice, and win-win cooperation, laying a solid foundation for building a community with a shared future for mankind. As President Xi Jinping pointed out, "People of all the countries in the world live under the same sky with one home and belong to one family. People of all the countries in the world should uphold the concept of one world, one family, open their arms, understand each other, seek common ground while reserving differences, and work together to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

China and Singapore are geographically close and bond by blood. It is all the more important for us to trust each other, strengthen cooperation, achieve win-win results, and share peace, security, prosperity and stability. In the future, China is ready to work with Singapore to further enhance political mutual trust, deepen pragmatic cooperation and strive for the greater development of the all-round cooperative partnership between both countries so as to make greater contribution to people's well-being of our two countries and the building of a community with a shared future for mankind!

Thank you!

# CAFIU President Yan Junqi's Visit to New Zealand, Fiji and Singapore

Wang Bo

At the invitation of Asia New Zealand Foundation, Fijian Parliament and Singaporean Parliament, Madame Yan Junqi, Chairwoman of the Standing Committee of the NPC and President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU) led a CAFIU delegation to New Zealand, Fiji and Singapore from December 10 to December 19. The delegation also included Mr. Liu Hongcai,

Vice President of CAFIU and former Vice-minister of the International Department of the Central Commission of the CPC, Mr. Zhu Yongxin, Executive Council Member of CAFIU and Vice Chairman of Central Commission of China Association for Promoting Democracy, and Mr. Zhu Rui, Secretary-General of CAFIU.

New Zealand was the first stop of the visit. China-New Zealand relations stand at the forefront





of China's relations with western countries. Particularly, after President Xi Jinping's state visit to New Zealand in 2014, the two countries have witnessed increasingly frequent exchanges, and close economic and trade cooperation. China has become New Zealand's biggest source of international students and the second largest market for outbound tourists. During the visit to New Zealand, the delegation met Parliament Speaker Trevor Mallard and Deputy Speaker Anne Tolley, and attended three seminars in Auckland and Wellington, exchanging ideas with representatives of NGOs, think tanks and media including Asia New Zealand Foundation, New Zealand China Council, New Zealand China Trade Association, New Zealand China Friendship Society, The University of Auckland, New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre of Victoria University, New Zealand Rotary Club, Skykiwi.com, and Chinese New Zealand Herald. In the three seminars, Madame Yan elaborated

on the spirit and significance of the 19th CPC National Congress, and exchanged ideas with the New Zealand side on promoting bilateral ties and enhancing people-to-people exchanges and connectivity between the two countries.

The year 2017 marked the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Rewi Alley, who made huge contribution to the friendship between China and New Zealand. The name of Rewi Alley was frequently mentioned by the New Zealand side during the meetings and seminars. Speaker Mallard said that he was honored to see Rewi Alley during his visit to China, and many New Zealanders are devoted to promoting New Zealand-China friendship following Rewi Alley's example. Representatives from New Zealand China Council and New Zealand China Friendship Society said that New Zealand people should inherit the cause of Rewi Alley, keep up with the trend of the era, work hard to promote the economic and personnel exchanges between the two countries, and help facilitate the

development of bilateral ties.

Fiji is the first Pacific island country to establish diplomatic ties with China and has always maintained good relations with China. The delegation was impressed with its beautiful scenery and hospitality of its people. During the visit in Fiji, the delegation met with Parliament Speaker Dr. Luveni, and had discussions with scholars from The University of the South Pacific and Fiji National University as well as Ministry of Information, Fiji Sun and Fiji Times. During the discussions, Madame Yan Junqi elaborated on the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress, and exchanged ideas with the Fijian side on enhancing bilateral ties and people-to-people exchanges.

Madame Yan also attended the 2nd anniversary of the founding of Chinese Culture Centre of Fiji together with Speaker Luveni and Vuniwaqa, Acting President and Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation. In addition, the delegation visited the Juncao Technical Demonstration Center assisted by China. Vice President Liu Hongcai also attended a discussion with over 20 representatives of local Chinese and employees of Chinese enterprises.

Speaker Luveni attached great importance to this visit. She told the delegation that the Fijian Parliament attaches great importance to its relations with China, and actively promotes the cooperation between our two nations on



women, poverty alleviation and health, as well as exchanges among NGOs. She has also been personally involved in the efforts to promote the bilateral friendship and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries, and attended many events hosted by the Chinese Culture Centre. In the discussions with the delegation, Fijian NGOs, media and scholars said that Fijian people, young people particularly, are quite enthusiastic about learning Mandarin and the Chinese culture, standing ready to make their own contribution to further enhancing people-to-people exchanges and deepening bilateral ties.

Singapore and China are close to each other in location and bond by blood. The bilateral relations have been developing rapidly since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1990. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2015, President Xi Jinping and President Tan Keng Yam paid mutual state visits, establishing the all-round cooperative partnership

that keeps pace with the times. During the visit to Singapore, the delegation met with Deputy Speaker of the Parliament Lim Biow Chuan and Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu. The delegation also had discussions with representatives from NGOs, research institutes and media including Singapore China Friendship Association, Hui An Association, Tian Fu Association, Singapore China Association, Longus Institute for Development and Strategy, National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, and Lianhe Zaobao, exchanging ideas on deepening bilateral ties and enhancing people-to-people exchanges. The Singaporean side expressed welcome to the delegation, while Grace Fu and Lim Biow Chuan spoke perfect Mandarin when meeting with Madame Yan. Lim told the delegation that Many Singaporean Chinese have relatives in China, they admire China's remarkable development as the living standards of their relatives in China improve a lot. Fu and Lim said that Singapore-





China relations are of vital importance, and the two nations can learn from each other to achieve common development and progress.

Madame Yan also delivered a speech titled “China and the World: after the 19<sup>th</sup> CPC National Congress” at RSIS, Nanyang Technological University. The session was moderated by Ong Keng Yong, Executive Director of RSIS and former Secretary-General of ASEAN. Over 320 people attended the session, including the Ambassadors of France, EU and Romania, and representatives from different ethnic groups of Singapore. After the keynote speech, President Yan Junqi, Vice President Liu Hongcai, Executive Council Member Zhu Yongxin, and Secretary-General Zhu Rui answered questions from the audience about China’s democracy and rule of

law after the 19<sup>th</sup> CPC National Congress, the system of multi-party cooperation and political consultations under the leadership of the CPC, China’s targeted poverty alleviation, how to enhance the world’s understanding of China, Chinese government’s efforts in investing in education, enhancing Singapore-China relations and the Belt and Road cooperation. The audience warmly applauded the speech and interaction. The audience believed that this comprehensive speech helped them better understand the latest economic and social development in China after the 19th CPC National Congress, and Madame Yan and other members of the delegation gave very detailed and dynamic answers to their questions, elaborating on the issues concerning China that attract their attention.





# A Promising Future for People-to-people Connectivity: Sidelight of CAFIU delegation's visit to Thailand, Sri Lanka and Nepal

Yin Qingqing

At the invitation of Thai-Chinese Culture and Economy Association, Sri Lanka-China Friendship Association and Nepal Council of World Affairs, Mr. Liu Hongcai, CAFIU Vice President, former Ambassador to the DPRK and former IDCPC Vice Minister, headed a CAFIU delegation to the three countries from May 17 to 26. CAFIU Deputy Secretary-General Zheng Yao was also in the delegation.

During the visit, Mr. Liu Hongcai met with Suthep Thaugsuban, former Deputy Prime Minister and current Chairman of PDRC Foundation, Bhokin Bhalakula, former Speaker and President of Thai-Chinese Culture and Economy Association, Karu Jayasuriya, Parliament Speaker and leader of United National Party, Thilanga Sumathipala, Parliament Deputy Speaker and leader of Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Duminda Dissanayake, Agricultural Minister and General Secretary of Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister and leader of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), and Jhala Nath Khanal, former Prime

Minister and leader of the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist-Leninist). He also met representatives from think tanks, organizations dedicated to promoting bilateral ties and Chinese enterprises as well as overseas Chinese in the three countries, exchanging views on bilateral ties, future cooperation, the Belt and Road Initiative, and people-to-people exchanges. Mr. Liu elaborated on the major spirit of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, General Secretary Xi Jinping's new ideas, new thinking and new strategies of governance, and China's recent economic and social development. This visit helped deepen people's understanding of the Belt and Road Initiative, enhanced the mutual understanding and cooperation between CAFIU and NGOs in the three countries, and also injected new vitality into China's relations with Thailand, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

## **The three countries enjoy political stability and sound social order**

King Bhumibol Adulyadej passed away in 2016, which has lasting impact on Thailand's political



landscape. There were banners and altars almost in every corner of the streets, mourning the beloved king. The social development of this country was in order and people's lives were as usual. On the streets of Bangkok, we saw motorcycles roaming ahead from time to time. Many foreign tourists were showing up at the hotel and on the street. During the nights, cruises full of tourists were sailing on Chao Phraya River. In the day time, we often saw pious Buddhists giving food and chanting doctrines to monks.

Sri Lanka enjoyed political stability, as the coalition government worked hard to improve people's well-being in a stable atmosphere. The expressway connecting the airport to the downtown area of Colombo, a project constructed under the non-reimbursable assistance of China, makes it easy for people to travel. In hotels of Colombo we often encountered entrepreneurs speaking different Chinese dialects.

During the delegation's visit to Nepal, the country

just completed its first local election in 20 years, and Prime Minister Prachanda announced his resignation, becoming Prime Minister of the caretaker government. However, this change did not affect the social and political stability. People's lives were as usual, while rows of stores were lining along the streets, with stalls selling daily necessities scattered around. Although it had been two years since the earthquake, we could still see the marks left by the devastating earthquake, as fallen walls and houses full of cracks appeared in front of us from time to time.

### **Friendship and cooperation: theme of China's relations with the three countries**

China has a time-honored history of friendly exchanges with Thailand, Sri Lanka and Nepal in spite of the differences in social systems. The friendly exchanges between China and Thailand date back to 2,000 years ago. According to Chinese historical records, the two countries started to exchange envoys and conduct trade



as early as during the reign of Emperor Wudi in the Han Dynasty. Over 1,000 years ago, eminent monks of China and Sri Lanka visited each other's country, forging profound bonds through Buddhism. China and Nepal have always been good neighbors, whose friendship and cooperation has never been separated by the Himalaya. The monk Fa Xian in Jin Dynasty and monk Xuan Zang in Tang Dynasty went all the way to Lumbini, birthplace of Sakyamuni located in the south of Nepal, to study Buddhist doctrine.

Since China established diplomatic ties with the three countries, the bilateral ties have been developing steadily in spite of occasional twists and turns. China and Thailand are close in both location and blood, sharing similar culture. The two countries are good neighbors, good partners and good friends. China is Thailand's largest trading partner, the largest source of imports and the largest source of tourists, with 31 pairs of sister cities between the two countries. Thailand is China's third largest trading partner in ASEAN,

the largest source of cassava and natural rubber import, and a traditional importer of rice. As of the end of 2016, China's accumulated direct investment in Thailand amounted to 4.11 billion U.S. dollars. At present, there are more than 200 large Chinese enterprises operating in Thailand. In July this year, the Thai government approved the first phase of China-Thailand high-speed railway project, which will further promote the inter-connectivity as well as economic cooperation and trade between the two countries. In 1952, Sri Lanka signed the Rubber-Rice Pact with China, breaking the blockade imposed by the western countries on China and giving us valuable support. In Hainan Province of China, there are rubber plantations made of Sri Lankan rubber seeds. In recent years, both sides have achieved fruitful results in pragmatic cooperation in the areas of telecommunications, electricity, water conservancy, transportation and resources development. Major cooperation projects such as Colombo Port City, Hambantota Port Phase II

and the Extended Line of Southern Expressway are proceeding steadily, bringing tangible benefits to both peoples. China and Nepal have always treated each other as equals and supported each other, with the relations between the two countries maintaining a sound momentum. Nepal firmly supports the Belt and Road Initiative and is a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. China is Nepal's second largest trading partner. After Nepal suffered from a devastating earthquake on April 25, 2015, China provided Nepal with a package of 3 billion yuan in aid. At the end of 2016, the two sides signed an agreement on economic and technical cooperation under which China will provide Nepal with 1 billion yuan in grants.

During the visit, the delegation was warmly received by the inviting organizations of the three countries. Thai-Chinese Culture and Economy Association made an extraordinary arrangement of the delegation's schedule in Thailand and provided convenience for the delegation's visit. Ananda Goonatilleke, President of Sri Lanka-China Friendship Association, welcomed the delegation during mid-night at the airport with his wife and made a lot of efforts in arranging and coordinating the delegation's itinerary in Sri Lanka. Nepal Council of World Affairs held a distinctively local welcome ceremony for the delegation at the airport.

### **Belt and Road Initiative: Injecting strong impetus into the development of China's relations with the three countries**

This visit coincided with the successful conclusion of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. The keynote address delivered by

President Xi Jinping at the Forum has become popular topics among people from all walks of life in the three countries. The governments and NGOs of the three countries spoke highly of and Forum and President Xi's keynote address. All the people from different circles of Thailand the delegation met believed that the Forum had yielded substantial results, promoted different countries' understanding of the significance of the Belt and Road Initiative, further enhanced China's international status and influence, and would play a positive role in promoting regional development and boosting the relative sluggish world economy. Bhokin Bhalakula, President of Thai-Chinese Culture and Economy Association, said that the Belt and Road Initiative is highly compatible with Thailand's own development demand, as Thailand is a juncture connecting the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean, and a point connecting the ASEAN on land and at sea. As a result, the realization of inter-connectivity among different countries will enable Thailand to play an important role in the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Karu Jayasuriya, speaker of the Sri Lankan Parliament, said that the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was a huge success. Prime Minister Wickremesinghe was honored to be invited to attend the Forum and was very satisfied with its outcomes. Both the Sri Lankan government and major political parties in the country are supportive of the Belt and Road Initiative put forward by President Xi Jinping, believing that the initiative is compatible with Sri Lanka's own development intentions and goals, and the initiative will bring tangible benefits to Sri Lanka. Deputy Speaker Sumathipala said that under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, the projects of Colombo Port City and

Hambantota Port Phase II jointly implemented by the Sri Lankan government and Chinese side are complete and transparent in procedures with clear and reasonable allocation of funds and interests, gaining the support of the Sri Lankan people. Many NGOs in Sri Lanka agreed that since the Belt and Road Initiative was put forward four years ago, it has attracted worldwide attention and responses, yielding many positive results. The Initiative will greatly boost Sri Lanka's economic and social development. The Forum has set clear goals and measures so that people are full of expectation on the outlook of the Initiative.

The Nepalese side said that the Forum is quite influential. The Nepalese government, all political parties and the general public all support the Initiative and speak highly of it. They have high expectations that the Initiative can help overhaul Nepal's poor infrastructure. The media cited President Xi Jinping's address at the opening ceremony of the Forum and appreciated the spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and win-win cooperation contained in the Belt and Road Initiative, believing that the Initiative will provide important opportunities for enhancing regional connectivity and common prosperity. It is generally recognized in Nepal that signing the MOU on the Belt and Road Cooperation with the Chinese government is a major achievement of the Nepalese government. Annapurna said in an editorial that China is Nepal's trusted neighbor and good friend who has long supported Nepal's economic and social development. The Belt and Road Initiative will deepen bilateral cooperation in various fields such as connectivity, trade and investment, and energy, and will contribute to Nepal's economic and social development.

## **Promoting people-to-people connectivity for the Belt and Road Initiative**

The main purpose of the CAFIU delegation's visit to Thailand, Sri Lanka and Nepal was to strengthen friendly exchanges with NGOs of the three countries and consolidate the public support for China's bilateral relations with the three countries. During the visit, the delegation made extensive contacts with NGOs in the three countries and reached wide consensus.

Thai NGOs said they welcome the Chinese counterparts to carry out activities in Thailand and are willing to strengthen cooperation with these NGOs. They suggested that China's NGOs should strengthen their ties with people from all walks of life in Thailand, and should listen to public opinion at the grass-root level. At the same time, the delegation also visited Khon Kaen, a city in the northeastern part of Thailand, called on the overseas Chinese in the area, visited the Mandarin schools and held discussions with leaders of local Chinese communities. Leaders of local Chinese communities said that overseas Chinese are capable and willing to play a greater role in promoting people-to-people connectivity. They are willing to actively promote the Chinese culture, facilitate people-to-people exchanges between China and Thailand, and enhance China-Thai cooperation so as to make positive contributions to the bond between the two peoples.

The delegation held a seminar on people-to-people connectivity between China and Sri Lanka, exchanging views on promoting people-to-people connectivity between NGOs from China and Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka's NGOs pointed out that currently the total number of tourists from

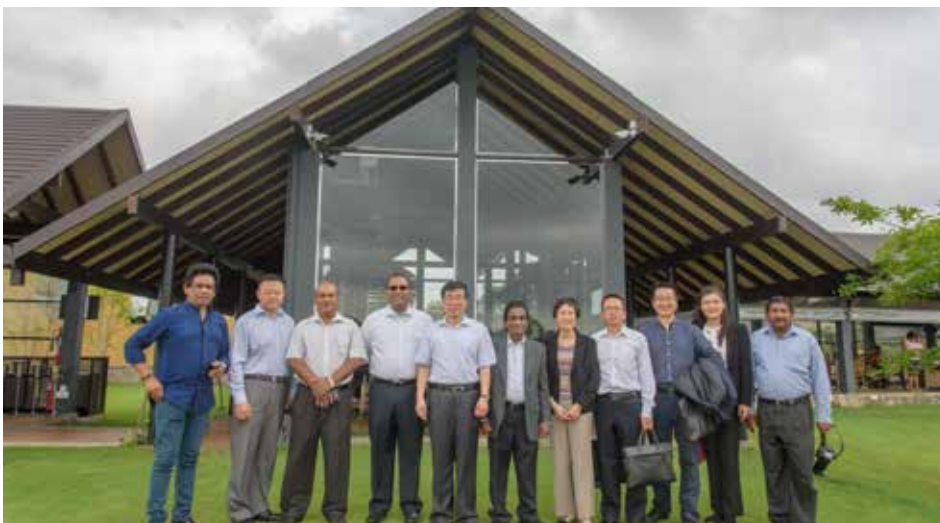


China had surpassed that of Britain and China is now the second largest source of tourists visiting Sri Lanka. This shows that the people-to-people exchanges are becoming more frequent and presenting new opportunities for people-to-people connectivity. They said they would actively participate in the Silk Road NGO Network proposed by China. They suggested that China should encourage more NGOs to join the network in order to promote people-to-people connectivity together. At the same time, NGOs, enterprises and the media should play their roles in resolving doubts and reducing the negative voices so as to help more people get better understanding of the Initiative and give support. At the same time, efforts should also be made to step up guidance for young people and draw lessons from the successful practice and experience of the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road Young Student Speech Contest" organized by CAFIU to conduct more flexible activities with wide influence, great attention, broad participation that are easily accepted by youngsters.

The delegation and Nepal Council of World Affairs jointly held a seminar on promoting

people-to-people connectivity in Nepal. More than 70 people, including former ambassadors, scholars from think tanks and NGO principals attended the seminar. At the seminar, Vice President Liu Hongcai talked about the economic and social development of China and the preparations for the 19th CPC National Congress, and comprehensively interpreted the Belt and Road Initiative and the Forum. The audience posed questions enthusiastically in a warm atmosphere. The Nepalese side said no matter which party is in power in Nepal, Nepal's friendly attitudes towards China will not change. As a southern neighbor of China, Nepal hopes China will further strengthen exchanges between China and Nepal, carry out pragmatic cooperation and continuously consolidate the public support for the development of bilateral relations. At present, there are frequent exchanges between the NGOs of Nepal and China. Although China's NGOs have carried out many activities in Nepal, they have limited scope of activities. Therefore, it is hoped that the Chinese NGOs can do more work and win public support.

(Translated by Wang Bo)





# Vice-President Ai Ping Visits Lithuania, Greece and Poland

Yuan Hao

At the invitation of Lithuania-China Forum, Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy (Greece) and “Polish House” Civic Association, Mr. Ai Ping, former Vice Minister of the International Department of CPC Central Committee, Member of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference and Vice-President of CAFIU headed a CAFIU delegation to visit Lithuania, Greece and Poland from June 15 to 24. Deputy Secretary-General Zheng Yao accompanied the visit.

The visit was initiated in the context of comprehensive implementation of the “Belt and Road” initiative and profound changes in the geopolitical scenario of Europe. It was also the time not long after the conclusion of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (referred thereafter as the “Forum”). During the 10-day visit, the delegation had meetings and discussions with representatives from the political, business, academic and NGO circles, introducing the outcomes of the Forum and expressing the



willingness of conducting friendly cooperation to enhance people-to-people ties.

In Lithuania, the delegation met with Mr. Ričardas Degutis, Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications of Lithuania, had a roundtable discussion themed on the “Belt and Road” initiative and China-Lithuania people-to-people cooperation, and called on Dr. Vytis Silius of the Centre of Oriental Studies of Vilnius University.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications is responsible for China-Lithuania cooperation under the framework of the “Belt and Road”, and Minister Rokas Masiulis attended the Forum in Beijing this May. According to Mr. Degutis, Lithuania attached great importance to the cooperation opportunities of the “Belt and Road” initiative, since it is one stop along the routes of China-Europe block train and there is huge potential for bilateral tourist cooperation. At the roundtable discussion, the political and business representatives thought positively of the big

Chinese market, looking for ways to lower tariff barriers and export local Baltic Sea products such as amber to China.

Established in 1579, Vilnius University is one of the oldest institutes of higher education in East Europe. The Centre of Oriental Studies of Vilnius University was founded in 1993, and has become the largest center of Asian Studies in Lithuania, covering disciplines like Sinology, Japanology, Indology and Buddhism. In 2010, the Centre of Oriental Studies opened up a Confucius Institute based on the cooperation between Vilnius University and Liaoning University. During our talks, Dr. Silius introduced to us the general situation of Chinese Studies and Sinology programs in Lithuania, and pointed out that the Lithuanian people had limited understanding about China due to the distance between the two countries and inadequate communication channels. He sincerely hoped that the two countries could expand cooperation in academic exchanges, overseas student exchanges and tourist



cooperation so as to strengthen the ties between the two peoples.

Greece is one of the most friendly EU countries and the second stop of the visit. It is known to the Chinese people as the cradle of the European civilization, a country of Thousand Islands in the Mediterranean as well as a hard-hit zone of the European debt crisis. CAFIU did not have many partners in Southern Europe before, so this is considered as a visit of expanding friendship and exploring partnership. In Greece, the delegation met and talked with representatives from Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy and Nicos Poulantzas Institute. The three organizations expressed their willingness to strengthen ties with CAFIU and looked for opportunities for further cooperation in the future.

The think tanks and NGOs in Greece had high expectations on cooperation with Chinese NGOs. During the talks with the delegation, the representative from ELIAMEP pointed out that Greece, situated along the Northern coast of the Mediterranean, is near North Africa and the Middle East, and it had been troubled by the great inflow of refugees in recent years. Besides, affected by the European debt crisis, it has yet to walk out of the economic recession. The factors combined have hit hard the Greek economy and society. They hoped that the Chinese NGOs could take part in offering humanitarian assistance to refugees and work together with other

international NGOs to seek better solutions to the social problem.

As for bilateral cooperation, the representative of Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy suggested enhancing the understanding of the Chinese people of Greek tourist resources, classic culture and agricultural products such as olive oil. The NGOs of both countries, according to him, should play their role as a bridge and promote practical cooperation. The representative of Poulantzas Institute said that the win-win cooperation between China and the “Belt and Road” partners could not be achieved without cultural exchanges. As two of the most famous ancient civilizations, Greece and China have huge potential for cultural exchanges.

In Poland, the last stop for the visit, the delegation met with former Speaker of the Polish Senate Mr. Pastusiak and head of “Polish House” Mr. Klimczak, had a roundtable discussion with “Polish House” on the “Belt and Road” and China-Poland people-to-people cooperation, attended a commemoration event to the 25th anniversary of the cooperation between CAFIU and “Polish House”, and had talks with experts and scholars from Jagiellonian University on further promoting people-to-people exchanges and cooperation under the framework of the “Belt and Road”.

“Polish House” Civic Association is CAFIU’s most important partner in Poland, and has been cooperating with CAFIU for 25 years since the

early 1990s. During the visit, “Polish House” arranged meetings of different levels in different fields for the delegation, such as the welcoming reception, roundtable discussion, commemoration event and farewell party. The Polish side has attached great importance to the cooperation with CAFIU.

At the roundtable discussion with “Polish House” on the “Belt and Road” and China-Poland people-to-people cooperation, a Polish representative quoted a Polish saying that “One person alone can walk faster, but a group of people can walk further” in a metaphorical way to emphasize the importance of enduring cooperation for long-term bilateral relations. Vice-President Angelard said that people-to-people exchanges are real, enduring and reliable, and have great potential in the future. Professor Haber, the President of “Polish House” Advisory Committee said that the topic of the

“Belt and Road” had attracted wide attention in Poland since President Xi’s visit last year. The “Belt and Road” sees the world as interconnected and reflects China’s strategic vision. It is expected that the NGOs of both countries could enhance their cooperation to contribute to the friendship of both countries under the framework of the “Belt and Road”.

During the ten-day visit, we have seen the strong will of European friends for boosting cooperation with China, addressed their concerns for ways to enhance cooperation, and got a clear picture of the way ahead. As a member of a Chinese NGO, we will work harder for strengthening our ties with people from the rest of the world.

(Translated by Ma Jingjing)



# Because of Cultural Confidence

Wang Shi

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Chinese Culture Promotion Society, as well as the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my serving in it. The missions of the Society mainly include “promote Chinese culture” and “enhance international communication”. Reviewing the efforts made by the Society over the past 25 years in the above two aspects, as a civil organization, or non-governmental institution, the root of confidence or strength of the Society, in my opinion, is the word said by President Xi Jinping- “cultural confidence”.

In an era featuring political multi-polarization, economic globalization and cultural diversity, facing different beliefs, different values, different national consciousness, different life styles and custom all over the world, the precondition of cultural exchange is concrete self-assessment. You should have a thorough understanding on yourself, your culture, your ethnic group and your nation,

as well as their status in the world. For instance, as an inheritor of Chinese culture, being proud of the 5000-year consecutive history of Chinese culture and the Chinese civilization, and deem it a precious treasure of mankind, you will naturally possess ample confidence no matter what country, nationality, or institution, people you face. If you neither thought of towering over others nor being inferior to others, you will be of an equal and peaceful mind. In my opinion, all these are based on cultural confidence.

Some people say that the Society is very brave and bold and the programs it designed or operated





are not like what can be done by a NGO. My answer is, “it’s not because the Society is different, but because of our confidence and proud on Chinese”. It is just passion that drove us to imagine some programs of high starting point.

In February 1996, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Bhumibol Adulyadej’s ascending to throne, the Society organized more than 100 musicians and held a grand festival concert in Thailand, expressing the friendship between people of China and Thailand. This event received warm response from the royal family and all walks of people of Thailand.

In June 2000, the Society invited Lee Hee-Ho, wife of Kim Dae-Jung-the then President of South Korea, visited Beijing and staged a release ceremony in the Great Hall of the People for her new book *The Prayer before Daybreak*. This event opened the door for many programs of cultural exchange between South Korea and China. It was also in this event, President Zhan Xiang and I formed strong friendship with the First Family. I visited South Korea twice and met Lee Hee-Ho

the Presidential residence in Chong Wa Dae. Two years ago, in spite of her age of over 90, Lee Hee-Ho, accompanied by her son, came to Beijing and met with friends working in the Society.

In July 2004, the Society invited staff of National Association of Recording and Science of the United States and judges of Grammy Award visited China and proposed to found Grammy Award in the East. We told American friends that the absence of China is a loss of Grammy. And without the participation of China and the East, we can hardly say Grammy is a globalized award. In the Sino-American Music Forum held that time, participants from music circle of mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan, including celebrities from the circle of pop music, all participated in the discussion.

In May 2005, the Society organized the Asia Cultural Cooperation Conference in Beijing, probed into cultural topics faced by Asian countries and regions as well as the possibility of establishing Asian Cultural Alliance under the circumstance of globalization. Culture-related





NGO delegations from nearly 20 countries attended the meeting.

Since December 2011, the society has taken over the organization of the biennial “Nepal China Festival”. The Society not only expanded the scale of items such as perform, exhibition, exposition, film festival, but also founded the “South Asia (Katmandu) Forum”. Nepal is a place attached great importance by diplomats of the United States and India. As an NGO, the Society organized a series of activities in Nepal and greatly expanded the influence of China. This year, we established the Nepal Chinese Culture Promotion Association in Nepal. Besides local Chinese, the Association also attracted some Nepalese interested in Chinese culture.

In March 2014, together with Organization of Peace and Friendship of Mongolia and Russian Association for International Cooperation, we formed The Tea Road Cooperative. The Cooperative has held a series of China-Mongolia-Russia Mayors’ Summits respectively in Erenhot, Mont Wuyi, Yanshan Mont and Pingyao. These summits proposed the idea of “connecting different cities” and received warm response from cities along the Tea Road.

In August 2014, in celebration of the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relationship between China and Mongolia, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Ulan Bator. At the same time, under the support of Ministry of Culture, the Society staged a series of activities in Ulan Bator themed “the Tea Road” and was praised by President Xi. Thereafter, our Tea Road activities visited Australia with President Xi, and visited Indonesia with Liu Yandong, Vice Premier

of the State Council and Sun Jiazheng, President of China Federation of Literary and Art Circles.

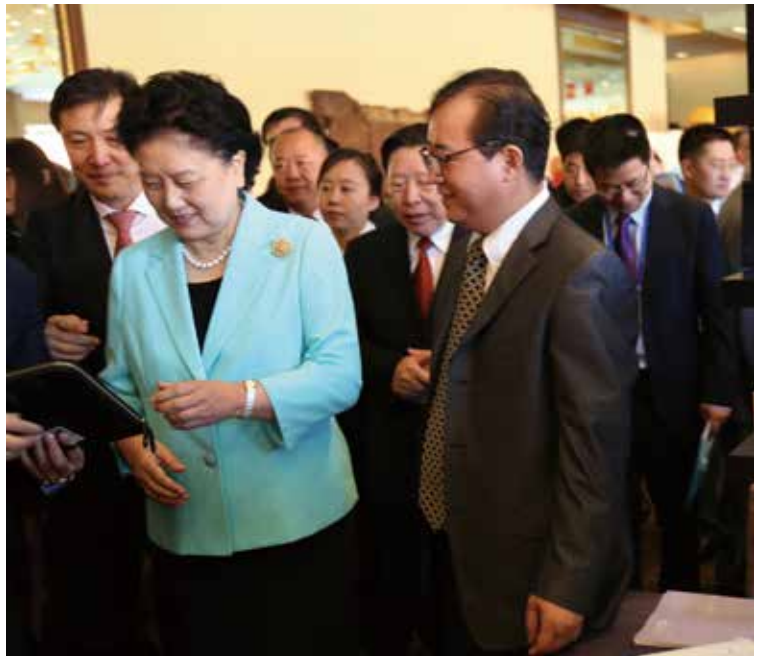
It is totally appropriate to say that cultural confidence from the heart enabled the Society view our culture and the job of international cultural exchange and cooperation from the perspective and status of a master.

Considering that currently there’s still non-negligible estrangement, suspicion, opposition and conflict in terms of culture among different countries, regions and ethnic groups, and this circumstance will still exist in a long period, we realize that people-to-people exchange, with the aim of strengthening people-to-people bond, will shoulder important mission. Meanwhile, we also feel that in terms of cultural exchange, compared with national or governmental diplomacy, NGOs are of many special advantages.

People-to-people communication is purer and closer to culture, thus reducing suspicion or worry in terms of ideological or cultural infiltration. Although currently many foreign institutions doubt whether there are real NGOs in China (they argue that the NGOs of China are only in name, and in fact they are all of Party or governmental background), in the process of practical contact, they can still feel the special cultural and social atmosphere of Chinese NGOs and are prone to reach an equal and mutual-trust relationship with Chinese NGOs. This is a delicate and indescribable feeling of culture. Many foreign organizations have a special affection and trust on the Society, for they could feel the “culture” of it.

International communications conducted by the Society sometimes is of very high level, even

facing foreign political leaders or high-ranked cultural institutions, thus being with the element of “cultural diplomacy” or “public diplomacy”. However, we believe that the function of “diplomacy” is basically objective. International cultural exchange, from the perspectives of mind, willingness and attitude, belongs to culture. Cultural exchange calls for honest and sincere mutual learning. As long as cultural exchange is adequate, the effect of people-to-people diplomacy will naturally be reached.



In our opinion, the so called “confidence” is different from “self-abasement” or “arrogant”. The one-century-humiliation in China’s modern history cultivated serious cultural inferiority in the mind of some Chinese people and they believe that exotic things are always better. China’s rapid development in recent years made some Chinese feel over confident on Chinese culture. They believe that Chinese culture is on the one hand unique-different from any other culture, on the other hand the best-it is the only culture which can save the world from running into unrest in the future. We argue that the above two states of mind are not cultural confidence. Confidence is, as what ordinary people say, “neither view myself as grandson nor as grandpa”. It is an equal attitude in which you can “find your beauty and that of others; share the beauty and achieve unity”.

shared future for mankind, what’s more important is to realize that people-to-people diplomacy is not only important part of national diplomacy but also has its own indispensable value compared with official diplomacy. The relations between countries or governments, due to interests, are always fluctuating. However, the friendship between the people is usually constant. In this sense, no matter what change happened in terms of relations between governments or countries, the friendship between the people is of enduring value. In addition, this value can lay foundation for the relations between countries, governments and other official institutions, hence the sentence cited by Chinese President Xi Jinping, “the key to sound relations between states lies in the affinity between their people”.

(Translated by Ma Jiatai)

From the perspective of creating a community of

# People-to-people Diplomacy of China under the background of The “Belt and Road” Initiative

Su Yanxiang

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core, China has made great achievements, in social and economic development with rapidly rising comprehensive national strength growing international influence and the expansion of diplomatic work. China's diplomacy is stepping into a whole new era, in which opportunities and challenges coexist. Currently, the Belt and Road initiative is being implemented steadily, and has attracted wide attention from the international community and positive response from many countries. At the same time, there are also misunderstandings and misinterpretations among some countries and people about the foreign policy and practice of China. With the expansion of foreign exchanges in terms of scope and complication. Being flexible, popular, amicable and pragmatic, social organizations and people-to-

people exchanges cannot in telling be ignored the story of China.

## **I. The targets, principles and missions of people-to-people diplomacy**

As an important part of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, people-to-people diplomacy has been playing its indispensable important role. Currently, it's very important to develop our social organizations, encourage our social organizations to widely and orderly participate in international exchange, expand the existence of Chinese social organizations in the international community so as to match the strength of our country, and foster a public opinion expression system well integrated with the overall diplomacy.

As an important part of diplomacy, people-to-people diplomacy is highly oriented in people

and has a prominent role of supplementing the government's job. Under the leadership of the Party, people-to-people diplomacy of China should target at international governmental organizations like the UN, influential international non-governmental organizations, local governments and social organizations of different countries, such as the media, think tanks, enterprises, business associations and overseas Chinese groups, take part in international affairs as non-governmental forces, and work with international counterparts to maintain peaceful development of the world as well as enhance the healthy and sustainable development of bilateral and multilateral relations.

## **II. Historical position, opportunities and challenges of people-to-people diplomacy under new circumstances**

At present, the pattern of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics is gradually forming and steadily developing, and the Belt and Road initiative and diplomacy with neighboring countries is being steadily implemented, which opened wide space for people-to-people diplomacy, and at the same time granted people-to-people diplomacy greater historical mission and development opportunity. People-to-people diplomacy could, on the one hand, become "loudspeaker", interpreter and practitioner of the foreign strategic proposition of China, on the other hand, gather friends, resources and support for the job of the Party and government, thus promoting pragmatic cooperation and exchange in all areas.

At the same time, we should realize that China is now facing some prominent challenges in terms of people-to-people diplomacy. On the one hand, social organizations of China as a whole have a series of problems, such as immature development, weak capacity, incomplete sector coverage, inadequate capacity building and inadequate experience in terms of international cooperation and exchanges, therefore, they cannot fully satisfy the need international job. On the other hand, in a complicated international environment, there is a long way to go for social organizations of China to go abroad, deal with perplexed circumstances, and carry out job independently.

## **III. How to channel the development of people-to-people diplomacy**

With the features of flexibility, diversity, wide coverage, developed network and people friendliness, people-to-people diplomacy can contribute wisdom to major state foreign strategy and planning in time, and tell the stories of China in easy-to-understand manners; it can walk deep into the civil society of some countries and communicate with local media and think tanks, thus enhancing the improvement of China's national image; it can, in line with the needs of regional development, promote local social and economic development via boosting cultural, economic and scientific exchanges.

People-to-people diplomacy is a long and arduous task. To make achievement and expand influence, people-to-people diplomacy should make persistent

efforts to improve its strength and attractiveness, continuously strengthen capacity building and network building, appropriately set short and mid-term objectives and implement them step by step.

In the short term, people-to-people diplomacy should focus on the following objectives: first, establish well-functioning organizational structures at the provincial-level of the country and form a sound and interactive response mechanism; second, catering to the needs of major foreign tasks, foster, develop and support a number of social organizations so as to prepare strong teams for future people-to-people diplomacy; third, support and organize eligible social organizations to take part in diplomatic practice, so as to explore ways and gather experience for carrying out people-to-people diplomacy.

In the mid-term, people-to-people diplomacy should focus on the following objectives: first, build a people-to-people diplomacy them featuring well-functioning system, integrated organization, wide coverage and outstanding capability, achieve certain steady existence in the international community, and show the abilities of expressing ideas and making coordination in international affairs; second, establish far-reaching coordinating bodies and mechanisms of local people-to-people diplomacy, and make sufficient policy investment and funding; third, formulate social organization development plan and enhance the forming and improvement of people-to-people diplomacy force; fourth, encourage social organizations to carry out international exchanges and help them broaden

channels of international cooperation, support outstanding social organizations to further improve their strength; fifth, support social organization to participate in projects related with people's livelihood or public interest at abroad.

With the successful staging of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, the Belt and Road initiative has been widely recognized by all countries, with a more prominent status of China on the international stage, and higher expectation on China's leadership in global development from the international community. In the current new circumstances, China should further explore the role of people-to-people diplomacy in strengthening public opinion communication, enhancing people-to-people bonds and encourage cooperation in areas related with people's livelihood. We should also guide people-to-people diplomacy practice with people-to-people diplomacy theory with Chinese characteristics, learn from practice and make continuous efforts to improve the theory and policy of people-to-people diplomacy, support and guide people-to-people diplomacy "going abroad" and "letting in" and gradually develop themselves in the process of practice, so as to became strong complement to official diplomacy, thus enhancing deep communication and cooperation between China and the rest of the world.

Su Yanxiang, Deputy Chief of Foreign Affairs Division, Foreign Affairs Office of People's Government of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region

(Translated by Ma Jiatai)



# Attending UN Human Rights Council Session: My Experience and Thoughts

Tong Lihua

The 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council was convened in Geneva from 6-23 June 2017. Both with ECOSOC Special Consultative Status since 2011, Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center and Beijing Zhicheng Migrant Workers' Legal Aid and Research Center where I work sent a 4-member delegation led by me to the Session. This is the first time that NGOs from China attended the entire process of a UN Human Rights Council Session in an in-depth way, which attracted wide attention from both home and abroad.

## **I. What We Did and What We Achieved**

We managed to get two chances to speak at the general debate, hosted two side events, attended over twenty side events hosted by NGOs from other countries as well as over a dozen of informal consultations on relevant resolutions. We also sent delegates to the ITU Summit, called on the UN department related to NGOs and 10 plus INGOs' offices in Geneva. I made a presentation titled "China's Reform in Rule of Law" at the request of China's Permanent Mission to the UN Office at

Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland. When meeting with us, Ambassador Ma Zhaoxu gave high appraisal of our in-depth participation in UN Human Rights mechanism. He expressed his hope for seeing our continuous participation in the future. As a matter of fact, I scored a lot by attending this session of Human Rights Council.

## **A. Briefing on China's Development and Achievements in Human Rights and Rule of Law**

In this session, UNHRC Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights delivered his report on China's poverty reduction, which was full of prejudiced criticism to China's rule of law and social development. Meanwhile, a very small number of countries and INGOs unscrupulously blamed China over its human rights situation. I explicitly pointed out at the general debate, "the international community lacks basic understanding about the all-round reform of rule of law in China. The presentation of UNHRC Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights fails to be accurate or objective." Then I gave briefings on

positive developments of China's reform in legal system, criminal law, lawsuit system centered on trial, filing system reform as well as contributions of executive accusation law amendments to supervision over government authority by citizens. I also talked about China's achievements in development of human rights and rule of law from a professional and objective perspective.

## B. Steering Attention to Common Challenges Faced by Mankind

Instead of topics around China, the focus of the two side events we hosted was put on the problems of common concern by human society from a perspective of "building a community of shared future for mankind" put forward by President Xi Jinping. On June 20, Beijing Zhicheng Migrant Workers' Legal Aid and Research Center sponsored a side event themed "Against all Forms of Violence", at which, I gave a lecture reviewing the challenges brought about by all forms of violence to human society, including domestic violence against women and children, wars and regional conflicts as well as terrorism. In my lecture, I also criticized UN human rights mechanism for putting too much emphasis on naming and shaming. I called for joint efforts of mankind to build a world "against all forms of violence", for which, I put forward eight proposals for action. On the afternoon of June 21, Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center hosted a side event themed "Against Child Sexual Abuse". Catherine from Ending the Exploitation of Children and I delivered theme reports respectively. We called for enhanced international cooperation in preventing and ending sexual exploitation and abuse. I also put forward some specific proposals in this regard. Both themed side events were focused on hot topics of common

concern of mankind and raised very constructive and practical suggestions from apparent oriental perspectives, which demonstrated the maturity of China's social organizations and their capability of taking part in addressing global problems.

## C. Elaborating Positive Role of China's NGOs in Safeguarding Human Rights with Real Cases

A few countries and international organizations have been unscrupulously blaming China for cracking down rights-safeguarding NGOs. As a matter of fact, the two NGOs I am working with both belong to this category. In the past two decades, these two NGOs have carried out a large number of activities in safeguarding legitimate rights of children and migrant workers, and handled great amount of cases involving rights-safeguarding with broad social influence. Over 600,000 children, migrant workers and other vulnerable people have benefited directly from the free legal aids provided by the two organizations. These activities have been fully appraised by the Chinese ruling party and government as well as all walks of life for not only contributing to safeguarding human rights but also helping to alleviate social contradictions in a timely and effective way. These real cases serve as the best examples of China's human rights development. After attending our side events, Founder and CEO of International Bridges to Justice Karen Tse commented that the two side events were of great success, in the way that allowed the audience better know about the efforts made by Chinese lawyers and NGOs as well as their contributions to tackle violence, sexual abuse against children and other topics of common concern by human society. She also expressed her hope to see more Chinese NGOs participating in international events and her

readiness to cooperate more with Chinese NGOs.

## **II. Some Thoughts and Proposals**

Based on our in-depth participation in this session of UN Human Rights Council as well as our experience of calling on relevant international organizations, we see great space for China's NGOs to participate in UN mechanism. Currently there are about 400 NGO offices in Geneva, among which, only that of the Amity Foundation is from China. NGOs from different countries sponsor over 100 side events during each Human Rights Session, yet in most cases those from China don't sponsor any. Therefore, we felt very glad to see three side events sponsored by Chinese NGOs during this session. Chinese NGOs are not capable yet of putting forward international topics on their own initiatives or systematically planning for sponsoring side events, delivering speech at the assemblies and unofficial consultations, which resulted in very weak role in advancing the formulation of UN resolutions and leading international activities. Based on the above, we have several proposals as follows:

### **A. Facilitating Establishment of a Number of INGOs in Special Areas**

Those playing major roles in today's international governance system are intergovernmental organizations and INGOs. The former mainly refers to the United Nations while the latter refers to those with major influence such as Davos Economic Reform. According to a Geneva-based international exchange service center, it may take ten years to form an intergovernmental organization while it takes only two days to register an INGO. Countries all over the world are attaching more and more importance to the role played by INGOs. There are

over 7000 INGOs in US, over 400 in UK and over 300 in Japan. About 1200 INGOs are registered each year. In contrast, those based in China and with extensive international influence are very rare. We propose that the Chinese government attach importance to INGOs' role from a strategic perspective and facilitate the establishment of a number of INGOs.

### **B. Investing More in Funding NGOs' Participation in International Activities**

China's funding to UN and other international organizations has been increasing significantly in recently years. However, if not incorporated with national interest, this funding may not only fail in effectively giving play to Chinese NGOs' role, but also nurture and strengthen criticisms and condemnations. Many INGOs carrying out international projects are funded by different countries. Mechanisms funding domestic NGOs to carry out international projects have been set up in many countries, for example, the Agency of International Development in the US (USAID) and the Civilian Assistance Support Office under Economic Cooperation Bureau of Foreign Ministry of Japan. These mechanisms effectively fund the participation in international cooperation by NGOs from their own country. We propose that the Chinese government, when funding multilateral projects including those of UN and bilateral projects, take into consideration funding the participation in international activities by Chinese domestic NGOs.

### **C. Cultivating INGO talents**

In recent years, Chinese government has attached increasing importance to the cultivation and recommendation of talents for intergovernmental

organizations. However, the cultivation of and support to talents for INGOs are still far from enough, which has not only restricted the development of Chinese INGOs, but also decreased the efficiency of China's recommendation of experts to UN mechanisms such as different committees of Human Rights Council. For instance, among the over 100 experts in UN Committee on the Rights of the Child since it's founded, not a single one was recommended by China. This situation has placed restrictions on China's status and influence in international arena. We propose that the Chinese government enhance its efforts to cultivate and support talents for INGOs.

#### D. Establishing Platforms for Cooperation with UN

Aimed to facilitate efforts to end violence against children, a Global Partnership to end Violence against Children was established jointly by UNICEF, WHO and a number of INGOs, with funds provided by the national governments of UK, Sweden and some other countries. Most of the staff members in the project office are from NGOs. This type of financial assistance provided by state governments through the UN platform and with help of NGOs is naturally influential in international sphere, which helps to improve the state capability as well as that of NGOs to influence international affairs. We propose that NGOs innovate their ways of "going abroad" by strengthening cooperation with UN mechanisms and establishing a number of new international platforms for that cooperation.

#### E. Giving Help to Qualified NGOs for Establishing Offices in New York or Geneva

UN as an intergovernmental organization with the biggest influence in today's world witnesses

government delegations playing major roles. We propose that help be given to qualified professional NGOs to establish representative offices in New York or Geneva, which could not only participate in activities related to UN mechanisms in an in-depth way, but also serve as think tanks for government delegations in a favorable interactive way.

#### F. Building a Mechanism for Good Cooperation between Government and NGOs

NGOs need a favorable environment for "going abroad", such as encouragement from their sponsoring agencies and assistance by embassies and consulates. NGOs could be effectively supported for their "going abroad" only if it is regarded as a part of national strategic efforts to building a community of shared future for mankind. We propose that the departments concerned pay substantial attention and give specific support to NGOs' "going abroad". Of course, NGOs should also keep in touch and coordinate with the government on their relevant activities.

President Xi Jinping delivered a speech at the UN Office at Geneva at the beginning of 2017, which achieved high applaud from the international community. Standing on a brand-new historical stage, we should contribute to building a community of shared future for mankind by working actively in an all-round way for the "going abroad" of NGOs.

(Translated by Zhu Jingfang)

# A Successful Practice of Promoting Chinese Culture by “Going Global”

“‘Strength and Beauty’-Exhibition of Fan Yang’s Sports and Painting Works” Successfully Staged in Olympic Museum of Lausanne, Switzerland

At the invitation of Bach, President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), “‘Strength and Beauty’-Exhibition of Fan Yang’s Sports and Painting Works” was staged in Olympic Museum of Lausanne, Switzerland on the evening of May 5, 2017. This is the first time for the Olympic Museum to stage a solo exhibition for a Chinese artist since its opening in 1993.

The works exhibited this time were sports-related collections created Mr. Fan Yang in recent years. Mr. Fan Yang, council member of China NGO Network for International Exchanges, Deputy Head of Academy of Traditional Chinese Painting, China National Academy of Painting and President of Nanjing Painting and Calligraphy Academy, integrated Olympic sports spirit and the strong and vigorous figures of athletes of different countries with traditional Chinese painting. In his painting, Fan Yang skillfully demonstrated the artistic realm of syncretism of body and mind, and fully embodied the Olympic sports spirit of “higher, faster and stronger”.

President Bach of IOC attended and addressed the opening ceremony. “The Olympic Museum is a very important place for displaying art. President Xi Jinping visited IOC Museum in January 2017 and presented gifts to IOC. Mr. Fan presents us artistic works integrating traditional Chinese art forms with modern sports, which embody the great spirit and values of sports as well as the integration of sports and culture. In the future, we will present more works of more artists to the whole world, just like the works of Mr. Fan. His painting skill has reached a quite high level and is unique”, said Bach.





In his speech, Mr. Fan Yang first extended appreciation to the invitation of President Bach and the precious opportunity given by IOC to Chinese artists. “China successfully held the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, and is now actively preparing for the staging of 2022 Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. With the memory of Beijing 2008 Olympic Games fresh in mind, the Chinese people are full of expectations for 2022 Winter Games. The Chinese artists are making all their efforts to the creation of sports-related painting works, so as to fully demonstrate the understanding of the Olympic spirit and the expectation on the Winter Games”, said Fan Yang.

There are 22 pieces of sports-themed painting on exhibition this time. They include works recording the great events related to China’s participation in the Winter Games, such as “Beijing Mayor Wang Anshun submitted bidding report to Barrett” and “Mr. Li Jianrou won the first gold medal for the Chinese delegation in 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics”. “Besides, there are also works showing the presence of international sports stars, such as “Bolt-the fastest man in the world” “Federer’s scream” and “Serena Williams defeated Maria Sharapova and won championship”. The Chinese ink painting is helpful for people of other countries better understand the style of traditional Chinese art.

This is an important event of people-to-people exchange in support of China’s bid for 2022 Winter Olympics. It is also an important attempt of China NGO Network for International Exchanges in encouraging individual council members to actively participate in international exchanges. Mr. Yu Zaiqing, Vice President of IOC said, “In this exhibition, in the form of Chinese art, Mr. Fan

Yang has displayed the value of sports to the whole world, highlighted the charm of Chinese culture, and shaped the global recognition of Chinese art. He is a practitioner and promoter of the Olympic spirit of our era. His efforts have not only promoted international cultural exchanges and cultural integration, but also highlighted the value and status of Chinese art in the world.”

(Translated by Ma Jiatai)



# "Brightness Action" Medical Service

China Foundation for Peace and Development has organized medical service teams to operate cataract surgeries in many countries, including Myanmar, Mongolia, and Sudan. More than one thousand patients were benefited from the cataract surgeries. Additionally, four hospitals were set up in Myanmar, Cambodia, Mongolia, and other countries by CFPD along with donation of ambulances, training of medical staff, offer of medical services to villagers, and some other public-welfare activities.



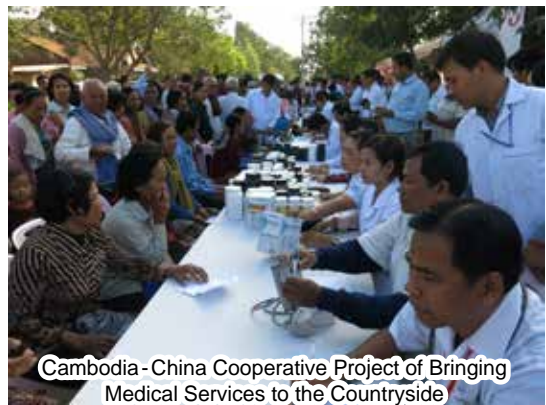
Mongolia - China Chingeltei District Children's Hospital



Cambodia - China Friendship Anloung Kgnan Health Center Project and the Donated Ambulance Vehicles



Chinese Ophthalmology Experts Offering Free Cataract Surgeries in Myanmar



Cambodia - China Cooperative Project of Bringing Medical Services to the Countryside



Cambodian Students from the  
Donated School by CFPD



Cambodia-China Friendship Indradevi Middle School



Old and New School buildings of Swe Taw Primary School



Mongolia-China Khuumun Kindergarden



The Intra-facility of the Mongolia-China Khuumun  
Kindergarden

Until Oct 2017, more than thirty schools and kindergartens were set up by China Foundation for Peace and Development in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippine, Sudan, and other countries. And four computer training projects were implemented in Turkey, Tajikistan, and Nepal where more than 30,000 students were benefited from.



# US-China Think Tank Symposium Closing Session Program

Speech by Iowa State Senator Charles Schneider

**June 12, 2017**



[Editor's Notes: US-China Think Tank Symposium was jointly sponsored by The World Food Prize Foundation, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations on June 12, 2017.]

The speech is made by Iowa State Senator Charles Schneider at the Closing Session of the Symposium. Schneider once participated in the 2nd China-US-Europe Young Leaders Exchange Program sponsored by CAFIU from September 8 to 17, 2015.]

First, I'd like to welcome you to Iowa and to the World Food Prize. We are honored to host you. There are many distinguished guests in attendance. There are representatives from prestigious think tanks, government officials, and business and community leaders, including from Iowa's sister state, Hebei Province. In reviewing the program, I see that you have had very interesting discussions on Sino-US trade and economic relations, province-state exchanges and collaboration, and the future of Sino-US relations.

I also understand that you took time to visit

Muscatine yesterday. That is one of my hometowns. My family lived there when I was born. We moved away when I was two years old, but returned for another two year period of time when I was eight years old. Muscatine has a special place in the history of the relationship between our two great nations. I am proud to call it a hometown, and I hope you enjoyed your visit there.

I wanted to talk about two main points. First is the importance of the U.S. relationship with China to the State of Iowa. Iowa's economic ties with China have strengthened in recent years. China was Iowa's fourth largest trading partner in 2016, and its third largest trading partner in 2015. Most of that trade is tied to the agricultural sector, but it also includes financial services.

In addition to serving in the Iowa Senate, I work for Principal Financial Group, a financial services company headquartered here in Des Moines, Iowa. Since 2005, Principal has had an asset management joint venture with China Construction Bank. Principal has offices in Beijing and Hong Kong. Last year, Principal and China Construction Bank announced that they will also pursue a similar joint venture in the pension sector.

Iowa is a relatively small state. Its economic growth is largely dependent on exports to foreign markets. That's why trade with China is a critical

component for Iowa's future growth. It is in our best interest to strengthen that relationship.

That brings me to my second point, which is the importance of exchanges between our two great nations to growing that relationship. I can point to the history of the relationship between the State of Iowa and China as an example. It began with a visit by a young government official from China to Muscatine, Iowa. He was welcomed by Iowa's young governor. Today, that young Chinese government official is China's President, Xi Jinping. That young Iowa governor is now the United States Ambassador to China, Terry Branstad.

But I can also point to personal experience. In September 2015, I participated in the US-EU Young Leaders Exchange Program, sponsored by the Chinese Association for International Understanding. During my visit, I spent time in Beijing and Qinghai Province. That experience was valuable to me in many ways.

I learned about China's political system and had the opportunity to meet government officials, including the former Chinese Ambassador to North Korea. My colleagues and I had the opportunity to ask him about relationship between the two countries. I was surprised at his candor and willingness to discuss the topic. Many of the points he made have helped me put current developments with North Korea in the proper context.

I learned about China's economy. I saw with my own eyes that China is investing heavily to transition away from a manufacturing-based economy. While in Beijing, we toured Innovation Way, a street that used to house book stores. When we visited, it was home to about ten business accelerators and a government service center catering to technology company

startups. While in Qinghai Province, I saw the "New Silk Road" leg of President Xi's One Belt One Road program being built before my eyes as we traveled from Xining to an Olympic training facility and to Qinghai Lake.

I also learned about China's people and culture. Everywhere we went, we were welcomed with open arms. We spent a day with a host family and experienced what life is like for a typical Chinese family. We ate authentic Chinese cuisine, including the famous Peking duck, and drank Maotai.

I cannot think of a better way to learn about China, its people, and its culture, than through the exchange. That's why I firmly believe that exchanges and collaboration are essential to growing the relationship between our nations.

We have our political differences. Some of them are significant and will be difficult to resolve. But those differences underscore why these exchanges are so important. The more we interact with one another, the more ties we will weave. The more ties we create, the more likely it will be in our mutual national interest to resolve those differences peacefully and collaboratively. Every exchange creates new ties, growing like a web to bind us together during difficult times. For that reason, I hope they continue. And if you're ever in need of an extra participant, I'm available!





# United Nations Office for Partnerships

The United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP) strives to serve as a gateway for partnership building between the private sector, foundations and other non-State actors and the United Nations system in furtherance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNOP's field of work falls into three integrated areas:

The Office serves as the operational interface between the United Nations Foundation and the United Nations system in support of high-impact projects implemented throughout the world by UN system agencies;

UNOP also serves as the administrative hub for the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), providing administrative support for UNDEF's operations;

Moreover, the Office advises, guides and facilitates partnership events and initiatives between the United Nations and non-state actors (such as private sector, foundation and civil society) in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## UNFIP

The United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) was established by the UN Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan in 1998 to serve as the interface between the United Nations Foundation (UN Foundation) and the United Nations (UN) system. UNFIP is a UN trust fund that manages and accounts for the UN Foundation's grant-making to the United Nations and also provides ongoing guidance and accountability for the Foundation's work in accordance with the Relationship Agreement between the UN and UN Foundation. As part of

its governance structure, UNFIP has an Advisory Board, which is chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and comprised of senior representatives from the UN Secretariat, Member States and outside experts.

The United Nations Foundation (UN Foundation) was founded in 1998 by entrepreneur and philanthropist Ted Turner to channel a historic \$1 billion gift to support United Nations causes and activities. The UN Foundation, a public US charity, has served as a vanguard for partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector that has inspired others. The Foundation collaborates with the United Nations to foster innovative partnerships, campaigns and initiatives to secure better and healthier lives for people across the globe by focusing on the areas below: Global Health; Women, Girls and Population; Energy and Climate; Advocacy, Communication and other development-related issues .

### **UNDEF**

The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) was created by the UN Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan in 2005 as a United Nations General Trust Fund to support democratization efforts around the world. UNDEF supports projects that strengthen the voice of civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation

of all groups in democratic processes. The large majority of UNDEF funds go to local civil society organizations – both in transition and consolidation phases of democratization. UNDEF has supported over 600 projects in more than 100 countries at a total amount of almost US\$170 million. UNDEF grants range from US\$100,000 to US\$300,000.

### **Partnership Advisory and Outreach Services**

The UNOP also provides Partnership Advisory and Outreach Services in response to requests from the UN system, non-state actors and Member States pursuing public-private partnerships in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for action. This area of UNOP's work includes co-convening a number of high profile events at the United Nations each year that engage non-state actors (private foundations, civil society organizations, private sector and business associations, academic institutions) together with UN entities that share a common commitment to advancing the SDGs in innovative and impactful ways through cross-sector partnerships.

The organization of UNOP is elaborated in the Secretary-General's Bulletin dated 18 December 2009 (ST/SGB/2009/14).