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Letters may be edited for length or content.

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Editor's Note

Overview of the InterAction Council's 35th Annual Plenary Meeting

The InterAction Council, in partnership with the Chinese Association for International Understanding, held its 35th Annual Plenary Meeting from September 28th to 30th, 2018 in Beijing, China. Around 100 delegates, including the former state leaders and experts from over 20 countries, attended the Meeting and discussed issues of global governance, international trade, artificial intelligence and climate change etc. under the theme of “Global Governance: A Necessity for Our Times”.

Chinese President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory letter to the Meeting. Vice President Wang Qishan met with the former state leaders. Ji Bingxuan, Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee and Vice President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding, announced President Xi's congratulatory letter and delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of the Meeting.

(Translated by Xia Jiaoye)



Congratulatory Message of President Xi Jinping on the 35th Annual Meeting of the InterAction Council

On the occasion of the opening session of the 35th Annual Meeting of the InterAction Council, on behalf of the Chinese government and Chinese people, and in my own name, I'd like to extend warm congratulations on the opening of the session and sincere welcome to the members of the InterAction Council present at the session!

The world today is faced with changes unprecedented in 100 years. The reform of the global governance system and the international order is accelerating, and it has become a general trend and the common task for all countries to strengthen global governance and improve the global governance system. The InterAction Council has made continuous efforts on solving global challenges and played an active role in safeguarding world peace and promoting common development. As the session focused on topics about global governance affairs, I believe the important session would help various parties deepen their consensus and improve the global governance system.

China always follows the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration in engaging in global governance, firmly supports multilateralism and actively promotes the building of a new type of international relations, as well as a community with a shared future for humanity. We stand ready to work with the international community to strengthen the exploration and practice on improving the global governance system and jointly build a better future for humanity!

I wish the meeting a complete success!

Xi Jinping
President of the People's Republic of China
September 28, 2018
Beijing

Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan Meets Members of InterAction Council

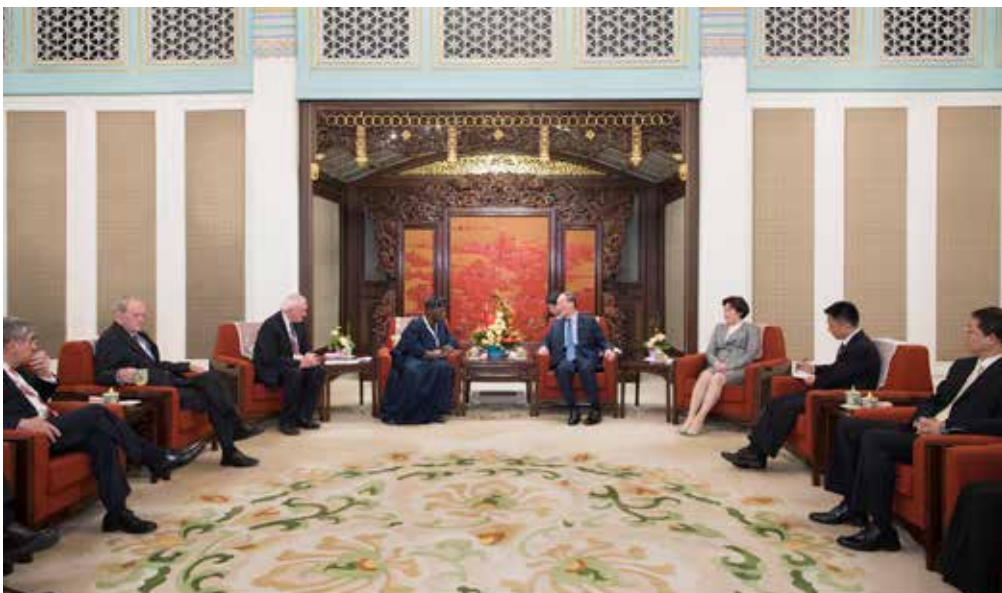
Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan met with members of the InterAction Council in Beijing on September 29.

Wang said that every country should follow the path consistent with its own characteristics. He said that the socialist road with Chinese characteristics has been found after hard exploration and unremitting struggle during the nearly 70 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and the 40 years of reform and opening-up since 1978, and is also deeply rooted in the Chinese civilization that have stretched 5,000 years. Currently, different countries in the world are interconnected with one another, with interests deeply intertwined. Guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, China

will unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development and promote the building of a community of shared future for humanity. China appreciates the efforts made by the InterAction Council on promoting global peace and development, he said, adding that he hopes the 35th Annual Session of the InterAction Council is a complete success.

Members of the InterAction Council said the international community should adhere to multilateralism and resolve major world issues through dialogue, consultation and cooperation, adding that the council stands ready to work with China to make suggestions on improving global governance.

(Translated by Wang Bo)

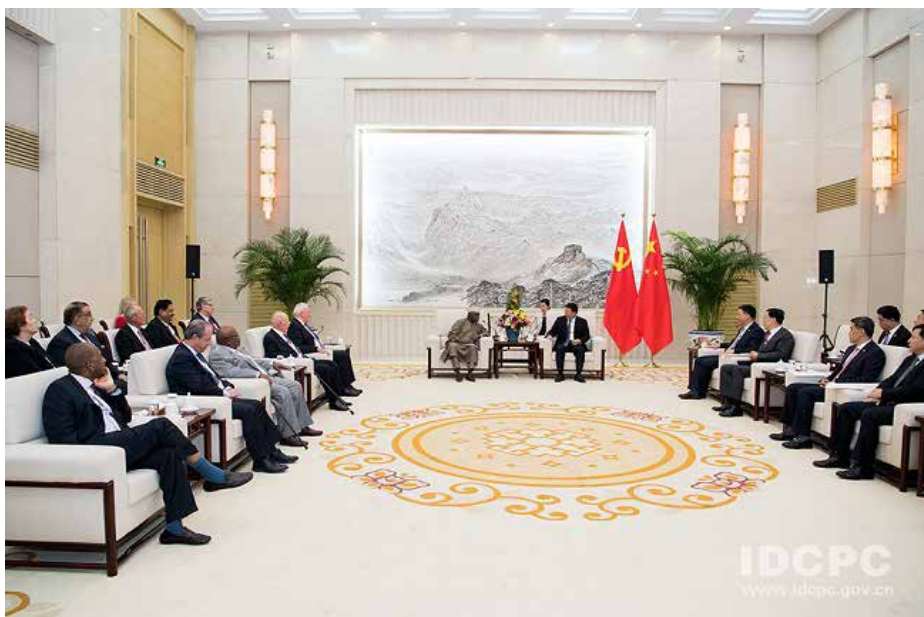


Minister Song Tao Meets with InterAction Council Members

Song Tao, Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee (IDCPC), held a group meeting with members of InterAction Council on September 30, 2018.

Song Tao congratulated on the successful convening of the 35th annual meeting of the InterAction Council in Beijing. Song said that President Xi Jinping's congratulatory message to the 35th annual meeting fully reflects the great importance the Chinese side has attached to strengthening and improving the global governance system as well as its positive attitude as always. The Chinese side is willing to continue strengthening exchanges and cooperation with

InterAction Council. Song introduced the exchanges between the CPC and political parties around the world, and expressed that China will follow the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, firmly adhere to the path of peaceful development, and promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. Song said that China has always been a builder of international peace, a contributor to global development, and a defender of the international order. It has actively promoted the establishment of a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness and win-win cooperation, and actively facilitated the economic globalization



toward a path that is more open, inclusive, balanced, and win-win-oriented. China has always adhered to the concept of global governance featuring wide consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits, and believes that the world's affairs should be discussed by all countries, the international rules should be jointly formulated by all countries, and the development results should be shared by people of all countries. This is also the principle of the Belt and Road Initiative. Song emphasized that China's development cannot be separated from the rest of the world, and vice versa. With the continuous deepening of reform and opening-up, China will create more and better opportunities for the world.

Former Nigerian Prime Minister Obasanjo and former Prime Minister of Ireland Bertie Ahern spoke on behalf of the InterAction Council. Obasanjo thanked President Xi Jinping for his congratulatory message to the annual meeting and China's strong support for the organization of this annual meeting. He said that President Xi Jinping's congratulatory message has been echoed by many people at the annual meeting. The ideas and concepts stated in the congratulatory message were widely recognized by the participants. President Xi Jinping pointed out in his congratulatory message that China has always adhered to the concept of global governance featuring wide consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, actively promotes the construction of a new type of international relations, firmly supports multilateralism, and promotes the building of a community of shared future for mankind, which coincides with the purposes of the InterAction Council. The InterAction Council was established in 1983 with the purpose of

giving full play to the experience and influence of the former political leaders of various countries. It not only focuses on the current issues of great importance, but also sets sights on the future development of the world. It proposes solutions and suggestions to the leaders of different countries on major challenges facing all mankind, and strives to improve the overall well-being of the humanity in the hope of making the world a better place. The InterAction Council appreciates China's proposal to strengthen multilateral cooperation, improve global governance, and achieve common development. It is willing to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation with China in joint efforts to solve different types of risks and challenges facing humanity.

Bertie Ahern said that the InterAction Council actively advocates multilateralism and international cooperation, attaches great importance to the role of international organizations, and actively supports the development of international organizations. The InterAction Council highly appreciates the President Xi Jinping's view on global governance in his congratulatory message and is willing to strengthen cooperation with China in global governance. By holding this annual meeting, the InterAction Council has established good cooperative relations with the IDCPC and the CAFIU. It is willing to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation, continuously expand areas of cooperation and improve the cooperation.

Guo Yezhou, Li Jun, Wang Yajun and Qian Hongshan, Vice-Ministers of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, attended the meeting.

Towards a Global Governance System That is More Just and Reasonable

**Speech by Ji Bingxuan, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the NPC
and Vice President of CAFIU
at the Opening Ceremony of the 35th Annual Meeting of the InterAction Council**



Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen, friends:
Good morning!

First of all, on behalf of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU), I would like to extend warm welcome to all of you attending the 35th Annual Meeting of the InterAction Council. Now I'd like to read out the congratulatory message from President Xi Jinping.

(Reading out the Congratulatory Message of President Xi Jinping)

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

President Xi Jinping's congratulatory message expounds on the current international situation and the Chinese government's involvement in global governance, and affirms the work of the InterAction Council. The message demonstrates the CPC and the Chinese government value the role of the InterAction Council and its involvement in global governance. We are deeply honored to hold the annual meeting as the partner of the InterAction Council.

The world today is undergoing profound changes. Countries are increasingly interconnected and interdependent, and the adjustment of the international order is accelerating. What's more, the world is facing increasing uncertainty and instability. The challenges of sustainable development of the world economy has been on the rise, non-traditional security threats such as terrorism have continued to spread, and the importance and urgency of global governance has been further enhanced. As a responsible great nation, China firmly upholds the international order and international system centered on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, safeguards the open world economic system, promotes the establishment of a new type of international relations, builds a community of shared future for mankind, and contributes China's wisdom and solution to the improvement of the global governance.

The InterAction Council provides a platform for senior statesmen to contribute to the solution of global challenges and global cooperation. In the

new era, I believe the InterAction Council will provide innovate ideas, promote cooperation, and make greater contributions to the development of the global governance system. I'd like to make three recommendations:

First, promoting changes and improving the design of global governance system. Designed by western countries headed by the United States after World War II, the current global governance system is unable to adapt to the needs of the world. Hegemony, unilateralism, and anti-globalization have increasingly threatened world peace and development. We should promote the innovation of the systems by various countries, set the basic principles of international multilateral cooperation, improve international law, maintain the multilateral trading system, and conduct mutually beneficial cooperation extensively. The Belt and Road Initiative put forward by China complies with the inherent requirements of the reform of the global governance system, helps facilitate the practice of global cooperation and governance, and provides new ideas and new solutions for improving the global governance system.

Second, making up for the deficit and enhancing the ability of the international community to respond to global challenges. President Xi Jinping pointed out: Peace deficit, development deficit, and governance deficit are serious challenges facing the humanity. The current international community's governance on terrorism, refugee, infectious diseases, climate change, food security, energy security, and cyber security is still inadequate. We should facilitate countries' efforts to strengthen the warning and prevention of non-traditional security issues, enhance international cooperation, and improve their ability to respond to global challenges. This session will focus on issues such as climate change, artificial intelligence, cyber security, and prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. I believe it will help the relevant parties deepen understanding, build consensus, and promote new progress in solving relevant problems.

Third, practicing the concept of wide consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. Global

problems cannot be solved by one or a few countries, nor can the relevant countries evade international responsibility. The results of global governance cannot benefit only a few people, but should benefit the people of the whole world. We must promote the voice of the vast number of emerging economies in global economic governance, and promote a more balanced reflection of the will and interests of most countries in global governance system, especially developing countries, and facilitate the equality in rights, opportunities, and rules among different countries in participating in global governance. In the main body of governance, we should promote the positive roles of non-state players such as non-governmental organizations, multinational organizations, and multinational corporations in global governance.

The Chinese Association for International Understanding is the Chinese partner of this annual meeting. CAFIU has brought together celebrities and social groups from all walks of life in China to promote the understanding and cooperation between the Chinese people and the people of the rest of the world, safeguard world peace and promote common development. It conducts friendly exchanges and cooperation with various organizations of different countries. There is huge potential for the future cooperation between the CAFIU and the InterAction Council. It is hoped that by co-hosting this year's annual meeting, the two organizations can further exchanges, strengthen cooperation and make concerted efforts in seeking development.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

The world people's longing for a good life has never been stronger, and the ways humanity can tap into to tackle difficulties have never been more adequate. We are willing to work with the international community to jointly safeguard and promote world peace and development, and usher in a better future for the humanity!

I wish the annual meeting a complete success!

(Translated by Wang Bo)

Present State of the World

Keynote Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 35th Annual Plenary Meeting of the InterAction Council

By James B. Bolger, Former Prime Minister of New Zealand

28 September 2018
Beijing, People's Republic of China

Good morning. I extend my greetings to fellow members and associate members of the InterAction Council and to the impressive array of experts in attendance, and to all others who are attending this conference.

On behalf of the Council I extend our thanks to our Chinese hosts who have in so many ways helped the Council hold this gathering here in Beijing.

On a personal basis I am delighted to be back in Beijing and to see again this remarkable city whose changes over recent decades are truly impressive.

My remarks address the traditional opening topic; 'The Present State of the World'. In addressing that issue I will note that many of today's issues have legacies 100 years old.

Beijing is a long way by all measures from where Joan and I live a few minutes' walk from a long black sand beach on the West Coast of the North Island of New Zealand. Joan and I walk on the beach often.

A few days back, on a beautiful early spring morning I walked along that beach with a gentle tide flowing peacefully back and forth and all was at peace as I looked out across the gentle tide to a beautiful nature reserve on Kapiti Island a little way off shore.

Yet, if I turned my head a little towards the land I walk beside I would note that the sea was moving further inland with every passing storm and how the fence that was at the old high tide mark now lies forlornly on the beach with neither use nor purpose.



I was reflecting as I walked along enjoying the gentle swish of the tide with the world almost to myself, how similar the mood on the Waikanae beach was to the world at large. If we only look in one direction we see little other than progress and prosperity, but if we look elsewhere we see terrible conditions of destitution and poverty.

If we look again we see the hopelessness and utter despair of the 65 million refugees who have nowhere to go and remain locked up in camps because no country offers them a home. I reflect often on how far the world has moved on from the beautiful and humane words carved on the Statue of Liberty overlooking New York harbour.

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”

I reflect on those words as I walk along and have no convincing answer, other than selfishness, as to why that Golden Door has effectively closed across much of the world.

I reflect on the climate change as I walk along and know that if I was able to see further northwest I would see the great but desperately dry lands of New Zealand's closest neighbour Australia, suffering its worst winter drought in decades.

And lifting my eyes a little higher looking south I theoretically would see the great white continent of Antarctica, twice the size of Australia – where I have visited twice. Antarctica's vast ice fields hold the great majority – 70% - of the world's fresh water, but its ice is melting and sea levels are rising.

A recent article I read (Dom Post 1.9.18) gave the world a stark reminder that the time for action is now by noting that:

“The amount of CO₂ in the earth's atmosphere is about the same as it was 3 million years ago when sea levels were about 17 metres higher than they are now”. Scientists don't know how quickly sea levels will rise now the atmosphere has reached that level of CO₂.

The article went on to say that “according to the latest research results, the more severe sea levels rise predictions look much more accurate than the more optimistic ones.”

Secretary General Antonio Guterres of the UN said this month, (11.9.18), referring to the forthcoming report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that;

“We are careering towards the edge of the abyss.”

The Guardian Columnist (6.9.18) George Monbiot puts it equally bluntly: “Defending the planet means changing the world.” A big call, but the facts are known so to achieve the required change means changing our thinking. That is a most difficult challenge, but it is happening.

Any current political leaders who deny the science are in the minority, and will be left on the side-lines of history.

A good example of progress is the decision of major car manufacturers to set a firm date to stop producing polluting diesel and petrol powered vehicles and move to electric powered models.

A key decision to changing our thinking and attitudes to polluting activities and endless growth is to dump Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as the universal measure of progress. GDP, which we have inherited from the 1930's only measures money transactions and is a totally inadequate measure of societal progress. I will come back to that later.

2018 is the tenth anniversary of the last global financial crisis when taxpayers across the world had to spend untold billions to rescue the banking and the underlying financial system.

Despite that catastrophe, big money has a big voice and little has changed.

Local and international media a few times every day tell us somewhat breathlessly what the markets are doing.

And only occasionally what our throwaway society, which in part drives markets and GDP, is doing to the environment.

Remember all that plastic and other junk that has now gathered at what is described as the ‘Great Pacific Garbage Patch’. This floating rubbish dump is 1.6 million square kilometres in size, which is three times the size of France.

We must face the fact “that climate change is no longer some far off problem. It is happening now. Climate change is already disrupting agriculture and ecosystems, our water and food supplies, our energy, our infrastructure, our human health, human safety – now. Today.

And climate change is a trend that affects all trends-economic trends, security trends. Everything will be impacted. And it becomes more dramatic with each passing year.”

That quote came from the US president's address to the Glacier Conference in Alaska, September 2015 – 3 short years ago.

Yes, a different President, and while the political whims of the voters can change leaders, that does not change the science or reality of climate change. The science is the same today as it was in 2015.

As always history casts a long shadow over today's world and while to some extent, we work under that shadow, earlier generations worked together to escape from its more virulent legacies like the wholesale confiscation of land from indigenous people. With

today's many issues we forget that subjugation and slavery were the normal and accepted construct of earlier societies. We have made progress.

While reflecting on historic legacies, recall that after the unspeakable horror of WWI, which cost 40 million lives, the Sykes-Picot agreement, engineered by Britain and France carved up the Arab regions formerly controlled by the Ottoman Empire.

The conflicts and wars in that region still dominate much of the news cycle and foreign powers still claim the right to try and influence the politics and progress of those ancient lands and people to suit their purposes. Tragic.

WWI was followed a short 21 years later by WWII which ended when the world witnessed the frightening power of nuclear weapons with the destruction of the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The other defining aftermath of WWI was the election of Hitler in 1933 who with his enthusiastic supporters, and driven by xenophobic hatred of the Jews and other minorities led to the slaughter of 6 million Jews in Concentration Camps and gas chambers of Nazi Germany. Xenophobic hatred of others is not without relevance today.

The important fact to remember is that at the end of WWII, leaders knew that radical new thinking and new approaches were needed to prevent a repeat of the horrors of two World Wars, a devastating world economic crash in the 1930s and the slaughter of the innocents in WWII. Those events all happened over a short 31 year period, and so horrified leaders that they were prepared to adopt radical new approaches based broadly on the philosophy that we needed to work together as a world community if we were to achieve the twin goals of peace and prosperity.

A first step was to establish the United Nations in 1945 and within the UN to establish the powerful Security Council. And I observe the membership of the Security Council should be changed to better reflect today's world.

Following the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1944 it was agreed that a new framework was needed to facilitate open and fair trade between nations so the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were established and alongside that the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) to establish fair rules for international trade.

The GATT became the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995 and continues the journey to open up trade between nations. Trade is often unequal but still benefits both sides.

To help feed a hungry world the Food and Agricultural Organisation was also set up in 1945 and the World Health Organisation was established in 1948.

The period between 1845 and 1948 can only be described as frenetic in terms of creating a new international order. The activity and diplomacy required should be studied by those who believe that the market alone can solve all issues.

The other movement that spread with relentless energy in country after country was the legitimate demand for independence from colonial masters that also occurred from 1945 onwards.

In addition farsighted leaders, especially in Germany and France, set about uniting the economies of Europe, first through establishing the European Economic Commission (EEC) which became the European Union (EU) in 1992 and ended up with 28 Member countries and 510 million people – a huge trading block.

The twin goals of bringing Europe together were to prevent further wars which has been common down the centuries in Europe, and to bring the economies together to promote the rebuilding and growth of Europe.

The integration went an important step further than just lowering barriers to goods by also allowing the free movements of citizens. This was brave but in my view an important step in breaking down political barriers between people.

I know it is this free movement of people that has caused friction and anger and unfounded fear in some countries. Fanned by unscrupulous leaders it is causing difficulties, but the movement of people will continue as it always has and with brave leadership current emotions will subside and pass.

The next big shift in world politics came with the end of the Cold War which symbolically happened with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and then the reunification of Germany. An air of optimism spread across the world and countries talked of a peace dividend and reducing arms expenditure.

The foregoing is a crude overview of how the world

has evolved after the horror and destruction of the first half of the 20th century. Despite the horror there is much that is positive in the last 100 years, especially in the field of science, technology and food production.

Consider the remarkable fact that the world's population grew from 2 billion in 1918 to today's 7.7 billion and despite that huge increase in population 1.1 billion people moved out of extreme poverty. Thinking of the present state of the world its remarkable what can be achieved when leaders are prepared to lead.

The reality now is that in the first quarter of the 21st century some current leaders seem to have forgotten, wilfully or otherwise, the compelling reasons why their earlier compatriots saw the necessity for a rules based and collaborative international structure and order.

An example is the decision, by a small margin, of the British voters to leave the EU without any semblance of a plan has created uncertainty not only in Britain, but elsewhere.

In the US trade wars are discussed, threatened and implemented as if they were of no consequence. The promotion of contempt and hatred of people from other ethnicities, beliefs and colour are considered by some as the cornerstone of modern politics.

Truth has been discarded and lies, no matter how farcical and absurd are promoted as alternative facts. Truth is described as fake news and integrity ridiculed. Much media coverage is given to the above stories and while most of the world is not following these angry political developments, the question remains as to what has brought about this 'Age of Anger'. By most accounts today's generation has more wealth, options and opportunities than any previous generation. People can do more, see more and achieve more than any other time in human history and yet many somehow feel cheated.

There are many factors behind what I call 'the disillusioned society' but greed and fear, two of the ancient enemies of human kind are the big drivers.

That said there is no cause for despair as the economic model based on individualism and greed, and the pursuit of endless growth is being seriously questioned; the grossly uneven distribution of wealth is being seriously questioned. The whole structure of today's world, much of it inherited from an earlier era, is up for serious discussion.

That is a healthy development as it is recognition that change has happened. China is now the big world player, and presumable feeling on the fringes of Western aligned World Bank and IMF, has established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and established the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

And why not, as so far this decade China has produced almost half of the global GDP growth. China's growth creates another Italy every two years – and Italy is a member of the 'big country club' the G7 but China is not. Another example of current world organisations being legacies of a different era. (Project Syndicate report 27.9.18)

The other big development is China's ambitious Belt and Road initiative spanning much of Eurasia. To me the big message out of today's world is that while some leaders and some countries are turning inwards, other more farsighted leaders see a different and more inclusive world.

Yesterday's world is fading and we should encourage the revolution in thinking that is happening now in Governments, industry and across society. The past is not coming back.

New Zealand started one such revolution 125 years back when we became the first country in the world to give women the vote. Even now that revolution has yet to reach all corners of the world, so that battle continues.

It is more than just the vote, it is about the role that women can and should play in leadership and in senior levels of all aspects of society. This revolution still has a long way to go to achieve equality between women and men.

I mentioned earlier that the world needed to move away from using GDP as a measure of progress as it takes no account of how the economic growth that was measured was created and what purpose was served by the measured growth. The destruction of the environment for example by cutting down virgin rain forests, or building nuclear bombs, would lead to stronger GDP growth.

There are many ways to get growth, but many are totally destructive and like massive investments in nuclear deterrence, lack any moral principles.

With GDP crime is good because large police forces add to GDP and repairing the damage caused by criminals and assorted thugs all add to GDP.

A 'Human Development Index' (HDI) has been developed to capture a broader range of indices, broadly including life expectancy, education opportunities and economic opportunities.

A move in the right direction, but from perspective a comprehensive index must include inequality, gender disparity and importantly the impact of growth on the environment. Yes, more complex but far more valuable in measuring genuine progress.

And in the space of community anger it is worth noting that all the good work done by generous loving people hardly registers in GDP measures. But borrowing money to purchase goods that have little or no value is great for GDP.

That brings up the scary monster of the level of world debt.

Ten years on from the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the start of the 2008 financial crash that destroyed the dreams of millions across the world, we are still playing the same growth song but this time the borrowing to keep the music going is so much larger than in 2008.

The McKinsey Global Institute this month, (Washington Post 4.9.18) notes that total debt now is 'a whopping US\$169 Trillion, up from US\$97 Trillion on the eve of the Great Recession'. I am not going to speculate what the full implications of such a debt mountain are; you can work that out yourself.

I have in general been talking about the world as it is and some of the events that brought the world to this place. Where some see only uncertainty and fear and want to build walls, others see unbelievable opportunities.

Fortunately, modern technology is not constrained by an old fashioned wall.

To achieve the maximum benefits from the extraordinary possibilities that artificial intelligence (AI) and Robots will usher in tomorrow will require that we start now to challenge old thinking, stretch old boundaries and think of new possibilities.

The near universal 40 hour working week only emerged after the industrial revolution and was bedded about 100 years ago. It was hotly contested by the old guard at the time.

With the extraordinary possibilities of AI at our collective fingertips, a 35 hour day or 4 day working

week should already be in the planning stages in advanced economies.

The concept of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) should also be in the planning stage, and likewise universal 24 hour accident cover and universal health care should be an accepted part of all developed societies and a work in progress for all others.

These are not fanciful dreams but realities in many countries now. In New Zealand we have had 24 hour no fault accident cover since the 1970's as well as universal health care.

My point is simple, that while there is much from the past that needs to be remedied and we must continue and complete that effort, we must likewise set out in clear lights why today's gloom is misplaced.

Let me conclude by saying that Leaders must set out the great possibilities of the 21st century and explain their commitment and plans to achieve new exciting goals. Consider how the vision of a free trade agreement encompassing 1.2 billion people, twice the size of the EU, stretching from Cape Town to Cairo would greatly enhance the lives of millions. But this time in the 21st century, let us make sure that all benefit from Globalisation.

AI and robotics are not to be feared but to be seen as today's tools to reduce the drudgery of boring repetitive work.

With machines doing more and more work we humans can plan for a different and more stimulating lifestyle. Instead of bemoaning past failures of policy, let us commit to a new order where all are treated fairly irrespective of ethnicity, colour or religion.

Going forward "You have to be able to hold two ideas in your head at once: the world is getting better and it's not good enough". (Dr. Hans Rosling.) But we must keep trying.

Thank you for your attention.

Final Communiqué

35th Annual Plenary Meeting of the InterAction Council 28-30 September 2018 Beijing, P. R. China

The InterAction Council convened in Beijing, China, from 28-30 September 2018 for its 35th Annual Plenary Meeting. The Council focused on the great challenges affecting the present state of the world, including global governance, international trade, the rise of artificial intelligence, and climate change, among other topics.

Global Governance

The catastrophic world wars of the 20th century opened the eyes of all nations. Leaders began to see that the greatest future challenges to peace and security would be global, enormous in scale, and transnational. The global community concluded that a multilateral system was needed to avoid the horrors of another war. At the core of that system is the United Nations (UN).

Enshrined within the UN Charter are the principles of the sovereignty of states, the prohibition of the use of force, self-determination of peoples, human rights, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Over time, the multilateral system steadily evolved and now includes many agencies under the UN, regional organizations such as the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU), several international treaties, international norms, and international courts and mechanisms designed to guard norms and settle disputes. It is by no means a perfect system, but it has contributed substantially to the preservation of global peace, stability, prosperity, and development.

A generation ago, statesmen recognized that no nation could or should expect to go it alone. And as such, the international system favoured partnership over partisanship. This is no longer the case; our international system is now under attack. As the former prime minister of New Zealand, James

Bolger, told the Council in his 2018 State of the World address:

“The reality now is that in the first quarter of the 21st century some current leaders seem to have forgotten, wilfully or otherwise, the compelling reasons why their earlier compatriots saw the necessity for a rule based and collaborative international structure and order.”

Mr. Bolger specifically mentioned refugees as an issue that some irresponsible politicians have cynically exploited for parochial and short-term political gain. Blaming unemployment and inequality on refugees and migrants is wrong and it is cruel. Denying that the behaviour of humankind can affect the climate simply delays a desperately needed solution. Violence continues to be transboundary. Religious conflict continues to divide. Attacking the international system ignores our collective story, and it is a story of chaos, suffering, and destruction.

Recognizing the need for strengthened global governance, Xi Jinping, President of The People’s Republic of China, urged the Council to “enhance consensus among all parties and promote the improvement of the global governance system.”

The Global Economy and the War on Trade

Our international system was originally based on ideas of multilateral cooperation and the rule of law. The geopolitical landscape, however, has changed substantially since 2016. International institutions, alliances, and other norms that were once considered stable are now under tremendous pressure and are evolving rapidly.

Despite many transnational challenges and

disruption, the world economy has steadily expanded since the 2008 global financial crisis. Less people now live in poverty, the world's financial markets are at all-time highs, and nations are connected tightly through trade, sharing in one another's prosperity.

For example, the combined nations of Europe accounts for 60 per cent of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The United States and China share a role in preserving global peace and security and are tied very closely through trade. Thirty-eight per cent of China's GDP is driven by trade, and trade with the United States contributes 3.5 per cent to China's GDP. The United States is not as dependant on trade as most of its partners but still 10 per cent of American wealth, on average in recent years, is driven by trade. The burgeoning trade tensions of 2018 will not only affect the China-America relationship but will also impact businesses globally. These negative impacts will only accelerate as global economic growth slows. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), expected growth in the major economies has been downgraded and is expected to plateau at 2.1 per cent in 2019.

For these reasons, in July 2018, the European Union and China held a summit where they declared in a communiqué that:

“Both sides firmly supported the rules-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trading system with the WTO (World Trade Organization) at its core and are committed to complying with existing WTO rules. They are also committed to cooperating on reform of the WTO.”

Unfortunately, those who have benefited the most from economic expansion has been the world's wealthiest. Since 2008, wealth creation has been concentrated in ever fewer hands. Oxfam published in January 2018 that the world's eight wealthiest people own the same amount of wealth and assets as the bottom 50 per cent of the global population. It is a terrible statistic, but year after year, we have seen the needs of investors and capital prioritized over the needs of labour and a militant resistance to any suggestion of a global tax on wealth.

All but one of the world's eight wealthiest live in the United States or the EU, furthering the gap between northern and southern nations. Unfair and exploitative trade deals have resulted in less revenue for developing countries. Less resources force poorer countries to cut back ever further on their investments in infrastructure, education, and healthcare. This in turn leads to more migration as people seek better

lives or simply to survive. Progressive trade, a concept promoted by Canada, combines globalization and free trade with equitable and sustainable principles such as rules on the environment and fair labour conditions. It is an example for all wealthy nations.

The world may have not learned its lesson from 2008 when global total debt was US\$140 trillion. Since then, global debt has grown to US\$250 trillion, increasing the risk of another debt-driven financial collapse. Nations, companies, and households are borrowing more because of an expansionist culture of growth and consumption. This is driven by financial markets, which force companies to push products and services as they sprint desperately to meet quarterly performance targets. This short-term thinking is also reflected in the way nations compete. Today, a singular focus on GDP growth favours transactions and consumption above many other important aspects of human endeavour. GDP is an inadequate measure. GDP ignores the richness of culture, just and civil society, our shared humanity, and also man's creativity and productivity. Critically, GDP ignores ecology and the environment. Pursuit of GDP growth has created a vicious cycle that is ruining the planet.

Recommendations:

- Abandon GDP as a measure of a nation's productivity because GDP is limited in its focus on transactions and consumption. GDP totally ignores other, and perhaps more critical, factors that are indicative of a successful society. The outcomes of human activity would be better measured against the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or other metrics to capture humanity's progress.
- Support reform of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as suggested in the proposals of the European Union, Canada, and other states that will be discussed in a meeting of trade ministers to be held in Ottawa, Canada, in October 2018.
- Reduce levels of debt worldwide, as it is unrealistic to continue to borrow from future generations without restraint. Continued use of debt accelerates irresponsible consumption and excessive debt places us all at risk.
- Prioritize the role of multilateral solutions and institutions to create collective benefits. Bilateral negotiations lead to limited outcomes while collective action builds trust among nations and creates an opportunity for unified response during global crises.
- African nations should no longer be pressured by

the West to trade development assistance in exchange for access to Western markets. Protectionist policies are unfair to lesser developed countries, but more so when the West insists upon including LDCs in value and supply chains without reciprocity.

- Campaign to ensure cultural understanding and education. Populist politicians manipulate through a number of methods including electronic media which cannot be contained adequately. Educated citizens will resist this propaganda.

Climate Change, Plastics, and the Health of the Planet

Without question, human economic activity has changed the climate. Tropical storms are more severe than ever, and frightening storm surges are now impacting flood plains ever further northward. Every year, new high temperature records are set which have had dangerous impacts; 70 per cent of the world's fresh water supply is held in permanent snow and ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica. This supply is melting. In our oceans, the results of hyper-production sit in a horrific man-made creation now known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The fact that we live with and accept a 1.5 million square kilometre floating patch of plastic waste is unacceptable. It is predicted that by 2050, plastics in the ocean will outweigh fish. States like Kenya are leading the way with a ban on plastic bags while others like the United Kingdom have pledged to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste by 2042.

China's leadership and engagement in preserving the health of the planet was witnessed in its unwavering support for the Paris Agreement on Climate, the most comprehensive multilateral agreement on protecting the environment. The Agreement without China would have failed. The 21st century has featured China's leadership in preserving the environment, in addition to ensuring peace and security and lifting millions of people out of poverty through trade. Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan, in a meeting with IAC leaders, confirmed that "China will follow the path of peaceful development and promote the building of a community for a shared future for humanity." The InterAction Council Co-chairs, the Honourable Bertie Ahern and His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo, agreed with the Vice President that combatting climate change was crucial for the shared future of the planet.

Macro-level policies on the environment will have an impact on individuals. There is a strong connection between protecting the environment and offering universal healthcare. There is no à la carte option:

the bare minimum should include global policies on the environment with a focus on how outcomes will affect individual health.

Digital health systems are presently fragmented due to a period of explosive innovation causing a proliferation of platforms and applications. This challenges health care providers seeking to create a single view of the patient as personal data lies separated in silos. A single portable medical identity offers a single view of the patient, making sense of various and disparate data. Data collection is also increasingly important to planetary health where researchers are now able to apply algorithms and derive insights from a variety of data sets including Google search results. For example, such analysis of Google search makes it possible to predict the presence of Ebola in a population or the spread of influenza.

Climate change will place strain on both related and unrelated institutions. As weather events and diseases accelerate and spread because of climate change, people all over the world will seek safety. Many will flee their homes; they will be transformed into migrants.

Recommendations

- Urge governments to end the use of single-use plastic items.
- Plan all future InterAction Council meetings to avoid generating any plastic waste. It will be encouraging for others to see the Council leading by example.
- Call on States to implement the InterAction Council's Dublin Charter for One Health, which calls for integration of health and environmental planning.
- Cease the use of coal and embrace renewable energy.

There are 68.5 million displaced people without homes or countries

Presently, there are 68.5 million people who have been forcibly displaced from their homes due to prosecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations. This is the largest number of displaced people since the Second World War. This number includes refugees, stateless people and internally displaced people. Another 26 million people are displaced each year due to natural disasters and weather-related events. Climate change will only increase forced migration.

The challenges migrants face includes a lack of documentation, lack of legal status or confusion of migrant status, inhospitable host countries, and limited opportunities for employment. Presently, there is a lack of solidarity in refugee protection witnessed as states in the northern hemisphere are increasingly allocating resources to border control. States in the southern hemisphere and the less wealthy states are left to respond and shelter refugees and migrants with the limited resources that they have. Meanwhile, the United States announced it will reduce the number of refugees allowed into the country to 30,000 for 2019. Wealthy nations must do more.

In 2015 the Syrian war substantially increased the number of people forced into migration. European Union countries received over 1.2 million asylum applicants in 2015. This sudden yet expected increase prompted states to restrict their asylum legislation and caused the European Commission to propose an amended Common European Asylum System, featuring a more restrictive approach. Many politicians in wealthier nations are cynically exploiting fear within domestic populations who feel ever powerless and far removed from economic opportunity.

Solutions must consider that lesser developed countries, such as some African nations, do not consistently provide identity cards nor is there a persistent and pervasive technology infrastructure. Refugees and other displaced peoples may no longer have access to critical documents, such as birth certificates, that existing systems require.

Cultural understanding is key to a successful and functioning multilateral system. Culture is a driving force for economic and political change. Currently, there is an understanding deficit in how the US and the rest of the world views China. Currently, there is a lack of understanding over what it means to be a refugee. Until those misunderstandings are corrected, we should expect conflict.

Recommendations

- Design identity systems that are persistent, privacy protecting, and decentralized where the data are owned by the citizens themselves, not governments or corporations. A digital passport should be created to aid refugees who are deprived of paper identification because of war and strife.

- Urge wealthier nations to support migrants living in camps around the world and to admit a greater percentage of the global refugee population. To that end, in partnership with the World Refugee Council,

the InterAction Council will organize an experts group on refugees and migration in 2019.

- Develop education programs to counter propaganda and to encourage empathy so that citizens are less inclined to succumb to xenophobia and propaganda.

Artificial Intelligence, The Coming Wave: Opportunities and Problems

In the last year, the concerns over the implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Computer Vision, and Machine Learning have waned. Previously, many had expected a profound and lasting impact on unemployment. As artificial intelligence solutions are implemented, there have been no examples of significant unemployment as result of these technologies.

Fears of self-driving vehicles have been replaced by the welcoming of AI technologies into the financial services infrastructure, offering benefits such as instant fraud detection. As 5G networks are rolled out in 2019 and 2020, the ability to capture data will increase geometrically from its current staggering pace of 2.5 quintillion bytes of data per day. 5G will not only enable safe self-driving cars, it will impact, for example, how patients are treated in hospitals, predict where police resources are deployed, and recommend how public policy is created.

Artificial Intelligence can provide a policy maker with a series of tools that can diagnose, prescribe, and optimize based on the data available and the problem at hand. However, the implementation and development of this technology needs the leadership and guidance of ethical leaders. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has twenty years of experience in developing international instruments and frameworks related to ethics in science. UNESCO offers a unique universal forum in which an ethical AI framework could be developed and promulgated.

We cannot forget: not everyone has equal access to technology. The digital divide is real. In order to participate in the economy of the future, citizens must receive proper education and training. Technical education is not presently distributed equally. If education remains concentrated, the digital divide will only increase.

Reducing the divide provides a path toward decent work for both men and women. It will reduce poverty and increase the tax base, providing governments with the needed resources to respond to global and local challenges. Steady income, for workers and their families, allows citizens to participate in

the political process, make choices, control their destinies, and direct their future. Access to income allows citizens to safeguard their own human rights.

Around the world, women are consistently underpaid and under-represented within government, the workplace, and other political institutions. Some regions and countries have done a great deal to ensure that women are properly represented in the economy. But globally, women continue to earn 70 per cent of what men earn.

Labour force participation rate globally is 50 per cent for women compared to 77 per cent for men. Average pay for women is US\$12,000 compared to US\$21,000 for men. If women participated equally in the economy, their participation would add US\$28 trillion which is 26 per cent of annual global GDP.

Recommendations:

- Governments should seek to limit the monopolistic power of high technology companies and should explore antitrust regulations to limit their powers, as well as encourage the portability of data and oppose data centralization within a handful of high-technology oligopolies.

- Encourage governments and multilateral institutions to address the digital divide. Technology education and exposure is not equally prioritized worldwide.

- Engage UNESCO in the discussion on “an enlightened ethical debate” to define an ethical framework that would apply to all AI developments and applications. The InterAction Council’s Universal Declaration on Human Responsibilities should be updated to examine the ethical considerations posed by emerging technologies.

- Ensure the interests of consumers and citizens are protected as AI solutions are rolled out

worldwide. These solutions require access to data which is often given willingly by consumers, so it is imperative that consumers receive clear benefits in exchange for their participation.

- Continue to work towards gender equality and empowerment for women and girls, while promoting sustainable and inclusive growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

The Situation in the Korean Peninsula

In 2018, the world began to anticipate peace on the Korean Peninsula, which previously had been unimaginable. North and South have technically been at war since 1950, but this year, peace became

possible as the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) ceased its testing of nuclear weapons and sought engagement with the Republic of Korea and the United States. Kim Jong Un, Chairman of the Workers’ Party of Korea, and President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea are to be praised for entering into positive dialogues on the future of the Korean Peninsula. The decline of tension on the Korean Peninsula and the process of dialogue are one of the few good news stories in recent months.

As tensions decline, it is appropriate to reward the DPRK with increased access to the regional and global economy. China shares a significant role in realizing development and achieving a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. The international community highly appreciates China’s efforts for peace and welcomes her further constructive contributions.

Recommendations

- Strongly support the efforts of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea to engage concerned parties, applaud recent initiatives and constructive measures by the concerned parties to work for denuclearization and lasting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and encourage the concerned parties to enhance communication and collaboration in a pursuit of an early and proper resolution for the Peninsula issue through dialogue and peaceful action.

- Support a process that will result in the signing of a formal peace treaty on the Korean Peninsula, ending 65+ years of conflict.

- As part of the positive process leading to the denuclearization on the Peninsula, encourage economic cooperation among the concerned parties, including the North and South, encourage investment in shared infrastructure, and develop critical new infrastructure in the North.

Facing the challenges together

Multilateral institutions have served the world well and can continue to do so. We must face the challenges of our new century with the optimism contained in Mr. Bolger’s 2018 speech on the State of the World:

“My point is simple, that while there is much from the past that needs to be remedied and we must continue and complete that effort, we must likewise set out in clear lights why today’s gloom is misplaced.”

Security Building of the Belt and Road and Role of Political Parties and Social Organizations

——Keynote Address at the 2018 International Forum on Emergency Management and Safety Development of the Belt and Road
By Wang Yajun
Vice Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee



[Editor's note] The 2018 International Conference on Emergency Management and Safety Development of the Belt and Road co-organized by the Party School of the CPC Central Committee (National Academy of Governance), the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, the Ministry of Public Security, the National Health Commission, the Ministry of Emergency Management, the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council was held on December 6, 2018. More than 200 government officials, experts, scholars and emergency management workers from nearly 30 countries and relevant international organizations attended the conference. Shang Yong, Vice Minister of Emergency Management, Wang Yajun, Vice Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee (IDCPC), Li Ji, Vice President of the Party School of the CPC Central Committee (National Academy of Governance), Liu Yuejin, Member of the Party Committee of the Ministry of Public Security and Counter-Terrorism Commissioner, Xu Fushun, Deputy Director of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council and other officials in charge of the conference's co-organizers and Hugo Slim, Director of the ICRC's Political Research Office, Nicholas Rosellini, United Nations Coordinator in China, Khalid Abdullah Mansuri, Director of the International Division of the International Association of Emergency Managers and Director of the Emergency Management Department of the National Senior Security Council of the United Arab Emirates and other guests of honors delivered keynote speeches. An excerpt of the keynote speech by Wang Yajun, Vice Minister of the IDCPC is now published.

In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping stood at the forefront of the times, focused on the interests of the Chinese people and the common interests of the people in the rest of the world, and creatively proposed the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). With the guidance of the ancient Silk Road, a heritage and historical and cultural symbol of civilization, the BRI is devoted to fostering a new international cooperation framework, promoting an open world economy, safeguarding world peace and stability and adapting the Belt and Road to the times, so as to inject new vitality to the spirit of the ancient Silk Road featuring peaceful cooperation, openness, inclusiveness, mutual learning and win-win outcomes.

I. The BRI is an international cooperation platform and a popular international good in line with the trend of globalization

Over the past five years, the BRI has translated ideas and concepts into concrete actions, designs for cooperation into fruitful results, a Chinese proposal into an international consensus. It has built a popular and far-reaching international platform for cooperation and has become a widely endorsed international public good China provided to the world.

The BRI is an international public good that promotes the common development of China and the rest of the world. Focusing on the fundamental issue of development, the BRI not only serves as an important move for China to expand opening up and foster a new landscape for all-round openness, but also an international public good for the common development of the world that is conducive to China's deepening of opening up and strengthening its mutually beneficial cooperation with the rest of the world.

Over the past five years, China has worked with all parties concerned to jointly create a new model for all-dimensional cooperation. Aiming at achieving connectivity in five aspects, namely policy, infrastructure, trade, finance and people-to-people bonds, China has signed "Belt and Road" cooperation agreements with over 140 countries

and international organizations to ensure that an all-round cooperation in politics, security, society and culture can go in parallel with that in trade, investment and infrastructure. The total volume of trade in goods between China and participating countries has exceeded US\$5 trillion and China's foreign direct investment has exceeded US\$60 billion. A good momentum where all participating countries complement each other has been formed.

Second, the BRI is an international public good to promote the improvement and reform of the global governance system. For some time, economic globalization has encountered backlash and unilateralism and protectionism have been on the rise. Under this backdrop, President Xi Jinping, on various occasions, expounded on the Chinese solution to promote world economic growth and re-balance of globalization and called for joint efforts to create an innovation-driven growth model, a win-win cooperation model, a fair and equitable governance model and a balanced and inclusive model. As an important part of such solution, the BRI has become a key solution to address deficits in peace, development and governance with the coordinated efforts between China and the international community. It complies with the reality of international relations and received positive response from all sides, injecting confidence and drivers to realizing the re-balance of world economy and dealing with the complex and ever-changing international landscape and promoting peace, stability and common development of the world. The principle of consultation, cooperation for shared benefits that we have been committed to in building the BRI has been recognized by the international community and has become a core vision for China to lead the global governance, thus having great importance in guiding the reform of global governance system towards the direction of justice and fairness.

Third, the BRI is an international public good to blaze a new trail of building a community of a shared future for humanity. The goal of connectivity in five aspects pursued in the building of the BRI high accords with the wishes

of all countries to pursue peace, development, cooperation and progress. It also resonates with the vision of a community with a shared future for humanity to build a world with sustained peace, common security, shared prosperity, openness and inclusiveness that is clean and beautiful. International cooperation within the framework of the BRI covers a wide range of fields, including economy, politics, security, culture and ecology. They consolidated the foundation of common grounds, injected development drivers and enriched cultural connotation for building a community with a shared future. They also blazed an important approach for building such community. As a result, the BRI has been written into many important resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council. It also constituted an important part for cooperation in the outcome documents of many major multilateral mechanisms as the G20, APEC and SCO. The cooperation between China and relevant regions and countries has served as a vivid practice of building a community with a shared future for humanity through the joint efforts of China and the rest of the world.

The five years of practice has been a strong proof that the building of BRI has deepened pragmatic

cooperation between relevant countries, promoted coordinated development, improved people's livelihoods and embarked on a new approach for peaceful development and win-win cooperation, thus demonstrating its huge development potential. It's fair to say that the BRI is not only an international public good with distinctive Chinese characteristics but also one that enables us to create a better future of the world. The BRI combines the development and opportunities of China with that of the world, thus having precious value for cooperation, development and peace. It provides a specific solution for and injects a strong positive energy to all countries to work together for a brighter world.

II. Security is an important guarantee for the BRI to achieve progress and long-term stability

Over the past five years, security guarantee has played an indispensable and fundamental part in ensuring the smooth progress achieved in the building of the BRI that has excelled our expectations. With different development stages, historical traditions, cultural backgrounds and political systems of participating countries and regions, the BRI encounters many risks and challenges, among which security is one of the



most important factors. It's fair to say that the BRI can't even be started without security guarantee.

The Chinese government attaches great importance to the security guarantee of the BRI. President Xi Jinping made important exposition on security guarantee of the BRI on a series of occasions such as the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. The Chinese government has already established a leading group to advance the BRI, making an overall arrangement and deployment on work in all fields including cross-border security. At present, security cooperation has become an important part of the BRI cooperation. Over the past five years, China has continuously increased investment in security cooperation with partner countries and regions, and has formed a number of effective bilateral cooperation mechanisms, and strengthened security cooperation under the multilateral framework such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Effective measures have been taken in risk assessment, strengthening security guarantee and handling security-related accidents, and joint efforts have been made in safeguarding a secure environment to ensure sound results of the BRI.

Practice has shown that security is as valuable as sunshine and air for the BRI. Only a safe and stable environment can promote the development of the BRI with greater achievements and faster pace.

The world today is facing changes unseen in a century. With the in-depth development of multi-polarization, economic globalization, IT application and cultural diversification, the international configuration of power has become more balanced, and the reform of global governance system and international order is picking up pace. The connection between countries has never been so close, and people's aspiration for a brighter life has and the momentum of peaceful development has never been so strong.

That said, the humankind is also faced with unprecedented challenges. The BRI confronts not

only precious historical opportunities but also multiple risks and challenges. The complex and ever-changing international political and economic environment is adding new uncertainties to the BRI. The mounting unilateralism, protectionism, populism and xenophobia bring negative effect on the smooth progress of some projects. Especially since the beginning of 2018, some countries, with the tool of sanction, have imposed tariffs on many economic entities, bringing negative influence on the world economic growth and also adding new financial risks to some BRI cooperation projects. Our task of fighting against terrorism is still heavy. Although the "Islamic States" terrorist force has been uprooted, all forms of terrorism may spring up in separate units to launch underground attacks to regions like the Central East, South Asia, America and Europe. The BRI faces outstanding terrorism, extremism and separatism. There are even some threats of pirate attacking and cross-border crimes on some maritime channels.

Faced with the current situation and potential risks and challenges, the participating countries and relevant international organizations should further enhance cooperation on security, shoulder our historical responsibilities to jointly overcome security challenges. Address both the symptoms and root causes, destroy the breeding grounds generating security risks, work hard to diminish security deficit to ensure the steady progress of the BRI so as to build the Belt and Road into a road of peace, prosperity, openness, green, innovation and one that bring together all civilizations and benefit the people of the participating countries.

III. Political parties and social organizations should play a leading and promoting role in the security guarantee of the BRI

A secure environment for the BRI should be jointly forged and maintained by the participating countries. Governments are the first responsible entities of the security building of the BRI. They play an unparalleled role in formulating policies, establishing mechanisms, coordinating resources, comprehensively taking measures and conducting international cooperation. That said,

the characteristics and advantages of the political parties and social organizations should not be ignored.

Political parties are the source of policy formulation as well as leaders and shapers of public opinions. The political parties of the participating countries can play a vital role in guiding and promoting the political decisions and investment of resources and strengths in security building where the governments participate in. Social organizations are important entities for the people to participate in public affairs, promoting international cooperation and global governance. Social organizations of the participating countries have an important edge in communicating with the people and answering their wishes and lending impetus to the political parties and governments to strengthen security building, thus injecting strong forces from the civil society to the security guarantee of the BRI. Hence, the political parties and social organizations both can and should play a positive and unique role in the security development.

Pull strategic consensus. We must fully understand and promote the Silk Road spirit featuring peaceful cooperation, openness, inclusiveness, mutual learning and win-win outcomes. We must follow a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable perspective on security, strengthen communications and dialogue, forge a jointly built security landscape shared by all. Build a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation, pull strategic consensus to build a community with a shared future for mankind. We should lead all countries to take the initiative to progress in a gradual manner, on the basis of reviewing experiences and lessons. With the status quo of the region and the big-picture development of security in mind, all countries should take the initiative to make solid and viable projects to promote strengths and avoid weaknesses, so as to steadily advance.

Promote the building of safeguard mechanism. It is necessary for us to safeguard security building with effective mechanisms. First, improve the

established coordination mechanisms. With the current mechanisms such as SCO and Lantsang-Mekong cooperation, we should improve and upgrade the original dialogue and coordination mechanisms for political parties and social organizations. We should build partnerships, improve coordination layouts, enrich its connotation and make sure all countries can coordinate candidly to form consensus and measures. Second, consolidate the coordinated mechanisms. As for the important agendas, route maps, responsible areas of political parties and social organizations, we should make investment and support each other to see that we can achieve effective results with concerted efforts. Third, strengthen emergency mechanisms. We should comb the security risks and challenges of the BRI, especially that of the key areas, key countries and key projects in a sustained and comprehensive manner. Establish a comprehensive emergency system to have full knowledge of the risks to security in a timely manner. Fourth, pursue innovations in the security mechanisms. We should jointly consult and explore a new mechanism with all security forces assuming relevant tasks and duties on the basis of coordinating all forces including police, security staff, military and businesses in line with laws and regulations. We should use more security forces from the society and cope with conventional and non-conventional security risks in a coordinated manner. Fifth, improve the evaluation mechanism. With concerted wisdom and strengths of political parties, social organizations, think tanks and the media, we should scientifically set the evaluation index system, standardize the evaluation process, track and judge the effectiveness of the BRI safety construction and the trend of social situation and public opinions, so as to provide guidance for the BRI security building.

Enhance pragmatic cooperation. We should implement the cooperation consensus reached by all countries involved through concrete actions. First, effectively coordinate the responsibility in security building. We should urge the participating governments to fulfill their obligations in security building and make preparations for all aspects

in its building. Strengthen the coordination in security cooperation including emergency plans, materials and technologies, enrich the cooperation connotation and raise our level of cooperation. We should particularly, through communication and consultation of political parties, enhance the governments' cooperation and coordination in maritime and land security, improve the ability in law enforcement and address risks and challenges quickly, effectively and properly. Second, add more economic factors to security cooperation. We should give full play the role of guiders and fertilizers of the political parties and social organizations to build bridges, establish platforms and demonstration areas for exchanges and cooperation in economic, trade, capacity, technological innovations, thus promoting security with development so as to consolidate the foundation of security with tangible and actual economic development. Third, take the initiative to strengthen cooperation in people-to-people projects. By doing so, we can reflect the fact that the political parties and social organizations originate from the people and their function to answer the people's needs and serve them well. We should extensively learn about people's wishes and needs, focus on their targeted requirements, implement the building of people-to-people projects including fundamental education, health, medical care, drinking water, assisting the disabled, controlling and mitigating the diseases and emergency rescues so as to reduce poverty, backwardness and social injustice, and the predisposing factors of security risks.

Enhance mutual learning among different civilizations. The Belt and Road is a road for civilization exchanges, where the idea of openness, inclusiveness and mutual learning should be an important foundation for securing the security building. First, enhance the philosophy of mutual learning among civilizations. We should work hard to reach to our people, promote trust and friendship, choose communication over estrangement, mutual learning over clashes, co-existence over superiority, interactions over confrontation. Work hard to promote the communication of different values and sharing

of the fruits of civilizations and pursue a shared vision. Second, enhance people-to-people friendship and communication. We should rise above the fences of communication caused by different nationalities, religions and languages, extensively establish bilateral and multilateral people-to-people communication platforms. We should continue to expand exchanges at all levels, including the youth, think tanks and women, promote exchanges in all fronts such as education, technology, culture, sports, tourism, health and archaeology with multiple forms as exhibitions, shows, events, festivals, sister cities, exchange students and establishing cooperation centers. By so we can consolidate the foundation of people-to-people bonds with bountiful fruits.

Since the inception of the BRI, its achievements have exceeded our expectancy and its rallying power has been recognized by the whole world, reflecting the fact that under the backdrop of complex changes in international relations, the international community is expecting and welcoming a new and good-quality international public good and also that China, as an important member of the international community, plays a more active and important role in the supply of international public good. President Xi Jinping announced at the 26th Leaders' Summit of APEC that China will host the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in April, 2019, and pointed out that China will work with all parties, with the principle of consultation, cooperation and shared benefits, to advance the BRI with high quality, high standard and high level, thus creating greater development opportunities for the Asia-Pacific region and the whole world at large. The building of the BRI is progressing with strong momentum, and is bound to embrace a brighter future. The participating political parties and civil society organizations should also uphold a global perspective and a responsibility to benefit the people, join the building of the BRI and create a community with a shared future for humanity.

(Translated by Liu Junwang)

Speech at the 2018 World Canal Cities Forum

By **Qian Hongshan**,
**Vice Minister of the International Department of the
CPC Central Committee**



[Editor's note] On October 12th, the 2018 World Canal Cities Forum was held in Yangzhou, taking the “protection, inheritance and use of canal cities’ cultures” as its theme. Mr. Zheng Jianbang, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Mr. Wang Jiarui, former Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Chairman of the China Soong Ching Ling Foundation, Mr. Lou Qinjian, Party Secretary of CPC Provincial Committee of Jiangsu, Mr. Qian Hongshan, Vice Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, Mr. Zhou Wenzhong, WCCO Chief Adviser and former Secretary-General of the Boao Forum for Asia, Mr. Brian Cowen, former Irish Prime Minister, and Mr. Shi Kefang, the Panamanian Ambassador to China attended and addressed the Forum.

The 2018 World Canal Cities Forum was co-hosted by the World Canal Historical and Cultural Cities Cooperation Organization (WCCO) and the China Pacific Economic Cooperation National Committee (CNCPEC). More than 300 representatives from more than 30 countries and over 20 international organizations including the United Nations Environment Program and Inland Waterways International gathered at the riverside of China’s Grand Canal. Through extensive and in-depth dialogues, they sorted out practical solutions for issues facing world canals and explored ways of canal protection and development, in the hope of achieving sustainable development of the canal.

The forum this year consists of one main forum and four sub-forums (World Canal Cities Museum Directors Forum, World Canal Cities Ecological Construction Forum, World Canal Cities Cultural Tourism Cooperation Forum, World Canal Cities Canal Legislative Protection Forum). Attendees demonstrated Jiangsu’s practice in the protection, inheritance and use of the Grand Canal, shared experience in protecting canal culture, exchanged global cases of canal cities development, and therefore contributed to the protection, inheritance and use of world canal cultural heritage.

The following is a speech by Vice Minister Qian Hongshan of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee at the forum.

Respected Vice Chairman Wang Jiarui,
Vice Chairman Zheng Jianbang,
Distinguished Party Secretary Lou,
Your Excellency Mr. Brian Cowen, former Prime
Minister of Ireland,
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear
friends,

October is a season when the fragrance of osmanthus fills the air. In this wonderful time, guests from more than 30 countries all over the world are gathering in Yangzhou to participate in the 2018 World Canal Cities Forum. Focusing on the theme of “Protection, Inheritance and Use of World Canal City Culture”, we will talk about the development of the Canal Cities, share experience, and promote cooperation. On behalf of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, I would like to express my warmest congratulations on the convening of this forum, and express my highest respect to the Chinese and foreign representatives who have long been committed to the protection of canals and the ecological construction of canal cities!

As we all know, canals are not only the main thoroughfares, but also the link of civilization. They serve as bridges connecting peoples and minds. They spread thoughts, values and cultures from different regions and ethnic groups to all directions and promote exchanges. In recent years, the World Canal Historical and Cultural City Cooperation Organization has, with the canal culture, linked 44 cities along the Chinese Grand Canal and 29 famous canal cities in the world. It has held a series of famous Canal Cities Expos and the World Canal Cities Forums, facilitating economic and cultural exchanges and promoting common development and prosperity of canal cities. It has become an important platform for the world's canal cities to share experiences, exchange views and carry out cooperation. Having been held for 11 consecutive years, the World Canal Cities Forum has made tremendous contributions to enhancing the communication between Chinese and foreign people. It is playing an increasingly important role.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

The world today is undergoing profound changes. Integrating into the world more actively, China has proposed the Belt and Road Initiative. Over the past five years, the Belt and Road Initiative has turned from a vision to a reality and proved fruitful. Up to August, 103 countries and international organizations around the world had signed cooperation agreements with China; the total volume of trade between China and countries along the route has exceeded 5 trillion USD. We have seen deepening investment and cooperation brought by successive key projects, and steady construction of trade zones, especially free trade networks. With these projects and activities in place, China and the people along the line have enhanced mutual understanding and friendship

This forum is based on the important instructions of President Xi Jinping on building the Grand Canal Cultural Belt, which implies that the historical and cultural resources of the Grand Canal must be well protected, inherited, and made good use of. This not only meets the expectations and concerns of the people in the Canal Region, but also helps the long-term development of the canal cities. We believe that this forum will make a platform of communication for the world's canal cities involved in the “Belt and Road”, and promote common development and prosperity.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

Chinese President Xi Jinping repeatedly stressed that “Friendship, which derives from close contact between the people, holds the key to sound state-to-state relations”. Civilian forces are playing an even bigger role in advancing the development of state relations and global governance. Responsible for foreign relations for the Communist Party of China, IDPC has attached great importance to dealing with foreign political organizations and parties as well as to people-to-people exchanges. We strongly support Chinese social organizations to go global by actively participating in international activities. We encourage domestic social organizations to carry out various forms of cooperation with their foreign counterparts, especially with those from the Belt and Road partner countries, and work together to promote communication between countries and deepen friendship.

In recent years, with our assistance, the China NGO Network for International Exchanges has extensively associated with relevant international and domestic civil organizations and individuals and actively participated in the exchanges and cooperation organized by international NGOs. We have encouraged Chinese NGOs to participate in the UN conferences and forums, the Asian People's Forum, the C20 Forum, the BRICS Civil Forum and other major multilateral international events. Multilateral platforms have been set up, including the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network, China-Africa People's Forum, Shanghai Cooperation Organization People's Forum and others. A number of cooperation projects have been carried out in Africa and Southeast Asia.

We believe that through this forum, we will continue to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with civil society around the world, enhance friendship and mutual trust. Let's work together to promote common development and build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Finally, I wish this forum a complete success! Thank you!

(Translated by An Kerui)

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: CHINA'S CONTRIBUTION THROUGH THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION

George I. H. Cooke

Global Governance: where are we?

Symbiotic associations among states and peoples have occurred over centuries whilst a semblance of collective governance on an international scale in varied forms and manifestations has existed from time immemorial. The building of empires, which were spread over many centuries, did result in governance from powerful capitals, yet this was a forced form of governance on weaker nations. Differing periods of colonialism saw large swathes of the world being governed by conquering nations, mostly emanating from Europe.

City states and subsequently nation states had interacted with and amongst each other, but a global network hadn't been realized until the founding of the League of Nations. Here global governance in its modern form began to take shape through this initial experience. It was with the establishment of the League on 20 January 1920, pursuant to the Paris Peace Conference that ended the Great War that was later identified as the First World War that voluntary and free willed cooperation began to emerge in the world.

The League may have faltered in the quarter century of its existence, yet nations started realizing the potential of a cooperative

mechanism. World peace, collective security, disarmament, the resolution of international disputes by peaceful means such as negotiation and arbitration, measures to curb human and drug trafficking, improving labour conditions, ensuring health care and a myriad other issues became the focus of nations that came together in the League of Nations.

Whilst the outbreak of the Second World War spelt the end of the League, it didn't curb the enthusiasm of nations and their leaders to ensure that a new and innovative approach would be adopted when war ceased. The preparation, throughout the Second World War, for what would occur after the battles had ended, is testimony to the foresight of leaders to forge a common stance, which resulted in the establishment of the United Nations Organisation in 1945. Over the last century since the creation of the League, and more specifically in the seven decades since the founding of the UN, humanity has grappled with numerous causes for concern when the world has been on the brink of a Third World War, yet managed to avert all out disaster owing to many factors including sound diplomacy, economics and sheer power.

The rise of regionalism in the twentieth century

with the emergence of numerous groupings based on, but not often limited, to geography, resulted in the creation of a heavily intertwined network. The connectivity which was formerly carried out through neighbouring nation states coming together has evolved today to include associations based on security, religion, culture and economic cooperation. It has led to deeper reliance on one another, generating an environment in which states are not isolated anymore.

Ahead of the centenary in 2020, reviewing the progress made, identifying areas in which states have faltered, comprehending the scope of that which is to come and strategizing for future, it is prudent to analyse the role of specific groupings and countries in the promotion of global governance. Today amid a flurry of economic connectivity, states, especially those in the global south, are reaching out for enhanced trade, guaranteed markets and greater investment to boost their economies and ensure prosperity. For most of the twentieth century, this tangible cooperation was forthcoming from the West, as the Cold War dominated global affairs. Yet with the closing of the last century, it is evident that states of the east and most of the global south, which provided moral support in the past, have rapidly emerged, some ahead of others.

Amongst states that have undergone rapid advancement, the leader is China. Over the near seven decades since the founding of the Peoples Republic of China, the country has risen in a plethora of sectors, taken on a catalytic role in global affairs, and is transforming the rationale of global governance. Through its involvement in international associations, ranging from the UN, Group of 20 (G20), the Boao Forum for Asia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) among others, and also through its own domestic and foreign policies such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has ensured a massive presence in the world. It has also resulted in countries grappling to understand the rise of China, some trying to counter its growth, whilst most are eager to enhance relations and experience similar growth and prosperity.

China's impact on global governance is being felt in almost every country around the world. Shouldering greater responsibility in global affairs, China's involvement is not confined to a particular country or group of countries, nor to a specific region. Over the last four decades China has gained influence, but borne the responsibility that goes with it. Having attempted to play a greater role in existing structures, China has moved ahead by creating new and innovative mechanisms based on her own attributes which stem from but are not limited to history, culture, size and the ensuing potential.

Some in the west have turned their back on globalization, jeopardizing the process, network and institutions they fought hard to establish. In the wake of rising nationalism and economic protectionism that has spread rapidly in the last few years, China is seen today to be providing the support and cooperation the global south yearns for. Developing countries, in their inherent desire to enhance prosperity and improve the livelihoods of their peoples, are bereft of the tangible support that once flowed from the West. China has been able to fill the vacuum, but through unique means. China's two pronged approach of working bilaterally and multilaterally has seen the country make immense headway in both arenas.

The bilateral connectivity was carefully nurtured over the last seven decades and has been enhanced by the BRI and the resulting investment and development. From a multilateral perspective, China is one of the strongest advocates of cooperation and integration. Believing in the need to share opportunities and generate mutually beneficial arrangements, China is using her position in many international groupings to share positive experiences and ways by which they can be replicated, in a bid to improve conditions internationally.

Growth of the SCO: power house of the 21st century

The last century ended with the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions

being inked in Shanghai. The resulting Shanghai Five brought together China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. In 2001 the group added Uzbekistan and was renamed the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Bringing together key Dialogue Partners and Observers, the SCO's decision to include India and Pakistan as full members in 2017, saw the Organisation growing but more importantly transforming into a larger Asian alliance. Estimated to be the largest organisation in geography and population after the UN itself, the SCO has, over less than two decades, consolidated its position on the world stage.

Originally formed as a confidence building forum to demilitarize borders, the SCO has expanded its mandate to include increased military and counter-terrorism cooperation and intelligence sharing. Geared towards tackling the 'three evils' of terrorism, separatism and extremism, the states involved have effectively cooperated through a multitude of fora, such as joint drills and other cooperative mechanisms, to thwart the rise and/or spread of the 'three evils'. The amalgamation of political summits with peace games in Bishkek in 2007, intense cooperation between the SCO and the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation and the formulation of an Anti-Extremism Convention, the outfit has realized the need to respond to growing challenges from outside the region and to respond collectively if an impact is to be made.

Identified as one of the most influential and powerful entities in global affairs, its strength comes from its membership and their high level of commitment. The inclusion of India and Pakistan bodes well for many. India and Pakistan receive the opportunity of working closely with each other and with China and Russia respectively as they allay their past misgivings, and bilateral differences for a greater cause. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has a sliver of hope if neighbours decide to work in unison. The formula is thus a win-win situation and is positively impacting other groupings.

Just as the 19th century was identified as the British Century and the 20th was dubbed the American Century, the 21st it is widely argued, belongs to Asia. Robust economic growth, rapid development, expanding populations and poor performances in other quarters of the world, indicate a possible realization of an Asian Century. With the inclusion of Russia, through the SCO and as a northern neighbour in the greater Asian region, key aspects of power are thrown into the formula, ensuring a success story. With China, India and Russia the prospects for the grouping remain endless.

China's role in the SCO: Synergizing for the future

China led the SCO in 2012 and took over the presidency once again in June 2017. Since then China has created new platforms for deliberations and widened the scope of the organisation, to ensure greater representation, meaningful involvement and deeper interaction at all levels among the member states. From the first SCO Peoples Forum in Xi'an in April, to the first SCO Women's Summit in May, the first ever SCO Media Summit in Beijing in June, and thereafter hosting the SCO Summit in Qingdao, also in June, China has provided reinvigoration and led in the effort to transform the SCO.

Forging consensus among member states to implement an initiative of the Chinese NGO Association for International Exchanges, the Peoples Forum brought together more than 80 delegates from across the SCO region as well as those from Cambodia, Nepal and Sri Lanka, as Dialogue Partner countries for several days of deliberations and in a bid to further consolidate the connectivity between SCO states.

In 2017, President Xi Jinping called for closer people to people connectivity, and the need to ensure a shared vision for humanity. His offer of Chinese solutions to meet the onslaught of challenges gripping the global community, generated avenues for deeper cooperation, mutual trust, and common development, all of which

are enshrined in the Shanghai spirit. Sharing the Chinese experience, the SCO Peoples Forum was an opportunity of understanding the potential of building bridges of communication and securing lasting peace, which could be a means of guaranteeing universal security. As an exercise in public diplomacy, the Forum ensured the realization of a Chinese proverb that the relations between states lie in the affinity of their people.

At the SCO Summit, the Chinese leader identified four areas for closer cooperation amongst member states. He identified the need to return to the Shanghai Spirit and act to advance the areas of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations and pursuit of common development, and enhance solidarity and coordination. President Xi called for the SCO to provide heightened emphasis on cooperation in the field of security with the 'three evils' remaining the focus, as the SCO works towards shared development by promoting a freer, more open interplay in the economic arena. His fourth call was for the SCO to play a more comprehensive role in world affairs.

The structured approach advocated by China is a reflection of her own policies wherein, successful attempts have been made to reduce poverty, improve livelihoods, generate growth, ensure a greater degree of prosperity and common development, safeguard peoples, and increase the influence of China internationally. Irrespective of the region or country, the provision of development assistance increases the influence that China has in the world, but of relevance is that the assistance is being sought by states, and not being forced on them by China. As the only country with the capacity to provide the assistance at the current scale, Chinese investments across the world, have been able to drastically change domestic dynamics within recipient countries.

Countries of the global north are among the chief beneficiaries. Hosting President Xi in 2015, the United Kingdom had received an estimated \$16 billion between 2000 and 2014, while Germany received \$8.4 billion, France was close behind with \$8 billion, and Portugal and Italy received \$6.7 billion and \$5.6 billion respectively, during the same period. Currently ranked as the number one investor among foreign governments in the United States, with an estimated \$1.18 trillion, China holds 21% of America's debt.

Developing countries rely on China but this in turn bodes well for South-South cooperation, as the fast changing tide with which China gradually assumes a higher, if not the highest role in the international hierarchy, augurs well for all developing countries. It needs to be understood in the Asian context, then the region as a whole can share the success of an Asian neighbour. Xi had no qualms in stating that 'China is an important member of the Asian family and the global family. China cannot develop itself in isolation from the rest of Asia and the world. On their part, the rest of Asia and the world cannot enjoy prosperity and stability without China.'

China has accepted her role, and is clearly emerging as the next world leader. It is obvious that the sooner she is viewed as a friend and is joined in the pursuit of development, the sooner Asia and in fact many other regions of the world, will gain strength and stability.

(The author is Deputy Director of Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka)

1. http://www.china.org.cn/business/Boao_Forum_2013/2013-04/10/content_28501562.htm

Cooperation and Win-win Progress is the Key Logic in China's New Round of Opening-up

Gao Min

The cruelty of WWII left the world with pain and suffering. To ensure long-term peace, stability and development, people worked together and set up a US-centered global economic and political order, formulated a series of international codes of conduct and corresponding support mechanisms. From an economic perspective, they include international organizations such as IMF, WB, GATT, as well as the dollar-centered international monetary system agreement. In essence, this order encourages free trade and the global flow of factors, boosts globalization, facilitates the modernization of global civilization and improves people's welfare. This order holds the key to the maintenance of peace, stability and development in the post-war world for over 70 years.

Both the United States and China benefit from this order. President Bill Clinton once mentioned in 2000 that "we should reiterate that an open market and rule-based trade are the best tools as far as we know to improve livelihood, protect the environment and build common prosperity". It is also true for China. Since 1978, China has worked a remarkable "economic growth miracle", thanks to reform and opening-up initiated by Deng Xiaoping. Reform and opening-up is a process for China to get involved with the global economic and political order and develop itself with global resources. China is grateful to the existing order as a beneficiary. However, with the deepening of globalization, the world is becoming multi-polarized and segmented.

The factors are seeking high-profit areas in the global market. With more refined division of labor, the factors are transferred to developing countries with more competitive edge. In the early stage of development, the abundant labor and an efficient government help the countries to be cost-efficient. They are deeply involved in the global division of labor and accept a considerable amount of production factors transfer, thus becoming a new force in the global community to boost economic and social development. Since the 1970s, the "Four Dragons in Asia", China, Brazil, India, Vietnam and some other

emerging countries have become growing forces in the global economy and politics to promote the formulation of a multi-polarized world.

Meanwhile, we also see more and more apparent Matthew effect in global development. In traditionally under-developed areas such as Africa, due to the lack of infrastructure and basic education, it is not able to accept the transfer of industries, nor included in the global industrial chains. Gradually, it is marginalized in the global market. Besides, the wealth gap between different countries is wider. According to a report Reward Labor, not Wealth issued by Oxfam, in 2017, of every 10 US dollars of newly-created wealth in the world, over 8 dollars are gained by the richest 1% people. From 2010 to 2017, the wealth of billionaires grows at a high speed of 13% annually, over six times of the ordinary people. Despite the growing global economy and people's livelihood, the salary of the ordinary people only grows by 2% annually.

Africa is the most typical example. Compared with other continents, Africa is still the most backward in terms of development. On one hand, it is restricted by its stage of development; and on the other hand, it is restricted by the additional conditions strung with outside aids and donations that barely solve the real problem. Based on my personal experience, under the current situation, Africa can hardly develop or solve its own problems. Besides, Europe and the US are not paradise, and they have their own problems such as the hollowing-out of industries and immigration. The existent global economic and political order is more and more difficult to accommodate new changes in the world, so some major countries have tried to improve or simply change the existent order. Brexit and growing trade protectionism have showcased the uneasiness of countries in the existent order, and precluded the change of public opinions towards the global order.

The most important lesson that we have learnt from WWII is no more wars, but the imbalance of the global order may see growing risks of a war. All

countries need to work together to find a new way to ensure peace, stability and development, which is of the best interest of all people and what China is thinking about. China benefits from the existent order and is responsible for seeking a new way of development that benefits the world.

China's solution is to further promote reform and opening-up. One way of opening up refers to its own, which means China invites other countries to share the benefits of its development by further opening up the service industry, lowering import tariffs and hosting the Import Expo. Another way is the opening up of the outside world. It promotes win-win development of countries through global platforms such as the Belt and Road initiative and AIIB. The key logic for such initiatives is cooperation and win-win, that is, to take an active part in the reform of global governance and build a community with a shared future for mankind through a new mode.

The Belt and Road Initiative and AIIB Build an Open and Win-win Platform for the World

The Belt and Road initiated and promoted by China is the concrete action taken by China to translate economic globalization. According to President Xi Jinping, "To simply put the blames on economic globalization does not respect the fact and is not conducive to seeking solutions. We should get accustomed to economic globalization, find the right direction and handle its negative effect so as to benefit all countries and nations." To this end, the Belt and Road Initiative upholds the principle of "mutual consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits", which proposes an open, inclusive and win-win solution to all countries. It also works for AIIB, which offers a win-win solution for the world through upgrading infrastructure with joint efforts.

In Africa for example, despite the criticism from some countries, China has helped Africa improve the infrastructure and upgrade industrial transfer capacity. From 2005 to 2016, China invested 293 projects in Africa with a total amount of nearly 100 billion USD, creating more than 130,000 jobs. In 2016 in particular, China's investment projects in Africa increased by 106%. The Chinese enterprises "vote with feet" to enter Africa, and China has become one of the top 3 investors in Africa. In 2017, the FDI coming from Chinese enterprises reached 3.1 billion USD, nearly 40 times as much as that of the year 2003. Countries such as Kenya and Egypt have attracted numerous Chinese enterprises through building industrial parks together, which have offered tens of thousands of jobs.

China has contributed to Africa's development without the intention to "colonize" Africa as some

countries stated. In fact, China has spared no efforts to help Africa instead of getting involved in other countries' internal affairs. China knows that the zero-sum mindset does not work in getting rid of the recession or solving the problem. It would only narrow the common space of global economy and result in a lose-lose situation. It is more important to "make the cake bigger", that is, to develop cooperative and win-win partnerships along the Belt and Road and the rest, build communities of shared interest, future and responsibility featuring mutual political trust, economic integrity and culture inclusiveness, and improve the growth of African countries. That is a sensible way to improve global economic and political order.

The Import Expo Offers China's Development Opportunities to the World

In October 2018, China hosted Shanghai Import Expo as an important gesture for proactive opening-up. It builds an inclusive and open cooperation platform for the common development of the world through expanding China's domestic market and sharing the development opportunities with other countries.

The Import Expo builds a convenient green channel between quality commodities and service and the Chinese market, promoting high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative. China takes this opportunity to expand import, boost global demand and trade volume, invigorate global economic growth, and offer long-term and sustainable opportunities for all countries. Meanwhile, the Import Expo helps expand import and opening-up, meets the need for consumption and industrial upgrading towards high-quality development, takes proactive action to tap the potential for domestic demand, and boosts China's industrial, consumption, trade and opening-up upgrading.

Different from "stock gaming", "Cooperation and win-win" is the key to address the imbalance of global development, showcasing China's responsibility in the world. China is willing to work together with other countries to find a new way of win-win development. China will not hesitate in pushing forward opening-up, and will make even more efforts to benefit all countries.

(The author is Research Assistant of Development Research Center of the State Council of China)

(Translated by Fan Qin)

Building Closer Ties for Mutual Benefit: Considerations for Chinese and Foreign Businesses in the Development of the Belt and Road

Miao Lyu

The Belt and Road Initiative, proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, advocates international cooperation based on mutual benefits. The Initiative has far-reaching significance for further opening the global economy and deepening economic and trade cooperation between China and countries along the route. Since its introduction more than five years ago, the BRI circle of friends has been constantly expanding to more than 100 countries, covering Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. China's trade with countries along the Belt and Road totals more than \$5 trillion. And its direct investment in these countries has increased by 7.2% annually. Also, China has built 82 economic zones in Belt and Road countries, invested altogether \$28.9 billion and brought 3,995 enterprises into the zones, which resulted in \$2.01 billion tax to the host countries and 244,000 jobs for local residents.

In the first five years of the implementation of the Initiative, with the participation of the Chinese government, policy banks, state-owned commercial banks and SOEs, large-scale infrastructure projects such as highways, railways, ports and power stations have been making steady progress. At the same time, however, the issue of sustainability of these projects has gradually emerged. As the Initiative is entering the second five years, its projects can achieve sustainable development only by a consultative process and joint efforts, with

the goal of bringing benefits to all. This article attempts to explore the future direction for win-win cooperation from the perspective of cooperation between Chinese and foreign businesses.

I. Optimize financial arrangements and promote financial market infrastructure

The investment gap along the Belt and Road is huge. According to the Asian Development Bank, the demand for infrastructure investment in the Asia-Pacific region (excluding China) from 2016 to 2020 is about \$503 billion per year. However, the supply of funds is only \$196 billion per year, leaving a gap as huge as \$307 billion yearly.

Optimize the financial mechanism for investment along the Belt and Road

Many countries along the Belt and Road are with high sovereign credit risk and low level of economic and financial development. Investment faces great financial risks. Therefore, it is very important to optimize the financial mechanism. Market-oriented means such as securitization can be adopted to absorb investment from international organizations such as the World Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, as well as Chinese and foreign companies. In this way, projects can be jointly built with reduced financial problems and investment risks.

Work together to promote financial market infrastructure

Many countries along the Belt and Road have poor infrastructure and underdeveloped traditional finance and commerce, but with relatively denser labor force. Such a factor structure provides substantial opportunities for the development of financial payment system based on mobile Internet. As economic cooperation deepens, Chinese financial businesses have begun to go abroad and cooperate with local counterparts in countries along the Belt and Road in building financial market infrastructure. The Chinese fintech businesses, represented by Ant Financial, adopted the “Technology Sharing + Local Partnership” model which contributed to leap-forward development of the local financial services. Since 2015, in partnership with India, Ant Financial has developed the Indian version of Alipay—PayTM. Two years later, PayTM became the world's third largest e-wallet after Alipay and Paypal, serving 220 million residents and more than 4 million small and micro businesses in India. After that, Ant Financial successively replicated the “Technology Sharing + Local Partnership” model and created local versions of Alipay in countries such as Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia. Thus, it has helped to contribute to the construction of local financial infrastructure, and promote virtuous interaction of local finance and economy.

II. Build industrial parks based on resources, market demand, development strategies and other elements

Overseas industrial parks are a new model for the globalization of Chinese businesses. Industrial parks have the advantage of bringing together upstream and downstream industries related to certain products, which means introducing all relevant industrial chains into the park, namely raw materials, technology, R&D, primary products, terminal products, and sales. For the moment, there are different types of industrial parks such as processing and manufacturing, resource utilization, agricultural industry, trade and logistics, R&D, comprehensive development and others.

According to the data of the Ministry of Commerce of China, so far China has built 82 economic and trade cooperation zones along the Belt and Road countries, with a total investment of \$28.9 billion. Altogether 3,995 businesses were introduced into the zones, generating a total tax of \$2.01 billion and creating 244,000 jobs to the host countries. The Sihanoukville Industrial Park, led by the HOdo Group and jointly built with other four businesses in China and Cambodia, is a good example. The area is characterized by agricultural overpopulation, intense and cheap labor, and relatively lower education and job skills of the working people. So medium and low-end industrial clusters were encouraged and export-oriented and labor-intensive businesses were introduced. The Park has become an important production base for Cambodia's textile products, contributing more than 50% to the economy of Sihanoukville.

Overseas industrial parks have been proved to be an effective means for the development of the Belt and Road Initiative. They help facilitate international cooperation on manufacturing, promote employment, and increase tax revenues of the host countries. Chinese and foreign businesses can work together according to their own needs, combined with the available resources, market demand and development strategy of the host countries.

III. Localize operations

Localization is the key to sustainable development in the Belt and Road development. Hiring local employees means providing jobs and training opportunities for local people and brand-building for businesses. At the same time, by procuring and subcontracting with local partners, it is beneficial for businesses to reduce costs and drive economic development of the host countries.

When China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) built the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) in Kenya, it adhered to the principle that “teaching one to fish is better than giving him fish”. By cooperating with many domestic railway vocational and technical schools, it strengthened

the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of local employees; meantime it adopted the one-to-one apprentice model in key training programs. In order to cultivate talents and support Africa's independent development, CRBC has fully funded 100 Kenyan students to study in China in three batches in the past three years. These students received systematic training in railway-related professions in China and involved themselves in the management and operation of SGR after they returned to Kenya. Since the construction and operation of the SGR Project, about 50,000 jobs have been created, more than 5,000 professional trained and over 300 local businesses involved in subcontracting or other forms of cooperation. These measures not only help to reduce the labor cost, but also promote local employment and facilitate the transfer of technology, management and standards. They have promoted the corporate image as well as market development.

Power China is also actively practicing the localization of talents. At present, it has about 70,000 foreign employees. Among them, more than 8,000 jobs have been created in the Nam Ou River Project partnering with the Electricite du Laos (EDL). Another project, the Qasim Power Plant, which is a cooperative project with AMC of Qatar, provides 3,000 jobs and 500 job training opportunities every year.

IV. Carry out cooperation in cultural and publishing industry

The cooperation between Chinese and foreign cultural businesses, like that among manufacturing and financial sectors, plays a crucial role in promoting the development of the Belt and Road. It is conducive to creating a community of shared interests, destiny and responsibilities that features political mutual trust, economic integration and cultural inclusion, and therefore promotes common prosperity. Since the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, Chinese publishing companies have been actively seeking cooperation with foreign counterparts along the route to boost cultural exchanges. For example, Jiangsu People's Publishing House and its Thai partner co-published

the novel "Her City" in Thailand, which was translated by Thai Princess Sirindhorn. It presented authentic Chinese society, culture, and cuisine to Thai readers. Hubei Science and Technology Publishing House and Current Publication Pvt. Ltd. in Nepal signed a strategic cooperation agreement on copyright export to promote hundreds of high-quality books on Chinese medicine, health, martial arts and chess. The cooperation with Chinese publishing companies has brought benefits to publishers in the Belt and Road Region. Kiran Gautam, General Manager of Current Publication Pvt. Ltd., said that the Initiative has broadened sales channels for Nepalese businessmen and established a network of connections to the world. Over the past five years, his business partners in China have extended from the frontier to the inland. He has established cooperation with more than 30 Chinese publishers. A total of 600 copyright contracts for Chinese books have been signed, of which more than 100 have been published in 2018.

President Xi Jinping repeatedly stressed that the Belt and Road Initiative aims to share China's development opportunities and achieve common prosperity with countries along the route. China's opening up to the outside world is not about staging a solo play, but is welcoming all parties to participate. We must fully recognize the importance of the effective cooperation among governments, businesses and the financial sector, of the extensive cooperation among countries along the route, as well as of the wide cooperation with multinational businesses from Europe, America and Japan. Only by working closely together can we adhere to the principle of "mutual consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits" and achieve sustainable development.

(The author is Co-founder and Secretary General of Center for China and Globalization(CCG))

(Translated by Yue Sangyu)

People-to-People Connectivity is the Key Foundation for the Implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative

Jin Xin

Since it was put forward more than five years ago, the Belt and Road Initiative has become a grand business card of a new round of opening up of China, leading the sound development of economic globalization and promoting the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. Over the past five years, the work that facilitates people-to-people connectivity has been carried out in a solid manner. Cooperation mechanisms have become increasingly diversified, and the quality of cooperation has been continuously improved. Silk Road stories in the new era have been emerging, laying a positive and friendly social foundation for the endeavor on the Belt and Road Initiative

People-to-people connectivity is the most fundamental, staunch and enduring connectivity.

“Friendship, which derives from close contact between the people, holds the key to sound state-to-state relations.” The pursuing of the Belt and Road Initiative not only focuses on “hard connectivity” like economic cooperation, but also pays attention to heart-warming “soft connectivity”. As one of the five components of the Initiative, people-to-people connectivity enjoys equal status with policy, facility, trade and financial connectivity. These five aspects form an all-dimensional

scenario of the Initiative, among which people-to-people connectivity underlies the other four. President Xi Jinping highly values people-to-people connectivity, stressing that “we should promote both economic cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, respect the culture, history and customs of different peoples, strengthen friendship with people of the Belt and Road countries, so as to lay an extensive social foundation for the building of the Belt and Road Initiative”. Connectivity by hearts, through people-to-people exchanges, is the most enduring connection.

The Belt and Road runs through mainland Asia, Europe and Africa. There are huge cultural, religious, economic and social differences between countries in this area. To establish and strengthen connectivity and partnerships among Belt and Road countries, we must connect people first. People-to-people connectivity is the long-term historical appeal of all countries. It can widely stimulate the positive role of various social subjects in the countries along the line. Through the interaction between peoples, enterprises and institutions, the effectiveness of the market could be expanded, investment and consumption promoted, demand and employment created. As a result of higher economic and social development, people of all countries can share a harmonious, peaceful,

prosperous and civil life.

In history, the spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, embodied by the ancient silk routes, has promoted the progress of human civilization. It is a symbol of exchanges and cooperation between the East and the West. Today, the Belt and Road Initiative has inherited this valuable heritage. The idea of people-to-people connectivity in the new era is not only about linking European-Asian-African civilizations, but also about making new ground on a higher level. Through people-to-people communication, it is hopeful that people from the Belt and Road countries will accept the ideas and goals of the Initiative, and will develop the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind that features political mutual trust, economic integration and cultural inclusiveness. Brought closer, people will carry out exchanges and communications in the spirit of equality, friendliness, mutual help and cooperation. Therefore, different civilizations are able to learn from each other and coexist harmoniously.

Achievements in people-to-people connectivity

Over the past five years, China has carried out multi-level and wide-ranging people-to-people exchanges with the Belt and Road countries, and has planned and implemented a large number of projects and activities, ranging from “big” projects between governments to “small” ones among the people. These efforts have effectively enhanced the recognition of the Initiative by the people of the Belt and Road countries.

I. The implementation of major projects has helped promoting people-to-people connectivity.

The endeavor on the Initiative has achieved remarkable results in the Belt and Road countries and regions. No major projects were possible without the support of people from both sides. The construction and operation of these projects is the confirmation of the deepening of people-to-people connectivity. “Roads lead to hearts”. The

implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative has not only brought the communicating arteries supporting economic development to countries along the route, but also sealed the friendliness of the Chinese people into the roads. Chinese businesses have actively integrated into the local society, with 85% out of more than 380,000 employees of overseas branches of China’s centrally-administered SOEs being local citizens. While promoting local economic development, Chinese companies have been involved in charity to help local people. For example, when building the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) in Kenya, China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) has dug more than 100 deep water wells for local residents, winning wide praise from the Kenyan people. Chinese companies have become talent incubators, industry propellers and good neighbors in the countries along the route.

II. Cultural exchanges promote mutual understanding.

By organizing events like Culture Year, art festivals, film festivals, music festivals, TV weeks, book fairs, and sports festivals, China and the Belt and Road countries have displayed their respective unique nationality and enhanced mutual understanding. China and these countries have further promoted cooperation in science, technology, education, culture, health, tourism, political parties, think tanks, youth, cities, social organizations and other fields. There are many “small but touching” events. For example, “Brightness Action”, cataract surgery program in developing countries in Asia and Africa has greatly benefited the local people, adding new vitality to the deep friendship between China and the recipient countries. What’s more, China has established the Chinese Government Scholarship--Silk Road Program, which annually sponsors 10,000 students from the Belt and Road countries to study in China. A large number of scientific and technological talents have been trained in this way.

III. Political party exchanges enhance mutual understanding.

As the leader of state relations,

the promoter of pragmatic cooperation and people-to-people connectivity, political parties have played an active role in the pursuing of the Belt and Road Initiative. In recent years, China has organized a series of international and regional forums and seminars with political parties and their affiliated political think tanks to help the international community understand the core of the Belt and Road. By holding the CPC in Dialogue with World Political Parties High-level Meeting, the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (Thematic Session on People-to-People Connectivity), and the Asian Political Parties' Special Conference on Silk Road and many other multilateral activities, we have continuously enhanced the understanding by politicians of the partner countries and other sectors of society concerning the Belt and Road Initiative.

IV. Chinese businesses actively fulfill their social responsibilities. Over the past five years, China's entrepreneurs and volunteers advocating internationalism have left for countries along the route, helping the poor and promoting development. People in many countries along the route have benefited from the Belt and Road Initiative. Mr. Zhang Huarong, Chairman of Huajian Group, is a good example. He has visited Africa 118 times in the past four years, creating nearly 7,000 jobs for Ethiopia. His goal is to bring altogether 100,000 jobs to Africa. In the first a few years when the shoe factory was being built in Ethiopia, he stayed in Africa for ten days every month, which tanned his skin and made him look like his African friends.

V. The Silk Road stories in the new era are constantly emerging. With the advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative, there have been many interesting legends during the course of international cooperation. Here are two examples. Cui Yunke, Deputy General Manager of CHICO Namibia, likes playing table tennis. While working in Namibia, he wrapped up champions in all the contests organized by Namibia Table Tennis Federation. In 2015, Cui Yunke was appointed

as the head coach of the National Table Tennis Team of Namibia by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In December 2015, under the leadership of Cui, Namibia won the third place as a team in the African League Table Tennis Championship, which was Namibia's best score ever. The local people in Namibia affectionately call Cui Yunke "Liu Guoliang of Namibia." Another example is Yuan Zhaohui, a young Maker from Xi'an International Trade & Logistics Park. While doing cross-border e-commerce, he "interconnected" himself with Anita, a girl from Kazakhstan, winning both love and fortune. There are many other similar stories, all of which add to the unique charm of the Belt and Road.

Take the Second BRF as a new starting point and build the Belt and Road into a road that connects civilizations

In April 2019, the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation will be held in Beijing. The Forum will provide a key platform for China and relevant countries to jointly sort out achievements, sum up experience, build consensus and plan for the future. In the next step, China and its partner countries will upgrade the overall layout of work on people-to-people connectivity, highlight priorities, create event brands, innovate cooperation forms, expand the breadth and depth of people-to-people exchanges, and build a cultural bond based on the Belt and Road.

First, we'll improve the top design. At the international level, we'll work more closely with international organizations such as the UNAOC, UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. We'll seek complementarities in the development agendas to find out possible areas of cooperation, collaborating in mutual learning, poverty reduction, disease prevention and treatment and sustainable development. At the national level, we'll strengthen communication and coordination with partner countries and give full play to the leading role of political parties of the countries in

the region. With concerted efforts, we'll discuss and formulate the short-term, middle-term and long-term goals of people-to-people exchange in order to make people-to-people connectivity a long-term task that is normalized and institutionalized.

Second, we'll highlight priorities of work. We'll focus on education, music, science and technology, culture, sports, tourism, health, archaeology, etc., expand the form of activities and enhance their quality and impact. We'll provide effective assistance in more practical charity projects, based on the expectations and concerns of people in this region. For example, we can help people in water-scarce areas to build water rafts, support people in some countries and regions to control desertification, refugee assistance, improve women's vocational skills, and offer re-employment training.

Third, we will encourage wide participation of the society. We will, by joint efforts of government and individuals, optimize resource allocation and improve the efficiency of people-to-people exchanges and cooperation. We will give full play to the role of private capital, social organizations, etc., so that social resources like government, industry, academia and media can be coordinated. Efforts should be made to form a network of participation and mutual support between relevant departments, social organizations, enterprises, think tanks, and media of China and its partner countries.

Fourth, bring innovation to the forms of cooperation. We need to create more brands, build more cooperation platforms, and bring more innovation to the forms of projects. The rich tourism resources of many countries along the route have yet to be developed, and China has accumulated mature experience in tourism infrastructure construction, tourism resource development, and the combination of culture and tourism. The next step is to continue to promote tourism cooperation by hosting "Year of Tourism" in each other's country, supporting

more countries to become tourist destinations, and improving tourism facilitation in China and countries along the route. It is also possible to enrich the cooperation style and improve mutual understanding by opening selected tourism routes in countries along the route and creating cross-border tourism demonstration zones. In terms of communication, we can jointly produce cultural and creative products such as animation, games, film and television dramas themed with the Silk Road, and resort to new modes of communication such as live webcasting, to display culture to countries along the route in a more direct way.

In addition, we must make good use of cooperation mechanisms such as the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network and the Silk Road Think Tank Association, and explore how to establish a performance evaluation mechanism for the work on people-to-people connectivity. We will help to build mutual appreciation, understanding and respect between people from China and other Silk Road countries.

We have every reason to believe that with the second BRF as a new starting point, China will conduct in-depth people-to-people exchanges and cooperation with the partner countries. We will establish a multi-level and wide-ranging mechanism of people-to-people cooperation, build more platforms, and open up more channels in order to lay a more solid foundation for cooperation. We will try to build a benign interaction between people-to-people exchanges and economic cooperation, in which the former and the latter provide public support and material foundation respectively for each other. Let's work together to build the Belt and Road into a road of mutual learning between different civilizations.

(The author is Director-General of China Center for Contemporary World Studies)

(Translated by Duan Jing)

Strengthening Sino-Japanese People-to-People Exchanges and Promoting the Growth of Bilateral Relations

By Wen Desheng

In 2018, the development of Sino-Japanese relations returned to the right track. The high-level exchanges between China and Japan have achieved mutual exchanges, and social exchanges have also shown a good development trend. Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU), as an important international exchange organization in China, has promoted the improvement and development of bilateral relations, and has organized exchange activities with friends from all walks of life in Japan and Beijing-based Japanese civil organizations and institutions.

Commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship and safeguard the healthy and stable development of China-Japan relations

The Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship is an important milestone in the further development of relations between the two countries after the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan. It has confirmed the basic principles of bilateral relations in the form of law and laid a solid foundation for the long-term, healthy and stable development of bilateral relations. Commemorating the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the treaty is to learn from history, to be peaceful and friendly, to oppose hegemony, and to promote the development of bilateral relations.

First of all, the social organizations of China and Japan and friendly people from all walks of life gathered together to commemorate the 40th

anniversary of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship. On October 25th, representatives of CAFIU were invited to attend the reception hosted by Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China-Japan Friendship Association in the Great Hall of the People to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Premier Li Keqiang and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who paid an official visit to China, attended the reception and delivered speeches. About 800 representatives from all walks of life from both countries attended the reception. At the reception, Liu Deyou, a consultant of CAFIU, president of the Japan-China Association Noda Yoshi, president of Japan-China Friendship Association Yoshimasa Hayashi, president of Japan-China Friendship Association Daisuke Omura, Tokyo-Japan Friendship Association President Utsunomiya Ichiro, and friends from Japan-China Economic Association and Japanese Sun Wen Memorial Hall shared friendship and looked forward to the future of Sino-Japanese relations.

Second, representatives from Chinese civil society, experts and scholars and Japanese parliamentarians discussed the future development of bilateral relations. On September 19th, CAFIU invited nine people from the 21st century Japanese-Chinese delegation led by Banli Kaieda, the highest adviser of the Japanese Constitutional Democratic Party, to visit China. Ji Bingxuan, Vice Chairman of the 13th Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Vice President of CAFIU met with him. CAFIU coordinated representatives

of Chinese social organizations and experts and scholars to hold a seminar to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship, and made recommendations and opinions for the healthy and stable development of bilateral relations. Liu Hongcai, Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Vice President of CAFIU and members from Japanese Institute of Social Sciences, China International Strategic Research Foundation, Pangoal Tank People's China Magazine and other think tanks attended the events. The Japanese delegation also visited IDCPC, China-Japan Friendship Association, China Friendship Promotion Association and other social organizations, visited the Lugouqiao Chinese People's Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall, and made a special trip to Zunyi City in Guizhou Province to visit the history of the Chinese Communist Party and understand China's economic and social development. The foreign guests said that in the future, the two sides should continue to strengthen exchanges in various fields, enhance understanding, overcome difficulties, and jointly safeguard bilateral relations and regional peace and benefit of the two peoples. The foreign guests spoke highly of the amazing achievements of Guizhou Province in innovation, ecological protection and tourism.

Third, representatives of Chinese and Japanese social organizations have played a role in actively promoting the improvement and development of bilateral relations. On February 6th, at the beginning of the New Year, CAFIU invited 10 people from Japan to visit China. During their stay in Beijing, the two sides jointly held a symposium to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, All-China Youth Federation, China-Japan Friendship Association, Chinese Society of Japan, China Institute of International Strategic Studies, China Private Enterprise and People's International Cooperation Promotion Association, Representatives from People's China magazines, Japan Local Government Internationalization Association, Japan International Exchange Foundation, Japan-China Economic Association, Niigata City Industrial Promotion Foundation, Japanese Tea Ceremony and many other Chinese and Japanese civil organizations and institutions participated in the event. Vice President Liu Hongcai and the head of the delegation, Yoshida

Sumi, gave keynote speeches respectively. The older generation and youth representatives of Sino-Japanese relations reviewed the fruitful achievements of the development of bilateral relations over the past 40 years from their respective perspectives, expressed their willingness to follow the spirit of the treaty, actively carry out friendly exchanges, and continuously promote the development of bilateral relations. At the symposium, everyone introduced the activity plan for the whole year. The Japanese delegation also visited the Forbidden City, the National Assembly Hall, the Great Hall of the People and the Lugou Bridge. It has a profound understanding of the difficult development of the modern dictatorship of China from the monarchy to the People's Republic for centuries, the people being the masters of the country and the independence of the country.

In addition, Vice President Liu Hongcai was also invited to Tokyo to participate in the Beijing-Tokyo Forum. CAFIU hosted and met with the Japan-China Friendship Association delegation, Japanese Youth League delegation, Japan Friendship Association delegation, Japanese delegation and other delegations, and interviewed with Chief Minister of the Japanese Embassy in China Noriyuki Shikata. Representatives of CAFIU also participated in the Sino-Japanese friendly exchange activities organized by social organizations such as the China Foreign Exchange Center. Through communication, everyone has enhanced their confidence in overcoming difficulties.

Strengthen concept communication, enhance mutual understanding, and promote mutually beneficial cooperation

The year of 2018 witnessed the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening up. China's development has always attracted the attention of the world. Therefore, in the exchange activities with Japan, CAFIU conducted in-depth communication with Japanese friends around the following topics and achieved positive results.

First of all, Japanese guests have an in-depth interpretation of the spirit of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and looking forward to China's future development. Many Japanese non-governmental organizations and friendly people who visited China once sent a congratulatory message to the Chinese Communist Party and Chinese national leaders during the

19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October 2017. They are concerned about China's development. Therefore, a profound interpretation of The Thought on Socialism with Chinese characteristics for a New Era and an in-depth understanding of China's two centenary goals has become an important topic. Japanese friends deeply admired that the idea of securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and build China into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful. Also, they were extremely concerned about China's diplomatic ideas and ideas for building a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind and building of the Belt and Road Initiative. Through exchanges, foreign guests have deepened their understanding of the Chinese Communist Party's ideological and theoretical concepts and ruling ideas, enhanced mutual trust and deepened friendship.

Second, Japanese guests actively contribute to the future development of bilateral relations. As is known to all, since the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan 46 years ago, four political documents including the Treaty of Peace and Friendship have been formed between the two countries, which have become the basic guidelines and follow-up that must be firmly grasped in the healthy development of bilateral relations. However, the Japanese side revolves around historical issues especially Japan's unfounded Claim of Sovereignty over Diaoyu islands that have seriously hindered the development of bilateral relations. At the same time, as China's economy has surpassed Japan, the status of the two countries in the world economy has also prompted the Japanese to make new adjustments and adaptations. In addition, due to the challenges of economic globalization, the rise of unilateralism and protectionism has also prompted China and Japan to face the new situation and coordinate their positions and jointly respond. In view of this, everyone agrees that although Sino-Japanese relations have experienced storms, peaceful and friendly cooperation has always been the mainstream. The two sides should actively follow the trend of the times and jointly build a more mature, pragmatic and enterprising Sino-Japanese relationship. Everyone believes that China's development achievements have profoundly changed China and world. China's

further expansion of opening up has built a broad space for China and Japan to carry out higher-level cooperation. The year of 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. China welcomes all walks of life in Japan to continue to participate in China's reform and opening up of new era. China and Japan should conduct mutually beneficial cooperation in a wider range of areas and play a positive role in pushing China-Japan relations into a new phase.

Third, by in-depth study, Japanese guests comprehend the world significance of the Belt and Road Initiative. Japan owns a deeper misunderstanding of China's efforts to cope with the weak growth of the world economy and actively promote the building of the Belt and Road Initiative. However, after constant exchanges, the Japanese side began to change view on third-party markets from not participating to agree with the joint development. This is the result of the continuous increase of trust and mutual understanding and deepening mutually beneficial cooperation. Belt and Road Initiative is an important platform for building a Community of Shared Future for Mankind. It is an important measure for China to implement a new round of expansion and opening up. The goal is to build a new pattern of comprehensive openness and explore a new model of global economic governance. Belt and Road Initiative is to create a road to peace, prosperity, innovation and civilization. It is to benefit the people of all countries along the line on the principles of jointly built through consultation to meet the interests of all through achieving policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds. To promote the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, China has always maintained an open and inclusive attitude and welcomes Japan to join. In 2013, China proposed the Belt and Road Initiative, and more than 140 countries and international organizations have participated. In 2019, China will hold the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. China is looking forward to this as an opportunity to continuously deepen the pragmatic cooperation between China and Japan in the third-party market.

Delegation of Young Political Leaders from Czech Republic Visits China

By Wang Bo

At the invitation of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU), the Delegation of Young Political Leaders from Czech Republic headed by Marie Pencikova, Chairwomen of the Central Budget Committee of the Czech and Moravia Communist Party, visited Beijing and Guizhou from October 13 to 19, 2018. In Beijing, CAFIU Vice President Ai Ping met with the delegation. The delegation also had talks with officials of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, the China Committee on Religion and Peace, and Beijing Foreign Studies University. The delegation went to Guizhou to attend the 2018 International Conference on Mountain Tourism and Outdoor Sports, and made field visits to know more about the economic and social development of areas inhabited by ethnic minority. Mu Rongkun, Deputy Governor of Qianxinan Prefecture, met with the delegation. They also visited Anshun and Guiyang, and toured Huochebang Company.

The delegation consists of six members, including young leaders from the Czech and Moravia Communist Party and the Czech Social Democratic Party as well as young scholars from universities and research institutions. The head of the delegation, Marie Pencikova, is a young leader in the Czech and Moravia Communist Party. She has deep insights into the political situation of the Czech Republic and follows closely the European and international affairs. She talked a lot about what traditional political parties in her country should do today to win more people's support. Radka Havlova, an assistant researcher at the Prague University of Economics, often shared her ideas on European and international political economy as well as China-Czech relations.

The members of the delegation said that they were most impressed by the round-table discussion with the China Committee on Religion and Peace. Representatives of Taoism, Islam, and Catholicism gave presentations about the development of religions in China. By sharing their own personal experience, they expounded on the harmony among people of different religions and as non-believers in China. Daniela Vasatkova, a political analyst of the Czech Social Democratic Party, said that it was out of her expectation that Chinese officials and religious leaders were so open in talking about religion with foreigners and exchanging views so frankly. From this discussion, they learned that the CPC and the Chinese government attach importance to religious issues, and that Chinese citizens' rights to freedom of religious belief are fully respected and guaranteed. This is in stark contrast to the spread of extremism and religious conflicts in some countries and regions.

Apart from attending the 2018 International Conference on Mountain Tourism and Outdoor Sports, the delegation also had some field visits to know more about Guizhou's economic development and poverty alleviation efforts. The delegation was amazed at the rapid changes in the rural areas of Guizhou, and praised the local government's measures to lift local people out of poverty by developing tourism suited to their conditions. Marie Pencikova said that as Guizhou is one of the provinces in China with the largest number of poor people and the largest poor areas, its poverty alleviation outcomes demonstrates the amazing speed in China's efforts to lift its poorest people out of poverty. The pioneering concept of targeted poverty alleviation specifies

a whole process of poverty alleviation, including identifying poor people, assigning tasks, adopting specific measures, and taking the path towards sustainable development. It shows that the CPC, as the ruling party of China, has demonstrated vision and wisdom in the top-level design, implementation of policy measures and the mobilization of the people. When visiting a local minority village, the delegation was welcomed by local villagers with songs and wine. The delegation watched the exhibition of the village's history. They said that national culture played an important role in poverty alleviation. From the historical changes of this village, especially the progress in the living standards and spirits of the

villagers since the reform and opening-up, they said that they know poverty alleviation is not just about the improvement of the people's incomes and living conditions, but more importantly, the elevation of their spirits. Guizhou enjoys beautiful scenery, but the greatest beauty of Guizhou lies in its people. The place demonstrates openness, self-confidence and inclusiveness. They told us that although the vast majority of people in their country are Czechs and their country enjoys advanced level of economic development, they can learn from China's experience in fully utilizing its cultural resources to provide new impetus for the economic development.

Tunisian Human Rights League Delegation Visits China

By Bian Peilin

At the invitation of the China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE), a delegation of the Tunisian Human Rights League led by its president Jamal Musalem visited China from December 3rd to 6th.

Tunisian Human Rights League was established in 1977. It is the first organization in North Africa and the Arab countries dedicated to human rights protection. It has joined important international and regional human rights treaty organizations and has important influence both at home and abroad. In 2015, Tunisian Human Rights League won the Nobel Peace Prize with the other three organizations for outstanding contribution to effectively avoiding the vicious struggles of multiple political factions in the country and helping the country achieve a smooth political transition.

During the stay in Beijing, Xu Lyuping, former Vice-Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee and Vice president of CNIE, met with the delegation. Liu Kaiyang, Deputy Secretary-General of CNIE held a working meeting with the delegation. The delegation participated in the symposium on The Concept and Practice of Human Rights Protection in China organized by CNIE, and Conducted in-depth exchanges with representatives from All China Women's Federation, China Human Rights Research Association, China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation and the Beijing Youth Legal Aid and Research Center on China's human rights development, the protection of women's and children's rights and interests, and China's poverty alleviation strategy.

During the visit of Xiong'an New District in

Hebei Province, Liang Yuan, deputy director of the Administrative Committee of Xiong'an New District, met with the delegation and introduced progress of the construction of the new district. The delegation visited the New District Urban Planning Exhibition Center and the Citizen Service Center. In Xiong County, the delegation participated in a symposium organized by the relevant departments of the county government and Beijing to support the Xiong'an Industrial Development Promotion Association, exchanged experiences on poverty alleviation. The delegation also visited the Baiyangdian eco-environmental protection project.

Recognize China's propositions and practices in human rights

President Musalem stressed that in the core concept of human rights, both sides have broad consensus and oppose the practice of some countries in the "human rights" banner and interference in other countries' internal affairs. Some countries often preach high the "national self-determination" principle in the United Nations agencies and other occasions. However, the essence is that they disregard the sovereignty of these countries and openly interfere in others' internal affairs.

Musalem said that China has made remarkable achievements in safeguarding the rights and interests of women and children and building democracy. China has also actively carried out international human rights cooperation and fully fulfilled its obligations under the international human rights conventions, fully demonstrating its role as a responsible country. China has left a deep impression on all-round achievements in the field of human rights. We believe that China will achieve greater achievements in the field of human rights in the future. China's practice of promoting human rights will play a leading role in the world.

Speak positively of China's achievements in poverty alleviation

Musalem said that China is the most populous country in the world. In the past three decades, China's economy has developed rapidly and has become the world's second largest economy, helping hundreds of millions of people to get rid of poverty. This is the best interpretation of progress in the cause of human rights. Bashir Abidi said that China has made outstanding contributions to the world's poverty alleviation and is a model for developing countries including Tunisia. Tunisia has long been plagued by poverty problems, China's ideas and practices in poverty alleviation, such as "poverty reduction by enhancing the skills of the impoverished population" and "teaching people how to fish is better than giving them fish", the government provides financial assistance to poor areas, and social forces participate in the provision of human, financial and material assistance are worth learning.

Hold high expectations of the development prospects of Xiong'an New District

During the visit of Xiong'an New District, all members of the delegation stated that China plans to make Xiong'an New District a modern star city in just 30 years, which is truly amazing. From planning and design to construction, Xiong'an New District reflects new development concepts such as people-oriented, innovation and green. It is a vivid portrayal from high-speed growth to high-quality development. By witnessing the new district's promotion of new energy vehicles, unmanned buses, and unmanned supermarkets, the new district has fully understood the new district as a high-end high-tech industry experimental field, providing a model for exploring the growth model and achieving high-quality development.

China Youth Delegation Visits Israel

By Wang Zhiyun

At the invitation of the Israel Youth Exchange Council, a six-member Chinese youth delegation including the author, led by Jia Tiesong, Assistant Director of China Youth Center for International Exchanges, paid a visit to Israel from November 11th to 15th, 2018. Having got a deeper understanding of Israel's national conditions, history, innovation industry and youth, the delegation exchanged views with the Israeli side on institutionalized exchanges and other issues.

During their visit, the delegation met with officials of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education as well as representatives of the Youth Exchange Council, the Youth Sports Association and Taglit Innovation Center, and they held in-depth talks on China-Israel relations, youth exchanges, and innovation cooperation. The delegation also paid visits to the Hazerim Kibbutz collective farm, the Israeli drip irrigation technology invention company--Netafim, the organic agriculture innovation project "Green 2000", and the Mahane Yehuda market. After a tour in the Israel Museum, the Friends of Zion Museum, the Jewish Holocaust Memorial Hall--Yad Vashem and a visit to a local kindergarten and middle school, members in the delegation got to know how Chinese language teaching was carried out in this country and their national identity, religious roots, China policy, youth education, innovation mechanisms, etc..

I. Israel and its people harbor deep friendship towards Chinese people, regard China as one of their important partners in the future, and are willing to strengthen all-round exchanges and cooperation with China.

Amir Lati, former Israeli Consul General in Chengdu, said that more than 1000 years ago, the Jews once arrived in Kaifeng city through the ancient Silk Road and established the first Jewish community in China. The Israeli people will never forget how the Chinese people offered help to shelter more than 30,000 Jewish refugees in Shanghai during World War II. As the first Middle Eastern country that recognized the People's Republic of China, Israel cooperates extensively and continuously with China in economy, trade, international cooperation, agriculture, culture, tourism, education, etc., thus the relations between the two countries have developed steadily and healthily with the increasingly deepening friendship between the two peoples. Talking about China's rising comprehensive national strength and its international status, Ms. Nurit, Head of the Northeast Asia Affairs, Asia Department of Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that China's development had brought unprecedented opportunities to other countries in the world. Meanwhile, she noted that their "European Era" was coming to an end and it's time to usher in the "China Era". In Israel, more schools at all levels, including kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, and universities, have begun to provide Chinese language teaching and Chinese language has become one of the main foreign languages for Israeli university entrance exams. The state is willing to enhance exchanges and cooperation with China in the fields of youth, science and technology, infrastructure, agriculture, health, education, culture, economy, trade, and tourism, etc. Ms. Gill, Executive Director of the Israel Youth Exchange Council, pointed out that Vice President Wang Qishan had reached an important consensus

on cooperation with Prime Minister Netanyahu during his official visit to Israel two weeks ago, and so the two sides should take this opportunity to further youth exchanges between the two countries and make full use of the existing exchange mechanism to dig out more exchange channels and resources, and put more practical youth exchange projects in place.

II. As an innovative country, Israel wishes to achieve complementary advantages and mutual development within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative and find out innovative and constructive solutions to common challenges facing both countries.

With multiple innovations and technological breakthroughs in areas including high technology, life sciences, biotechnology and agricultural technology, Israel is internationally recognized as one of the most innovative countries, attracting a number of multinational corporations to set up their R&D institutions in this country. Israel's research and development spending accounts for about 5% of its GNP which is twice the average level of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and higher than any other western country. China is accelerating its construction of an innovative country and placing innovation as the first one among the five concepts for development. Since the two countries share the same vision of innovative cooperation and have the complementary advantages and huge potentials, a lot more Israeli enterprises now take greater interest in China and more Chinese companies also choose to invest in Israel. The Innovation Authority, Israel's official agency responsible for innovation, has signed cooperation agreements with eight local governments including Jiangsu, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Shenzhen, Shandong, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Sichuan; Chinese companies will come to Tel Aviv to build its first light rail; the Fosun Group in China has acquired Israel's well-known cosmetics company AHAVA. All of these are successful cases connecting Israeli advantages in technology and innovation with the Chinese market and production capacity. Last year, both

leaders announced to establish a comprehensive and innovative partnership between China and Israel, clearly identifying priorities and pointing out the direction for cooperation between China and Israel in the new era. The two countries should take this as an opportunity to continue to deepen close cooperation in clean energy, agriculture, investment, finance, medical services and other fields within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative to benefit the two peoples and provide China-Israel solutions to such global issues as food, environment, health, sanitation and clean energy.

Science and innovation are two key parts that create the country's future. Israel has a population of just over 8,000,000 and yet has nearly 40,000 scientists; the country ranks among the best in the list of global innovation index assessments for a rather long term; its number of patent applications submitted per capita is the highest in the world; the total number of its start-ups ranks the second, only next to the United States.

The vitality in its science, technology and innovation can be mainly attributed to three reasons: First of all, the state establishes its official agency Israel Innovation Authority at the national level, and all start-ups can apply for funding from it. Second, the Jewish nation has always attached importance to education. 24% of the Israeli workforce has a university degree, and 12% has a higher degree, making Israel the third highest country in the industrial world in terms of academic degree, only next to the United States and the Netherlands. Third, poverty gives rise to the desire for change and that is true of this state in its turning the weaknesses into strengths, and making the impossible possible. Israeli people are flexible in thinking and action, which can be partly seen in the process of the delegation's dealing with its personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and other institutions.

(Translated by Li Ruifang)

Review by Philippine Scholar Charlie V. Manalo on President Xi Jinping's State Visit to the Philippines

Editor's Note: On November 20, 2018, Chinese President Xi Jinping paid his first state visit to the Philippines. The two presidents made a unanimous decision to establish a relationship of comprehensive strategic cooperation between China and the Philippines on the basis of mutual respect, honesty, equality and mutual benefit, and win-win cooperation, depicting a new historical position of China-Philippines relations. People from all walks of life in the Philippines gave a high appraisal to President Xi Jinping's visit to the Philippines and held the view that at this new historical starting point of China-Philippines relations, as China and the Philippines actively planned the vision of bilateral cooperation, strengthened pragmatic cooperation in the three pillar fields: security, development and humanities, deepened the Belt and Road Initiative, and jointly maintained peace and stability in the South China Sea, these moves would play a demonstration effect on ASEAN and even Asian countries and help to ensure regional peace and development.

In recent years, both nations have seen considerable achievements through all-round cooperation between China and the Philippines, ushering in a particularly important opportunity to further the bilateral relations. President Xi's visit has unfolded a beautiful blueprint for future relations between the Philippines and China and there is reason for us to believe that the two countries will seize this opportunity to realize greater development of bilateral relations at a higher level.

President Xi's visit to the Philippines will not only strengthen the diplomatic relations and economic ties between the two countries, but also serve as a milestone for the Philippines' current infrastructure construction plan "Build, Build, Build" and thus we believe that the further cooperation between the Philippines and China will inject fresh momentum to the Philippines' infrastructure construction and economic development. We also believe that the two sides will extend more cooperation in the fields of infrastructure construction, economy and trade as the two countries keep a very close economic and trade relationship and a number of infrastructure construction projects through cooperation are being carried forward at present. The Filipino people have the expectations that the two countries will keep an increasingly close economic and trade cooperation and that the Philippines will catch up with China's express train of development.

President Xi Jinping's four proposals of "deepening political mutual trust, persisting in cooperation and seeking truth, adhering to connect people, and

sticking to win-win cooperation" have pointed out the direction for the future cooperation between the Philippines and China. That the Philippines and China deepen political mutual trust, properly tackle disputes through friendly negotiations and strengthen maritime dialogue and cooperation plays a crucial role in bilateral relations between the two countries and also serves as a model in maintaining peace, stability and prosperity throughout the South China Sea region. China has made significant contributions to regional connectivity and the Philippines will make joint efforts with China to enhance mutual trust and gain more common ground through communication to contribute to regional cooperation in East Asia.

President Xi also mentioned in particular the beautiful story in history that the Philippine people led by the King Sulu embarked on a road of friendship to China. Therefore, the Philippines and China were already closely linked more than 600 years ago and this friendship deserves to be cherished by the two peoples and passed on from generation to generation. The trade between the two countries once experienced setbacks and the relations became frosty, but the bilateral relations then turned and moved, which gave new impetus and fresh blood to the non-government trade between the two peoples. The Philippine people hold the wish that the two countries will continue to maintain this friendly bilateral relationship as the better the relationship is, the more the Philippine people benefit.

(Translated by Li Ruifang)

Editor's note: With the continued progress of the Belt and Road Initiative, the educational cooperation between China and countries along the Belt and Road has been elevated to a new level. The number of foreign students choosing to study in China has grown by a large margin. Foreign students, as the main force of cultural exchanges, have taken the mission of cultural dissemination along the Belt and Road and are proactively making contribution to people-to-people connectivity of the Belt and Road Initiative. As follows are some articles written by foreign students in China, about China's social development and cultural traits as well as political landscape, from their own perspectives.

Belt and Road Initiative from Nepalese Perspective

Sameer Budhathoki

Nepalese student of University of International Business and Economics of China

Belt and Road Initiative

There is a new highway in Pakistan; a new rail terminal in Kazakhstan, a seaport is recently opened in Sri Lanka, a bridge in rural Laos, landlocked country Nepal has got access to four sea ports of China. What's interesting is that they are all part of one project emanating from China: 'Silk Road Economic Belt' and the 'Twenty-First Century Maritime Silk Road' which run through six economic corridors, the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa, spinning around 65 countries, touching 63.7 % of the world's population and collectively accounting around 30% of world GDP. This is China's Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI), the most aspiring and ambitious infrastructure in the modern history of mankind. BRI would incredibly interface the whole world through people to people network, culture, data and human progress, and essentially help to advance and exchange venture, innovation, industry, tourism, horticulture, biodiversity and 'blue economy' based on near favorable circumstances and aggressive edges with enhancing productivity and glaring guide to boost the advantages from progression and globalization to make a leap forward in the monetary front of member nations.

In September 2013, The General Secretary of the

Communist Party of China (CPC), Chairperson of Central Military Commission (CMC) and President of China, Xi Jinping first introduced the concept of New Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road during his visit to Kazakhstan. A month later at Indonesian parliament in October 2013, he proposed that the two sides should work together to build up a maritime silk road for the 21st century. Delivering a keynote speech in 2015 BOAO Asia Forum, president Xi Jinping said, "the building of the Belt and Road shall adhere to the principles of joint consultation, joint building and joint sharing, since it is open and inclusive rather than closed; it will not be a solo of China by itself, but it will be a chorus participated in by many countries along the Belt and Road." The primary target of BRI is to reinforce China's economy leadership through huge projects of network, framework development, participation, money related mix and individuals to individuals ties. This initiative has turned into basic and fascinating issue with regards to fiscal, political and educational field inside China and an incredible, alluring, intuitive topic across the world.

BRI from Nepalese Perspective

China has made phenomenal changes in socio-economic and technological developments. It

has enhanced quality of life of its people. Its willingness to share the fruits of development with neighboring countries for mutual benefits through the BRI is praiseworthy. In perspective of historical linkages between Nepal and China as well as considering the present day reality between the two nations, Nepal has joined the BRI with great enthusiasm on 12 May 2017. Beijing and Kathmandu hailed off Transit and Transport Agreement (TTA) in 2016, a huge move after the blockade by India in 2015, which enlightened Nepal's dependence on India for trade, commerce and exchange. As Kathmandu thought about its fuel emergency in view of the barricade due to connectivity being a landlocked country, Beijing rapidly turned into an achievable option in contrast to Nepal's reliance on India. Sandwiched between economic, military and geographic mammoths India and China, Nepal depends intensely on imports from India and totally on Indian ports for access of sea.

On September 8, 2018 China has granted Nepal access use its four sea ports Tianjin, Shenzhen, Lianyungang and Zhanjiang and three dry ports and Lanzhou, Lhasa and Xigatse to trade with other countries after finalization of the protocol of the (TTA) between China and Nepal. Likely, Nepal has access to the Chinese territory through six checkpoints. These early momentums indicate the meeting of expected benefits of Nepalese aspiration to have a meaningful participation in BRI bringing China and Nepal more closely. In June 2018, Nepali Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli made a trip to China to sign agreement worth US\$2.4 billion on infrastructure, energy projects to post-disaster reconstruction efforts. The main feature of the deal is to venturesome arrangement to build railroad line through the Himalayas. The line will connect the Tibetan border town of Gyirung with the Kathmandu, and Pokhara and Lumbini (Buddha's birthplace). The railway is being trumpeted as a potential fortune for Nepal's tourism industry, with some 2.5 million Chinese visitors expected to visit every year. Researchers estimate that Nepal's exchange could be helped by 35% to 45% when the rail line and other BRI framework ventures are finished.

The Chinese government has just led a pre-feasibility study on the Gyirung-Kathmandu railroad. It assessed the 72.25km line from the Chinese outskirts to Kathmandu would cost US\$2.25 billion. China and Nepal will come much nearer as the BRI will advance interconnectedness between the two. Railways from Lhasa to Kathmandu will before long interface the two in various paths as the BRI is additionally for infrastructural advancement. In addition, Chinese interest in Nepal will likewise develop as the BRI is additionally about exchange. Additionally the agreement targets boosting connectivity in areas such as transit, roads, railways, trade, aviation and power to promote mutually beneficial cooperation between Nepal and China in various fields such as the economy, environment, technology and culture which will spur the globalization of the Nepali economy.

If rail line is created as proposed, Nepal would turn into a transit trade hub and exchange among China and India. China is the second largest economy and first population in the world, which is known as the world's largest factory and India known as fifth largest economy and second largest population in the world. Both of these countries are emerging power in terms of economy, military and culture and have comparative advantages in terms of trade and investment. Therefore, these both countries can take benefit from the trade route through Nepal. If Nepal can produce export oriented commodities and services, it will be take more benefit by linking with the largest market of the world whereas China and India can trade among themselves through the route of Nepal which will be cheaper, faster and convenient route. Nepal is a country having profuse natural resources and labor power, Nepal needs to take initiation to gain capital investment and technology from various sources and BRI will be one, therefore, Nepal doesn't loss the chance to get benefit from BRI. A new framework of international economic cooperation and global connectivity is intended to be provided by Belt and Road initiative. Despite economic point of view, political, cultural and religious side, Nepal-China relations will elevate to the next level through Belt and Road Initiative.

My life in China

Andrieieva Tetiana

**Ukrainian student sponsored by Silk Road Chamber
of International Commerce in China**

I am studying in Xi'an Jiaotong University for one and half year. During this time I improved my Chinese language, learned Chinese culture, participated in various events and festivals. I also met many people from different countries; it is very interesting to communicate with them, to discover the customs and traditions of other countries.

Study in Xi'an Jiaotong University is not very easy, but interesting. My major is international Economics and Trade. Last year we studied Chinese language and mathematics, and this semester we began to study specialized subjects. I am very pleased with the quality of my study here, most of the teachers are very good specialists. After class I usually go to library, because it is very comfortable place for study. I want to learn Chinese culture so besides my classes I also attended Chinese drawing and Chinese cuisine classes.

Of course, during my study here I often take part in various events where every foreign student can represent his country or own talents. Last year in winter we took part in a cultural festival. This is a very interesting event where took part a people from 60 countries. Each country presents own traditions, cuisine, national clothes, dances and much more. The event was very fun.

Also in the spring we went to the Tianshui . There foreign students taught in schools, talking about their countries and every participant represented own talents like dancing, singing and much more.

We visited the local attractions (Fuxi Temple, Maijishan Grottes, Yuquan temple) and met with Chinese high school students. It was an interesting experience. In summer, together with foreign students, we visited one of the most famous sights of Xi'an – the Terracotta army. I was impressed of this sight, it was very interesting.

Recently our University held a New Year's concert. It involved a lot of foreign students from 西北大学, 西北工业大学 and others. Folk dances of many countries and Chinese performances were presented there. I like take part in events because it give a opportunity to meet new interesting people.

In my free time I like to walk around the city, visit Xi'an sights(Drum Tower, Bell Tower, Giant Wild Goose Pagoda, Shaanxi History Museum), parks, City wall, Muslim Quarter or find new interesting places.

China is a country with the help of which I can realize my dreams. I sincerely thank Silk Road Chamber of International Commerce to give me such a wonderful opportunity. After four years of studying at the university, I believe that I am ready to take the next step toward my dream. By accomplishing this, I will show myself that I can achieve something significant in my life, I can be who I want to be. At this point I am looking to gain the required skills and relationships to grow as a professional; I know that China is the right place for me to accomplish this objective.

My Understanding of the Belt and Road Initiative

Shamsullah Rasikh

Afghan Student in Peking University

China and Afghanistan, sharing 92 km border, are neighbouring countries. This neighbourhood has always been accompanied by friendly and close ties to both countries, over decades, due

to cultural, political, economic and historical commonalities. China is being one of the largest and most important neighbours of Afghanistan, with friendly political and economic policies

which have been of high value to Afghanistan. In current circumstances, China is busy in developing energy sector, training the people of Afghanistan in mining and cooperating in controlling drugs. China has also heavily invested in mining industry in Afghanistan. For instance, contribution of China by investment on Aynak copper mine with an investment of 3.5 billion US dollar, is one of the biggest foreign investment in the history of Afghanistan and if it is explored properly, it's expected to generate revenue bigger than all the projects of Afghanistan. Statistically, this project has reserves of more than 88 billion dollars which is double of Afghanistan's GDP.

President Xi Jinping, officially announced the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013. It includes rebuild of the old Silk Road, but in much larger dimensions, with economic, cultural and political objectives, extends from two, sea and land routes, to which many countries, including Afghanistan, have announced support and interest.

Undoubtedly, the Belt and Road Initiative is unmatched in kind, and its plan by the world's great economy (China) reflects the long-term sense of responsibility and vision of China to the region and the world's economic development. This mega project, will connect Asia from its easternmost point, through central Asia to Europe and the rest of the world, is expected to not only provide the basis for economic development in the region and the world, but also provide a strong bases of social/cultural ties among involved nationalities and ultimately help peace and stability and strengthening of friendly and close ties between the countries of the world.

Unfortunately, the ruling powers of the world have always had a self-centred, transient, unilateral, and rent-seeking policy towards other nations. Such vision and policy has undoubtedly played a significant role in generating and provoking of instability and chaos in the region, however development for themselves in the cost of spread of poverty and misery for others. Afghanistan is one of the prominent examples which has always been victim of such policies and is now burning in war and misery. It is really hard to believe that more than 40 advanced countries of the world, after 18 years of so-called struggle and effort, have failed

to win over a small group of insurgence (Taliban) in Afghanistan that was defeated back in 2001 in a matter of a week.

As a student of public policy, I believe that lack of comprehensive regional and global policies, in order to effectively link countries and to tackle their disputes and rivalries through highlighting, strengthening and expansion of their commonalities, has been at least one of the contributors and reasons of conflicts, poverty and retardation in the region. Central Asian countries, especially Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Iran, are the victims of such misconducts.

Considering the history of China and its current statues in the region and the world, and the hardship that China has went through and experienced throughout the history, mostly because of other's interventions and disruptions; China's deep understanding of the challenges of the region and adoption of the right policies to tackle it, is expected. Undoubtedly, the mega project of BRI will not only boost China's domestic economy, but it will be the foundation of economic development and strengthening of international relations and creation of common interests among countries of the region and the world. This could be perceived and seen as a practical and objective example of China's true understanding of the challenges of the region and its proper approaches towards global development. Due to the adoption and implementation of a policy of neutrality and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries, China has generated a credible position among countries of the region, especially in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, China's rapid economic growth, stability and its social order, with respect to its huge population, and its technological achievements, gradually offer a new model for the world. The current position of China on one hand and its positive interaction with the countries of the region, on the other hand, is a great chance and opportunity for successful implementation of BRI.

Built and Road Initiative, connects about sixty countries, via sea and land for the first time. This initiative will not only provide a platform for massive economic exchanges between these countries, but will also be an effective means for

developing social, cultural and political interactions among them. It should be noted that, for effective and efficient use of this opportunity and to meeting this opportunity to operate, cooperation, vigilance and the proper approach of member countries are critical and required. I believe that this initiative will act as a powerful force in the body of global geography to provide better living and future for its inhabitants.

Central Asian countries, especially Afghanistan, despite its important geographical strategic location; has been actively excluded from the economic interaction with other countries of the region and the world due to the lack of necessary infrastructure and lack of access to the sea. Domestic products of Afghanistan, including agricultural, handicrafts and natural resources, have been deprived of growth and reach of global markets due to the difficulty of geography and lack of connections, or at least facing serious problems. Afghanistan's reliance on single door for exports (Gwadar port of Pakistan), has put Afghanistan in an extreme vulnerable position. However, other options to connecting Afghanistan to the sea, like Chabahar port in southern Iran, has got significantly limited due to US sanctions on Iran. Therefore, the inclusion of Afghanistan in a mega project of BRI, will not only connect Afghanistan to several countries and resolve such mentioned problems, but will also revitalize and enhance the geostrategic and geopolitical role of Afghanistan in connecting north to south and east to west of Asia. Perhaps this role will make Afghanistan more competitive in the future than any other country in terms of cooperation and positive interaction between them.

In a nutshell, it can be said that BRI offers major opportunities for the countries involved in this

project in particular:

The first opportunity, progress and development, and increase the level of prosperity in the world. Large number of countries in the project, according to World Bank statistics, have a significant percentage of its people below the poverty line. For example, Kenya 23%, Djibouti, and Uzbekistan 23%, Laos 21%, and Afghanistan 40% (according to the Asian Development Bank). Thus, the success BRI to build construction, transportation, finance, banking and other infrastructure will increase the welfare of the people of these countries.

The second opportunity is the level of business of developing countries on the path. Although the share of Silk Road countries in global exports has almost doubled in the past two decades, but few countries, including China, are in-charge for exports. Inadequate infrastructure, poor policies and deep economic and cultural gaps in countries such as Afghanistan, Nepal, Tajikistan and Laos have hampered their integration into the global economy, but BRI is an opportunity for participation of these countries in trade and global exchanges.

The third opportunity is to improve communications and save time and cost of transporting goods from East Asia to Europe. Most recently, the transit of goods from China to Central Europe takes 30 days, and most of the shipping is done via sea routs, while rail transport is less time-consuming.

It should be noted that the delay of sending goods (per day) reduces one percent of the trade. Improving the rail network and other transport infrastructures in partnership with the region will lead to further trade, increased investment and economic growth of the countries on the path.

Notes;

- 1.Syed WaqasHaiderBukhari, "THE ROLE OF CHINA IN ECONOMIC STABILIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF AFGHANISTAN" Policy brief, Margalla Papers 2012
- 2.StinaTorjesen, "Fixing Afghanistan: What Role for China", Norwegian Peace Building Centre, Noref Policy Brief, No.7, (June 2010), p.3.
- 3.Syed WaqasHaiderBukhari, "THE ROLE OF CHINA IN ECONOMIC STABILIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF AFGHANISTAN" Policy brief, Margalla Papers 2012

Belt and Road International Forum on Public Cooperation for Ecological Remediation

Background

Most countries along the Belt and Road have been suffering land desertification to varying extent for decades. Desertification and land degradation are now great threats to human prosperity and the lives of future generations. Actively carrying out ecological governance cooperation so as to accelerate the improvement of the ecological environment along the Belt and Road is an important basic guarantee for promoting the common development and common prosperity of countries along the Belt and Road.

In order to contribute more to ecological restoration, China Green Foundation (CGF), jointly hosted the Belt and Road International Forum on Public Cooperation for Ecological Remediation with China NGO Network for International Exchanges, International Forestry Cooperation Center of National Forestry and Grassland Administration on September 11-14, 2018 in Wuwei City, Gansu Province. The forum was aimed at further mobilizing the enthusiasm of the civil society organizations of the countries along the Belt and Road, setting up a new platform for international non-governmental ecological cooperation, and giving a fresh impetus to regional ecological cooperation and sharing.

Delegates from international organizations and agencies including the Secretariat of UNCCD, UNDP, APFNet, IUCN, INBAR, WWF and CI, members of CSO Panel of UNCCD, and representatives of 16 NGOs from the countries along the Belt and Road countries such as Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Turkey, South Korea and Japan were invited to Wuwei to exchange their ideas and experiences, and to cooperate in the ecological field.

During the forum, more than 30 delegates from international institutions, research institutes, enterprises and civil society organizations conducted in-depth communication and exchanges through keynote speeches and panel discussions, and they proposed forward-looking and guiding views and opinions.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN Deputy Secretary General, stated in his congratulatory message that the Belt and Road Initiative focuses on common development and its goal of win-win cooperation is in line with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through this forum, Chinese NGOs can share with countries along the Belt and Road experiences and best practices on ecological governance and environmental protection.

Mr. Ai Ping, Vice President of Chinese Association for International Understanding, spoke positively of the important role of NGOs in ecological governance. Green development is not only conducive to ecological rehabilitation, livelihood improvement, and poverty reduction, but also can help to reduce national conflicts and regional disputes, pursue long-term development for countries and peace for the world. NGOs serve as an important bond in connecting the government and the people.

Mr. Pradeep Monga, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNCCD pointed out that this forum was at the forefront of one of the biggest challenges facing the planet today, and he highly valued the achievements and best practices of China's efforts to combat desertification and advocated a wider cooperation on ecological restoration among countries along the Belt and Road. Mr. Octavio Perez Pardo, a Latin American region delegate from the CSO Panel accredited to the UNCCD said that he would pay closer attention to China's progress in combating

desertification and the work of CSOs such as the CGF in combating desertification, and would attach great importance to participating, listening and understanding China's success stories in this area, and try his best to mobilizing international CSOs to actively participate in non-government international cooperation and exchanges, and make greater contributions to building a green earth. In keynote speech, Lo Sze Ping, Chief Representative of WWF China, introduced the vision of NGOs and the governments to jointly promote ecological governance along the Belt and Road from three parts: the ecological issues facing the Earth, the ecological opportunities and challenges of the countries along the Belt and Road, and the future direction of NGOs.

Achievement

The forum released three achievements: the launch of the Belt and Road Ecological Restoration Project and the International Special Fund with the Secretariat of UNCCD aiming to plant *P. euphratica* trees along the Belt and Road, the Minqin initiative and the establishment of CSO Partnerships on Ecological Remediation along the Belt and Road. The implementation of the restoration project finally aims to construct three *Populus euphratica* Ecological Restoration Belts along the Silk Road which respectively include *Populus euphratica* Ecological Restoration Belt in Northwest China, in

the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and in the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor.

Conclusion

Civil society organizations are an indispensable force for promoting international exchanges and cooperation, and a bridge between the government and the people. Through this forum, CGF has joined hands with all parties including social organizations, non-governmental organizations, enterprises and other sectors of society to participate in ecological governance along the Belt and Road, and guide enterprises, individuals, academics and other parties to contribute their wisdom and strengths. We will also speed up the scale-up operation of the International Special Fund and encourage the development of charitable cause from regionalization to internationalization.

In the future, we will work together with the countries along the Belt and Road to restore *Populus euphratica* trees and ecological condition of the Silk Road Economic Belt, and explore a scientific path that can balance the ecological restoration and economic development so as to build a green corridor along the Belt and Road and guard the Silk Road civilization.

(Translated by Wang Zhiyun)

The 2018 Silk Road Industrial and Commercial Leaders Summit(Zhangjiajie)

On October 16th, 2018, the Silk Road Industrial and Commercial Leaders Summit,(Zhangjiajie) sponsored by the Silk Road International Chamber of Commerce, was held in Zhangjiajie City, Hunan Province.

About 400 people attended the summit, including government representatives, former political

leaders, diplomats, leaders of international organizations, chairmen of the chamber (or association) of commerce, entrepreneurs and experts in the fields of international trade, finance, brands, travel and medicine from 84 countries and regions along the Belt and Road, including China, Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Turkmenistan, Croatia, Italy, Australia,

Switzerland, France, and Germany, etc. He Baoxiang, Vice Governor of Hunan Province, Chen Zhimin, the Deputy Director of the Social and Legal Affairs Committee of the Thirteenth National Committee of the CPPCC and Chairman of the Chinese Association for the Promotion of Friendship, Dou Enyong, Vice President of China NGO Network for International Exchanges, Zhang Wei, Vice Chairman of the China International Chamber of Commerce, Guo Zhenggui, Secretary of the CPC Zhangjiajie Municipal Committee, Liu Ge'an, Mayor of Zhangjiajie and Lv Jianzhong, President of the Silk Road International General Chamber of Commerce , attended the summit and delivered speeches.

I. Guests from over 80 Countries and Regions Attended the Summit

Higher Level, Larger Scale and Wider Influence

This summit features higher level, larger scale and wider influence. Guests from a total of 84 countries and regions along the Belt and Road, including diplomatic envoys of more than 40 countries, government representatives from more than 30 countries and chairmen of the chamber (or association) of commerce from more than 50 countries, talk about the international cooperation related to the Belt and Road Initiative, around the theme of “a new open era, a new platform for development, a beautiful new Hunan Province”, and thus promote the global economic and trade prosperity and development.

He Baoxiang, Vice Governor of Hunan Province, pointed out in his speech, in recent years, Hunan has actively implemented the Belt and Road initiative, establishing economic and trade cooperation with more than 200 countries and regions of the world, and building friendly relations with more than 80 cities from over 30 countries, and opening to the outside persistently. At present, Hunan, standing at a new starting point of “Innovation-driven and open development”, looks forward to working with the Belt and Road countries for extensive exchanges and cooperation, broaden the channels of trade, and join hands in

creating a better future.

Stjepan Mesic, Former President of Croatia, said the Belt and Road Initiative put forward by President Xi Jinping is today’s most important global economic development initiative, and many countries and regions, including Croatia, have responded positively to and benefited from the initiative. At present, international relations are facing many uncertainties, and it is particularly important to build the Belt and Road and connect Europe, Asia and Africa. Let us unite as one to move forward along the Silk Road and work together to maintain world peace and economic development.

Alexander Tomov, Bulgaria’s former deputy Prime Minister said the Belt and Road Initiative put forward by President Xi Jinping was a far-sighted and very timely initiative that benefited many countries and promoted the development and transformation of the world economic landscape.

Dou Enyong, Vice President of China NGO Network for International Exchanges, said that over the past five years, the Belt and Road Initiative had achieved a major leap from vision to reality and made phased achievements that had benefited the world. The summit will certainly mobilize the business and industry at home and abroad to participate more actively in the Belt and Road construction, and achieve common development and common prosperity of the new results through pragmatic cooperation.

Lv Jianzhong, President of the Silk Road International General Chamber of Commerce, called on participants to work together to build a community of shared future of harmony and integrated development for the international business.

Margvelasvilly, President of Georgia, Rodrigo Duterte, President of the Philippines, Schwillenellis Saulius, Prime Minister of Republic of Lithuania, Saad Hariri, Prime Minister of Lebanon, Scott Ferguson, Chief Executive Officer of the World Trade Center Association, Rowland Morilas,

Secretary-General of the United Nations Development Policy Committee, and Carrie Lam, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, sent congratulatory messages to the summit.

II. Combination of Theory and Practice

Practical Move and Global Perspective

The summit is committed to planning and setting up issues with the international thinking, including keynote speeches and dialogue discussions, as well as project docking and pragmatic cooperation, involving the Belt and Road economic and trade cooperation, standard setting, brand building, financial services, cultural tourism and the development of traditional Chinese medicine and other topics. The aim is to build a community of shared future for the integration and development of the international business, maintain the multilateral trade system, build a platform for dialogue, exchange and collaborative development, and strive to make the Summit a pragmatic cooperation platform for the construction of the Belt and Road through six parallel forums: building an Open World Economic Forum with benefits to all, holding the Founding Meeting of the Silk Road Friendship City Collaboration, i.e. the First Zhangjiajie International Tourism Forum, building a Safe International Business Environment Forum, an International Forum on the Belt and Road Initiative, an International Forum on Innovation and Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine and holding the Silk Road International Chamber of Commerce Financial Round-table Conference.

III. Summit outcome: Zhangjiajie Consensus

The important outcome of the Summit was the issuing of a statement on Working together to Build the Community of Shared Future of Integration and Development for International Business--Zhangjiajie Consensus at the 2018 Silk Road Industrial and Commercial Leaders Summit (Zhangjiajie) and the further expansion of the circle of friends.

Zhangjiajie Consensus indicated that the world today is in a period of great development, great change and great adjustment, and chambers (or associations) of commerce should coordinate governments and business enterprises, actively grasp the potential for cooperation and development opportunities contained in the Belt and Road Initiative, build consensus on development, set up cooperation platforms, promote project implementation, and promote the high quality, sustainable common development by trade and investment, thus we can inject new momentum into the global economic recovery, form a community of shared future for the integration and development of the international business, and help build a community of shared future for mankind.

Stjepan Mesic, former President of Croatia and Alexander Tomov, Bulgaria's former deputy Prime Minister were hired as international advisors to the Silk Road International General Chamber of Commerce at this Summit. 48 states and cities from 18 countries, including the city of Winnie, Macedonia, the city of Bossangoa, Bulgaria, the city of Rei, Australia, the city of Ternopol, Ukraine, the city of Zadar, Croatia, the Free city of Verona, Italy, and the Tashkent state of Uzbekistan, joined the Silk Road Friendship City Collaboration. 14 international organizations, including the Sogdia State Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Tajikistan, the Bulgarian-Kazakhstan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Amman Chambers of Commerce and the Azerbaijan-China Cooperation Federation, joined the Belt and Road Regional Organization Alliance. 18 Chambers of Commerce and Industry, including the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Silk Road Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kazakhstan, the Cuban Chambers of Commerce and the Cote Divoire Industry and Commerce Association, joined the Silk Road International General Chamber of Commerce as group members. The addition of fresh blood not only adds more momentum to tell the Belt and Road stories but also expands the coverage.

(Translated by Li Junling)

Chinese Social Organizations Hold Side Meetings on Human Rights in Geneva

Bian Peilin

On November 5, 2018, the 31st session of the two-week UN Human Rights Council Country Human Rights Review Working Group opened in Geneva, Switzerland. In order to demonstrate China's tremendous progress and achievements in the field of human rights, social organizations from China jointly held two side meetings entitled "Human Rights in China: Development and Progress since Reform and Opening-up from NGOs' Perspective" and "China's Ethnic Minority Development and Human Rights Progress" at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

“Human Rights in China: Development and Progress since Reform and Opening-up from NGOs' Perspective”

On the morning of November 5th, social organizations from China held a side meeting at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, on the development of China's social organizations and the progress of human rights in the 40 years of reform and opening up. About 50 people including foreign diplomats based in Geneva, officials from relevant international organizations, and representatives of Chinese and foreign civil organizations attended the side event.

Liu Kaiyang, Deputy Secretary-General of China NGO Network for International Exchanges, said that with the encouragement and support of the government, Chinese social organizations have maintained the momentum of development and have played an active role in promoting economic and social development and human rights.

Chen Hongtao, Executive Deputy Secretary-General of China's Poverty Alleviation Foundation, shared the positive efforts to implement poverty reduction at home and abroad and implement the UN Millennium Development Goals Report and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Besides, he introduced the development of Chinese social organizations and the positive role in the progress of China's human rights cause by taking his organization as an example.

Nie Jing, Director of the Liaison Office of the China Disabled Persons' Federation, introduced the China Disabled Persons' Federation to promote the Chinese government's inclusion of disability issues in the national economic and social development plan, participate in the formulation of laws, regulations and policies for persons with disabilities, and ensure the rehabilitation, education, employment, etc. of the disabled.

Zhang Caixia, Director of the International Organization Department of the All-China Women's Federation, introduced the important role of Chinese women in economic and social development. Through a series of activities carried out by the All-China Women's Federation, including women's poverty reduction, entrepreneurial innovation, safeguarding women's rights and interests, and promoting family building for women and promote international women's exchanges, Chinese women's cause has been fully developed.

Hong Ping, Deputy Secretary-General of the China Family Planning Association, introduced the diverse and colorful activities of adolescent

sexual and reproductive health and rights, and vigorously promoted youth participation in the ICPD Programme of Action and the UN's sustainable development goals, cooperation with countries along the Belt and Road and African NGOs to promote international cooperation in promoting the healthy development of adolescents and community health promotion.

Niu Shuaishuai, Director of the International Cooperation Department of the Beijing Youth Legal Aid and Research Center, analyzed the current situation of children's protection in China and the difficulties and challenges faced by them. She shared the effort to safeguard youth's rights and interests, such as actively participating in child protection legislation by providing legal aid and counseling, pushing policy reforms to promote the attention of all sectors of society and protect the rights of minors.

Kuang Yuqiu, Vice-Chairman of the Macao Women's Federation, introduced the positive role played by the NGOs of the Macao Special Administrative Region in promoting the economic and social development, and shared positive contributions to the protection of the rights of women and children, such as pushing legislation to on Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence. The Criminal Code's Sexual Offences Act and the establishment of combating against sexual harassment, human trafficking, and the International Convention on the Rights of Women and Children have made.

"China's Minority Development and Human Rights Progress"

On the afternoon of November 5th, Chinese social organizations jointly held the side meeting of "China's Minority Development and Human Rights Progress" at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. About 70 people from various diplomatic diplomats, officials of relevant international organizations, and representatives of Chinese and foreign civil organizations attended the side meeting.

Liu Kaiyang, Deputy Secretary-General of China

NGO Network for International Exchanges, said that China is a multi-ethnic country. The state guarantees the legitimate rights and interests of all ethnic minorities. All ethnic groups are equal, united, and harmonious.

Zhang Junhao, Director of the Chinese Association for International Understanding, introduced China's ethnic policy and economic and social development in ethnic minority areas.

Yili Xinna from the China National Minority Foreign Exchange Association introduced the government's practice of protecting the legitimate rights and interests of ethnic minorities through vivid cases.

Through the stories of themselves and their compatriots, Jemao Zhizhi and Jin Zhewang from China Association for Preservation and Development of Tibetan Culture introduced the development of economy, the improvement of people's livelihood and the protection of traditional culture in ethnic minority areas.

Lyu Congyang from Beijing NGO Association for International Exchanges shows the life scene of the Muslim population living in Beijing, and tells a Chinese story of equal treatment, mutual respect and common development between all ethnic groups.

In the interactive session of the side event, the delegates and the audience discussed issues related to the economic and social development of ethnic minority areas in China, the education of minority populations and the protection of employment rights and bilingual education.

The two side meetings highlighted the unique role of Chinese social organizations, tell the human rights stories in various ways, introduce China's human rights proposition from the perspective of social organizations, and demonstrate the new era of China's human rights cause. The development and progress China has won the comprehensive and objective understanding of others.

Chinese Social Organizations Participate in the UN Katowice Climate Change Conference

Wang Zhiyun

From December 2nd to 14th, 2018, the 24th Session of the UN Climate Change Conference was held in Katowice, known as “the capital of coal”, Poland. The conference included the 24th Meeting of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24), the 14th Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP14) and Part III of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to Paris Agreement (CMA1-3), etc. Representatives from more than 190 countries commenced negotiations on the implementing regulations of Paris Agreement.

The year 2018 was the deadline agreed on by the signatories to Paris Agreement for the adoption of programme of work for the implementation of the Paris commitments, thus the importance of the meeting was particularly prominent in 2018. The core objective of the meeting was to adopt the implementing regulations of the Paris Agreement, endorsed by all parties, and the key topics include climate action, climate finance, capacity building, gender, carbon neutrality, technology, etc. In addition, the Talanov Dialogue was held during the conference in accordance with the decision of the 2017 Climate Change Conference to promote the coordination of climate objectives and action by all countries by the year 2020.

At the Leaders’ Summit on December 3rd, Andrzej Duda, President of Poland, António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, Patricia Espinosa, the Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Kristalina Georgieva, Chief Executive of the World Bank, attended the meeting and delivered speeches.

After several rounds of negotiations between the parties, Michal Kurtyka, President of the Conference, and Deputy Minister of Environment of Poland, at 22 o’clock local time on the 15th, announced the official

adoption of the implementing regulations of Paris Agreement. Although the closing day was postponed one day from the original plan, the conference culminated in the negotiation of the rules for the implementation of the Paris Agreement, achieving a comprehensive, balanced and robust outcome that contributed to the subsequent full implementation of the requirements of Paris Agreement. The outcome of the conference conveys a positive signal of adherence to multilateralism, the implementation of the Paris Agreement and enhanced action to address climate change, highlighting the irreversibility of the global green low-carbon transition, boosting the confidence of the international community to cooperate in addressing climate change and reinforcing the political will of all parties to advance global climate governance. China has made an important contribution to the success of the conference and has been highly appreciated by the international community.

During the climate change conference, the Chinese delegation set up a “China Corner” in the venue, held 25 side meetings on the topics of low-carbon development, carbon markets, South-South cooperation, climate investment and financing, etc., and provided a comprehensive & three-dimensional account of China’s policies, actions and achievements in tackling climate change and promoting green and low-carbon development. It shows the image of a responsible power that actively promotes the construction of global ecological civilization and constructs the community of shared future for mankind.

Li Ganjie, Minister of Ecological Environment of China, attended the summit as a Chinese representative to express China’s attitude and position in actively promoting the multilateral process of climate change and promoting the success of the

Katowice Climate Conference, and said that China has become the largest country in the use of clean energy and has made a significant contribution to the response to global climate change.

Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said that “China’s achievements in the area of addressing climate change are impressive and show that climate change is not irreversible, and that China’s innovation and practice are instructive to many countries around the world.”

Xie Zhenhua, Head of China’s Climate Change Negotiation Delegation, and China’s Special Representative on Climate Change, attended the high-level activities and consultations of the conference, contributed China’s program and Chinese wisdom to the regulations of the Paris Agreement, and held a Chinese and Foreign Media Conference to engage in dialogue with representatives of major Non-governmental Organizations at home and abroad to introduce the positions of developing countries.

In addition to the formal negotiating agenda of the government, the conference has, as always, supported the participation of parties such as international agencies, non-governmental organizations, business and youth. There are two main highlights of UN in encouraging the participation of all sectors of society in addressing climate change: The first is the proposal of the COP24 Partnership Initiative, which encourages all entities, including society and business, to step up their efforts to support emission reduction actions and build resilience to reduce the adverse effects of climate change. The second is the launch of the “People’s Seat” initiative, which calls on global climate change advocates to release statements with the label “People’s Seat” (or Take Your Seat) on the Twitter platform, which are collected and submitted to the leaders of the participants. Michal Kurtyka, President of the Conference and Deputy Minister of Environment of Poland, stressed that the conference encouraged “openness, listening and the full participation of civil society in global efforts to combat climate change”.

With the strong encouragement and support of the current secretariat, especially the impetus from the COP24 Partnership Initiative, the enthusiasm for participation in the civil sector has

soared. International agencies, non-governmental organizations, enterprises and youth organizations, among others, organized hundreds of events and actively participated in the Conference process during the conference through the organization of side meetings, press conferences, exhibitions and other forms. With the United States withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, the parties are looking forward to an increase in China. China has completed the year 2020 relevant emission reduction targets 3 years ahead of schedule, promoting significant results in environmental governance, and events held by all sectors of China during the conference have attracted greater attention. In addition to government groups, a large number of social organizations, enterprises and youth organizations in China spontaneously attended the conference, the number of attendees with organized behavior reaching more than 200, and a total of over 40 events were held during the conference, including formal side meetings of the conference, China Corner side meetings, press conferences, exhibitions and so on. The events covered a number of topics, including energy conservation and emission reduction, green finance, low-carbon development, carbon markets, green refrigeration, youth action, climate communication, and entrepreneur contributions, etc. For example, Chinese social organizations such as the Green Innovation Development Center and the Green Research Institute launched the NGO Green Refrigeration Alliance at the conference and read out the China NGO Green Refrigeration Initiative, which is an important step in the transformation of green refrigeration into sustainable development, environmental protection, climate change and green low-carbon cities by Chinese social organizations. China Businesses for Climate Action (CBCA), jointly sponsored by a number of units such as Vanke Public Welfare Foundation and Avenue Response Climate Change Center (Team C) and the Alashan See Foundation, hosted the China Enterprise Action Side Meeting in China Corner---“building a corporate climate action platform”, and Xie Zhenhua, China’s Special Representative for Climate Change, and Al Gore, Former Vice President of the United States and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, attended the conference and addressed separately to affirm the important role and contribution of companies in tackling climate change.

(Translated by Li Ruifang)

East Meets West, Acupuncture Benefits the World “The Beauty of China”—TCM Acupuncture- Moxibustion into UNESCO Headquarters

Yang Yuyang, Liu Jingyuan

On November 15th, 2018, “Special Events of World Acupuncture-Moxibustion Day into UNESCO” were held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France, to celebrate the 8th anniversary of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) acupuncture-moxibustion being inscribed on the “Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity”.

The serial of events included the opening ceremony, the Intangible Cultural Heritage---TCM Acupuncture-Moxibustion Exhibition, the World TCM Acupuncture-Moxibustion Health & Art Festival and the International Acupuncture-Moxibustion Symposium, highlighting the concept of bidirectional and multidirectional “communication” and focusing on the interaction between Chinese culture and Western culture, the integration of traditional culture and modern culture.

Ma Jianzhong, Deputy Director-General of the State Administration of TCM of China, Liu Baoyan, Chairman of the World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Societies (WFAS), Denis Colin from France, Chairman of the European Association for the Promotion of TCM Development and Vice-chairman of the WFAS, French Parliamentarian Chen Wenxiong, French Ambassador to UNESCO Laurent Stefanini, Greek Ambassador to UNESCO Michel Spinellis and Chinese Ambassador to UNESCO Shen Yang, etc., attended the event on that day. About 1500 delegates from various countries and speakers from more than 10 countries including China, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, Greece, Brazil and Australia, etc., were also present in the event.

At the opening ceremony, Ma Jianzhong said that the entry of TCM acupuncture and moxibustion into World Heritage List was a milestone event showing that TCM culture is internationally recognized, which has a far-reaching significance

for further promoting the inheritance, protection and development of TCM acupuncture and moxibustion and attracting more attention and understanding from the international community to the extraordinary traditional culture of the Chinese nation. He also mentioned that the State Administration of TCM of China would attach great importance to the role of the WFAS in promoting the development of Chinese medicine and continue to support the work of the WFAS. At last, he delivered the wish to deepen cooperation and exchanges with countries around the world, promote mutual learning and jointly pass on, develop and make good use of traditional medicine with TCM acupuncture-moxibustion included.

Liu Baoyan in his speech observed that over the past 30 years or so, the WFAS has gradually built a comprehensive work pattern in which academic learning and research is the base, exchanges and communication the form, services the wing and strategies the soul. It has organized more than 40 world conferences and international symposiums on acupuncture-moxibustion and nearly 30 TCM acupuncture-moxibustion activities. Through establishing cooperation with 13 countries and regions since 2015, the WFAS has built 10 bases for TCM acupuncture-moxibustion to be inherited and taught, 4 cooperative sites offering TCM acupuncture and moxibustion medical services and one TCM center, altogether serving tens of thousands of patients and acupuncture scholars.

Juliette Binoche, a well-known French actress, especially sent a letter to express her gratitude. She had been treated with TCM acupuncture-moxibustion for many years from which she and her children have benefited a lot and now their physical and mental state both see a great improvement. In her eyes, TCM acupuncture-moxibustion has a rather long history, but it is quite modern, economical and environment-friendly and has its own wisdom to live in harmony with

oneself.

During the event, the Intangible Cultural Heritage--TCM Acupuncture-Moxibustion Exhibition showed to the audience from different perspectives the early history of TCM acupuncture-moxibustion and its modern development, health care, meridians and acupoints, the diagnosis and treatment techniques, offering them a chance to appreciate the profound foundation of TCM culture at close range.

On the evening of this day, the 2018 World TCM Acupuncture Health & Art Festival in France with "TCM Acupuncture-Moxibustion & Global Health" as its theme officially kicked off and culminated in celebrating the 8th anniversary of

TCM acupuncture-moxibustion being listed into the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity". Meanwhile, Work Together to create a community for Human Health--2018 Paris Declaration was released at the festival through which the WFAS called on people in the acupuncture-moxibustion community to adhere to the concept of harmony and health, to shoulder the important mission of inheritance and innovation, to advocate people to live a healthy life with TCM acupuncture-moxibustion and to work together to build a community of shared health for all.

(The authors are with World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Societies)

(Translated by Li Ruifang)

Amity Foundation Sponsors Two Kenyan Doctors to China for Medical Training

"Thank you, the Amity Foundation!" Elijah Mwaura, a surgeon from Kenya, said with excitement, "This study is of great significance to me and Dr. John Kanyi and to the medical community in Kenya. We look forward to this kind of opportunities in the future!" On October 16, 2018, the two doctors shook hands with the staff of the Amity Foundation and said goodbye to the 8-day pancreatic surgery training trip and returned to their hometown.

Dr. Elijah Mwaura is Director of General Surgery at Chogoria Hospital in Eastern Kenya. Dr. John Kanyi is from Litein Hospital in western Kenya. A week ago, the two doctors came to Nanjing to participate in the International Pancreas Training Course organized by the Jiangsu Provincial Foreign Affairs Office, Jiangsu Provincial Friendship Association, and Jiangsu Provincial Health and Family Planning Committee with other ten surgical doctors from Kenya, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Romania, Australia and other countries. The Amity Foundation recommended some of the participants for this training and funded their expenses in China.

Founded in 1936, the Chogoria Hospital located in eastern Kenya equipped with 300 beds and owns the ability to radiate around 5 million people. Dr. Mwaura enjoys 4 years of experience as a surgeon and is a young and promising doctor in Chogoria hospital. There are only two full-time surgeons in his general surgery. "And unfortunately," Dr. Elijah Mwaura said with some embarrassment, "Our

department does not currently have the ability to perform pancreatic surgery. It is well known that pancreatic surgery is extremely complicated and difficult. We have no skills and no experience in pancreatic surgery." Dr. Elijah Mwaura told the staff of the Amity Foundation that there are more than 20 operations per day in the general surgery at Chogoria Hospital, but mainly for trauma surgery.

Litein Hospital, where Dr. John Kanyi was located, was founded in 1924 and currently has 300 beds. However, there are only three surgeons in general surgery, and there is no ability to perform pancreatic surgery. "Our hospital is a teaching hospital affiliated with the Ministry of Health of Kenya. It also provides training for many Kenyan doctors. It is one of the most important medical training centers in Kenya." Dr. John Kanyi proudly told the staff of the Amity Foundation, "So coming to China to learn advanced pancreatic surgery is meaningful and it will lay the foundation for us to train more pancreatic surgeons in Kenya in the future."

The entire training period lasted for 8 days. The Jiangsu Provincial People's Hospital conducted a comprehensive pancreatic surgery teaching for 12 surgeons from four continents through centralized training sharing and actual surgical demonstrations in the operating room.

After the training, Jiangsu Provincial Health Planning Commission and Jiangsu Provincial Foreign Affairs Office spoke highly of the performance of two

Kenyan doctors. When he learned that he was so appreciated, Dr. John Kanyi showed two blushes on his dark cheeks. "In the training class, only we two were general surgeons, and the remaining 10 were all pancreatic specialists. They originally know more about pancreatic specialists than we do, so we only have to work harder to catch up with them." Dr. John Kanyi smiled heartily. "Yes," Dr. Elijah Mwaura added. "The People's Hospital of Jiangsu Province is not only extremely advanced in surgical techniques, but also well-recognized for complications and pre-operative and post-operative care for patients!"

The two doctors said that pancreatic surgery is a very difficult and challenging operation in every country. Previously, they thought it would be impossible to

do pancreatic surgery. After training, they enhance confidence, and now they can slowly start to try and use other surgical techniques learned to improve the efficiency of surgery and shorten the operation time. In addition, Jiangsu Provincial People's Hospital has also established a WeChat group with them, which can be used for remote consultation and assistance at any time.

"I have benefited a lot from this study," Dr. Elijah Mwaura said. "Thanks to the opportunity given by the Amity Foundation, and thanks to everyone who has helped us. I hope that there will be such an opportunity to bring advanced medical technology back to Kenya and serve more patients!"

(Translated by Bian Peilin)

Chinese Environmental Protection NGOs Visit Laos and Cambodia

From September 25 to 30, China Ecological Civilization Research and Promotion Association (CECRPA) visited Laos and Cambodia with 8 environmental protection NGOs, enterprises and institutions, including All-China Environment Federation, Sino-Japan Friendship Center for Environmental Protection, Chinese Academy of Environmental Planning and Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy, for presentations and exchanges on environmental policy and technology to lend impetus to the building of a green "Belt and Road". The last visit of CECRPA to Laos and Cambodia was in March.

The Chinese side held experience-sharing sessions with 7 Lao environmental protection NGOs and 10 Cambodian environmental protection NGOs. The Chinese experts gave presentations to the local NGOs on China's environmental protection policies and regulations, achievements made in ecology conservation, measures to tackle with climate changes and sewage treatment technologies, and answered relevant questions. The two sides had discussions and exchanges on the environmental protection and livelihood projects. The participants agreed that both sides need to make solid achievements in building a green "Belt and Road". The two sides should utilize their advantages and explore long-term cooperation mechanisms through research and investigation, pilot projects, local offices and

other forms to achieve more visual results so as to promote the high-quality development of a green "Belt and Road".

When in Cambodia, the CECRPA, together with Jiangsu Ecological Civilization Research and Promotion Association and Jiangning Ecological Civilization Promotion Association of Nanjing city, donated 30,000 RMB worth of walkie-talkies, flashlights, raincoats and stationary to Cambodian Greening Agency and Cambodia-China Friendship Association for helping them carry out forest protection and publicity and education on environmental protection. They also had discussions and consultations on further conducting project cooperation and setting up overseas offices in Cambodia and others. The Chinese delegation visited local Chinese-funded enterprises. They both agreed that Chinese civil society organizations should actively go global and play the role of bridges and links to enhance trust and dispel doubts so as to promote people-to-people connectivity.

The exchange activity enhanced the friendship between environmental protection organizations from China and Laos and Cambodia, broadened future cooperation and laid a strong foundation for a long-term cooperation with more in-depth and tangible results.

(Translated by Liu Junwang)

International Exchanges

The Third BRIDGE for Cities – Belt and Road Initiative: Developing Green Economies for Cities was held on October 8th in Vienna, the capital of Austria. Liu Hongru, Deputy Secretary General of China Federation of Industrial Economics (CFIE), on behalf of Xiong Meng, Executive Vice-Chairman and Secretary General of CFIE was invited to attend the conference. Multilateral exchanges and in-depth discussions were carried out on how to achieve sustainable industrial development in urban area, and how to promote economic development, infrastructure construction and community development in a virtuous circle. The three-day conference was jointly organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Finance Center for South-South Cooperation to support the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative and to promote the integration of the Belt and Road Initiative and the goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 1,050 guests from 188 cities in nearly 90 countries and regions attended the conference.

Western Returned Scholars Association (WRSA), also known as the Overseas-educated Scholars Association of China, held the first China-Germany Technology and Culture Forum on October 11 in Berlin, Germany. Chen Zhu, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Chairman of WRSA, Zhang Junhui, Chargé d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Germany, Rainer Gießbübel, Special Adviser to the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and Frank Henkel, Senator of State Parliament of Berlin, former Mayor of Berlin, former Minister of Internal Affairs of Berlin, attended the forum and delivered speeches. The guests had an in-depth exchange on China-Germany technology and culture cooperation, the Belt and Road initiative and “a community with a shared future for mankind”. The State Secretary of Germany met with the delegation led by Chen Zhu at the parliament building and thought that holding a technology and culture forum was meaningful to promote economic, technological and cultural exchanges and cooperation between the two countries. It is quite clear that both China and Germany hope to strengthen mutual learning and deep cooperation with each other. Participants

expected that the China-Germany Technology and Culture Forum continue to be held so as to build a new platform for exchanging ideas on technology, economy and culture between China and Germany.

China Association for NGO Cooperation and the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation jointly held a seminar on "The Going-out of Chinese Social Organizations" in Beijing from October 11-12, which was co-organized by The Asia Foundation (USA) Beijing Representative Office as a funding agency. The seminar aims to explore the phased results of the project research and share the experience and gains of the going-out of Chinese social organizations. The seminar shared the results of the phased research on the participation of Chinese social organizations in international affairs projects - the “Self-discipline Code of Conduct for Chinese Social Organizations Participating in International Project Cooperation” and “Operation Manual for Nepal”. The project is funded by the Asia Foundation and is conducted by the China Association for NGO Cooperation and the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation. More than 40 representatives from universities, social organizations, enterprises and international organizations attended the meeting.

Co-organized by the People's Government of Jiangsu Province, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Chinese Academy of Engineering, and the China Association for Science and Technology, the 2018 World Intelligent Manufacturing Summit, with the theme of “Empowering the Future through Intelligent Manufacturing” opened at the Nanjing International Expo Center in Jiangsu Province on October 12. The summit announced two important achievements. The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the State Administration for Market Regulation jointly issued the “Guidelines to the Construction of National Intelligent Manufacturing Standards System (2018 Edition)”, which marked a new height in the standardization of intelligent manufacturing in China. In addition, Song Xianzhu, Party Secretary of China Center for Information Industry Development, released the “China Intelligent Manufacturing Development Report 2017-2018”. According to the report, in 2017, the scale of the global support industry for

intelligent manufacturing has reached US\$430 billion. It is expected to exceed US\$1 trillion by 2025. China has already become the world's largest intelligent manufacturing market. Since 2016, the World Intelligent Manufacturing Summit has been held for three consecutive years. The attention from the industry has been significantly improved, and the brand influence has been continuously expanded. It has gradually become the largest and highest level industry event in China.

The 2nd International Forum on the Belt and Road Initiative & Global Governance was held at Fudan University from October 13th to 14th. The forum was co-sponsored by Fudan University and the Silk Road Think Tank Association, and jointly organized by Fudan Institute of Belt and Road & Global Governance and the China Center for Contemporary World Studies of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. 150 domestic and foreign delegates from politics, business and academia fields gathered in the major forum and 12 sub-forums to discuss new practices and new developments of the Belt and Road. At the forum, Fudan Institute of Belt and Road & Global Governance released the Annual Development Report on Belt and Road.

The Secretariat of the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network approved the following 8 organizations to join the network: Uganda-China Friendship Association, Mozambique Joaquim Chissano Foundation, Mozambique Economic and Social Research Institute, Malawi Farmers Cereals and Beans Initiative Forum, Ethiopia Development Association of Amhara Region, the Moroccan International Diplomatic Center, the Algerian Parents' Association for Mentally Handicapped Children, and the Nepal Development Initiative. Up to now, the number of member organizations has increased to 310, covering 69 countries and regions.

Ma Xiuhong, President of the China Council for International Investment Promotion, and Dr. Essam Sharaf, former Prime Minister of Egypt and Head of the Sharaf Foundation for Sustainable Development of Egypt, held talks in Beijing on October 16. During the meeting, Chairman Sharaf introduced the relevant situation of the Sharaf Foundation for Sustainable Development and related work carried out by the Foundation in China. President Ma Xiuhong expressed appreciation for the work carried out by the Foundation in promoting economic and trade investment between China and Egypt. The two sides reached broad consensus on establishing

information exchange channels, exploring bilateral economic and trade investment, holding two-way investment promotion activities, and project development cooperation. The two sides signed a memorandum of cooperation at the meeting.

The 20th Exchange Conference of Friendship Cities among China, Japan and Republic of Korea was successfully held on October 18th in Kaifeng City, Henan Province. He Jinping, Vice Governor of Henan Province, Lin Yi, Vice President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Hou Hong, Secretary of the Kaifeng Municipal Party Committee, Gao Jianjun, Mayor of Kaifeng City, Mr. Okamoto Tamotsu, President of the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations and Kim Yun-sig, Secretary General of the Governors Association of Korea, attended the opening ceremony and delivered speeches. More than 400 representatives from China, Japan and South Korea attended the conference. With the theme of "Building a community of shared future in North-east Asia featuring win-win cooperation", the guests of the three countries shared the development experience of their cities around three topics: "Traditional Culture and Civilization Progress", "Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development", "Smart City and Science and Technology Progress", providing valuable advice to the local governments of the three countries to carry out pragmatic cooperation in a wider area in the future.

The 19th China Annual Conference for International Education was held by the China Education Association for International Exchange on October 19th at the China National Convention Center in Beijing. With the theme of "Education Modernization-Practice and Exploration", this year's annual conference consisted of three parts: "China International Education Seminar", "Chinese and Foreign Universities Project Cooperation Fair" and "China International Education Exhibition" and discussed how to promote the development of educational modernization under new situation, thereby promoting the process of modernization of countries and even the world, and jointly exploring the development and cooperation of future education. More than 2,000 guests and representatives from China and abroad participated in the conference. It is reported that the China Annual Conference for International Education has been successfully held for 18 years and has developed into China's largest international education exchange platform and the annual grand meeting of Chinese and foreign education circles, and has become an important window and bridge

to link China's Education to the world.

Under the theme of “Belt and Road Initiatives Cooperation with People's Livelihood”, the 2018 NGO Beijing International Dialogue was held by the Beijing NGO Association for International Exchanges in Beijing from October 21 to 22, with about 200 representatives from 33 countries participating in the meeting. The participants jointly issued the NGO Beijing International Dialogue Proposal, which advocates deepening the communication among the people, adhering to sustainable development, increasing people-to-people exchanges, giving play to the unique advantages and functions of NGOs, and striving to create a better future for mankind.

The Estonia -China Infrastructure Cooperation Forum 2018, jointly organized by China International Contractors Association and KPMG and supported by Volvo Construction Equipment, was successfully held on October 22 in Tallinn, Estonia. Ando Leppiman, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications of Estonia, Fang Qiuchen, President of the China International Contractors Association, and Wu Yan, Economic and Commercial Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Estonia, attended the forum and delivered speeches. Senior executives from Power Construction Corporation of China (POWER CHINA), China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation, China Road & Bridge Corporation, China Harbour Engineering Company, CITIC Construction, and China First Highway Engineering Company, as well as guests from government agencies, financial institutions, contractors, law firms etc. of Estonia, attended the forum.

The sharing meeting about “Research on Environment and Social Responsibility of Chinese Enterprises Overseas Projects”, sponsored by the China Association for NGO Cooperation, was held in Beijing on October 23. The meeting analyzed the project- “Environment and Social Responsibility of Chinese Enterprises Overseas Projects” -which was jointly conducted by the China Association for NGO Cooperation and the International Rivers. The project selected two hydropower projects invested by Chinese companies in Laos and Cambodia. Through literature review and field research, it has learned about Chinese companies' practical experience, good practices, challenges on the implementation of environmental and social policies, and proposed related suggestions.

The reception to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Peace

and Friendship between China and Japan was held in Beijing on October 25. The event was jointly organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China-Japan Friendship Association. Premier Li Keqiang and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered speeches at the reception. About 800 representatives from all walks of life attended the reception.

The “Opening Sichuan-China-US Non-governmental Exchange and Investment Forum” was jointly held by the Sichuan NGO Network for International Exchanges and Asia & America Consultants Co., Ltd. on October 25th in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Liu Jie, Deputy Director of the Standing Committee of the Sichuan Provincial People's Congress, and President of the Sichuan NGO Network for International Exchanges, and Neil Bush, Chairman of the Asia & America Consultants Co., Ltd., attended the forum and delivered speeches.

The 2018 East Asia Civil Society Forum, jointly organized by China NGO Network for International Exchanges, Jiangnan University and China Global Philanthropy Institute, was held on October 26 at Jiangnan University. The theme of the forum was “Community Construction and Volunteer Service”. More than 100 experts, scholars and representatives of civil society organizations from China, Japan and South Korea conducted academic exchanges and discussions to share relevant experiences.

Dialogue on South-South Cooperation and International Development Cooperation was held by China Institute for South-South Cooperation in Agriculture and College of Humanities and Development Studies at China Agricultural University in Beijing on October 26. Representatives from the Secretariat of the Chinese Association for International Understanding attended the forum. The theme of the forum is “What does China's development bring to the world?” Nearly 200 representatives from Chinese and foreign government departments, social organizations and the media attended the forum.

The 5th World Buddhist Forum was jointly hosted by the Buddhist Association of China and the China Religious Culture Communication Association in Putian, Fujian Province from October 28 to 30. The forum includes the opening (closing) ceremony, a blessing ceremony, and the fast ceremony for thousand monks, sub-forums, TV forums, etc. Over 1,000 representatives from Buddhist and other circles from 55 countries and regions attended the forum.

Donated by Alibaba Charity and implemented by the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation, the launching ceremony of the “Smile Kids School Feeding Project” was held on November 1st at the Metebarber Elementary School in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The project will provide the school’s 600 children breakfast and lunch for a school year, which not only allows the school’s children to grow up healthily and concentrates on learning, but also attracts children from marginalized communities to return to school. Up to now, this program has been carried out in Ethiopia for 3 years, providing free breakfast and lunch to more than 4,600 local students.

The 2nd China Shaoxing International Friendship Cities Conference was jointly sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Zhejiang Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Shaoxing Municipal People's Government in Shaoxing City, Zhejiang Province from November 5 to November 7. The theme of the conference was “Friendly Cooperation, Innovative Development”. More than 300 representatives from 37 delegations of international friendship city and 17 delegations of domestic city attended the conference to renew the friendship between cities and their people as well as discuss the cooperation and development plan.

The China City of Charity Conference was held on November 5th in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province where The 5th 2016-2017 China City Charity Index and The Action Plan for Creating Charity Cities were released. The conference was hosted by China Charity Alliance, Guangzhou Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau, and jointly sponsored by other 24 units: Charity Beijing (Capital Charity Federation), Zhejiang Provincial Charity Federation, Shaanxi Provincial Charity Federation, Shenzhen Municipal Charity Federation, Guangzhou Charity Federation, Guangzhou Charity Association and other 24 units etc.

The 7th China-South Asia International Cultural Forum, co-sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Yunnan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Kunming Municipal People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Chinese Academy for South Asian and Southeast Asian Studies (Kunming), and Yunnan Minzu University, was held in November 6 at Yunnan Minzu University. Nearly 100 scholars specialized in the South Asian research field from domestic and foreign countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri

Lanka, Afghanistan etc. attended the forum. In addition to traditional thematic discussions, experts and scholars also built bridges for international communication in South Asia through cultural exchanges. The theme of this forum is “Jointly discuss, build, and enjoy the prosperity of South Asia to embrace a community of shared future”. Experts and scholars, as well as representatives of teachers and students of Yunnan Minzu University together shared opinions on the history of China-South Asia cultural exchange and explored the cooperation between China and South Asia, looking forward to the future of China-South Asia cultural exchange. Representatives of the Bangladesh-China People's Friendship Association, a member of the Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network also attended the forum.

With the theme of "Awe and Responsibility", the China Adventure Tourism Forum-Himalayan Summit was successfully held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from November 6 to 7. The conference was co-sponsored by China Tourism Association and All-China Environment Federation. It was supported by China Southern Airlines, Nepal Tourism Board, Nepal Embassy in China, Nepal Tourism Association, Nepal Chamber of Commerce, Nepal Mountaineering Association, Pacific Asia Travel Association and many other institutions. About 100 people including Duan Qiang, President of China Tourism Association, Feng Xiaoxing, consultant of China Environmental Protection Association, and experts and scholars as well as adventure tourism practitioners from different countries attended the summit.

Arken Imirbaki, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and President of China-Arab Friendship Association, attended and delivered a speech on the opening ceremony of the Second China-Arab City Forum, which was held by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Arab Towns Organization (ATO) and the Ministry of the Interior of Morocco on November 8 in Marrakech, Morocco. Aziz Rebbah, Moroccan Minister of Energy, Mines and Sustainable Development, Ahmed Al Subaih, Secretary General of ATO, Chairman of the Moroccan Town Council, President of the Moroccan Region Association and Wali of the Marrakech-Safi Region attended the meeting and delivered speeches. More than 250 representatives from government and NGOs, academic and private institutions from China and Arab countries participated in the forum.

Organized by the Future Education Research Committee of China Education Association for

International Exchange and jointly hosted by Nanjing University of the Arts and China Vista Education Group, the “International Conference on China-Italian Art Education” was held in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province on November 9-10. Nearly 200 representatives from the Chinese and Italian art education circles attended the seminar. During the conference, the organizer also held the “Yi Jiangnan” art exhibition, and nearly 100 works of art with various themes and various forms were exhibited as fruits of China-Italy art exchange.

Under the instruction of China’s Belt and Road Think Tank Union and Guangdong Provincial Government, 2018 China International Think Tank Forum of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road was held by Guangdong International Strategy Institute and China Center for Contemporary World Studies on November 10 in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. With the theme of “China’s Opening up and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road”, the forum discussed issues such as Belt and Road Initiatives and global governance, the construction of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, international capacity cooperation, international environmental change and China’s choice, so as to make contribution to further expanding the opening up, jointly building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, and promoting regional development and mutually beneficial cooperation. A total of about 300 experts and scholars from more than 20 countries including Russia, France, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, Singapore, and other relevant departments, attended the meeting.

Under the instruction of the International Organization of Folk Art , supported by the China National Arts and Crafts Society and the “One Belt One Road 100”, co-organized by the Lijiang Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, the People’s Government of Lijiang , Jinan University and the Central Academy of Fine Arts, the Belt and Road International Forum for Cultural Heritage Cooperation and Exchange 2018 was jointly held by the China Central Academy of Fine Arts City Design School and the Academy of Cultural Heritage and Creative Industry of Jinan University in Beijing on November 11. The conference centered on the Belt and Road cultural heritage, with the theme of “Protection and Development, Inheritance and Innovation, Tradition and Modernization, Cooperation and Communication”, and carried out discussions on topics such as the exchange and cooperation, sharing and application of cultural heritage, cultural heritage and contemporary urban tourism economy

and the development of creative industries. Government officials, experts and scholars from more than a dozen countries including Germany, Britain and Portugal attended the forum.

The Second China-Latin America and Caribbean Local Governments Cooperation Forum was held in Wuhan, capital of Hubei Province on November 14, 2018 by the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Wuhan Municipal Government. Nearly 200 local governments officials from 24 provinces and cities in 14 foreign countries including the Republic of Argentina, the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, the Republic of El Salvador, the United States of Mexico, Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Republic of Chile, the Republic of Haiti, the Republic of Suriname, Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, the Republic of Panama, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of Peru, and local governments leaders from 14 Chinese provinces, municipalities directly under the Central government, autonomous regions (25 cities), attended the forum.

Organized by the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and Zhoushan Municipal Government and co-organized by the Zhoushan People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Association of Zhoushan Literary and Art Circles, the “2018 Pacific Rim National Art Exchange Conference” was inaugurated at the Zhoushan Art Museum of Zhejiang in November 15. Ji Wei, deputy director-general of the Cultural Exchange Department of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Xu Xiaoyue, deputy mayor of Zhoushan Municipal city and Anida, chairman of the Sri Lanka-China Friendship Association attended and addressed the opening ceremony. Over 50 people, including artists, friendly personages from Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Japan and Chinese artists attended the opening ceremony.

Organized by the China Law Society and Great Britain-China Center and co-organized by Hainan Law Society and China Legal Exchange Society, the 3rd UK-China Rule of Law Roundtable was opened in Haikou City, Hainan Province on November 15. The theme of the Roundtable is “Strengthening Cooperation on International Business Disputes Settlement Mechanism and Promoting the Construction of Free Trade Zone”. 120 representatives from the law circle, business community and government agencies of China and the UK attended the Roundtable meeting.

The 2018 China International Friendship City Conference hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the China International Friendship Cities Association and the Wuhan Municipal Government was held in Wuhan, Hubei Province from November 15 to 16. Vice President Wang Qishan attended the opening ceremony and delivered a keynote speech. More than 300 foreign delegates from over 60 countries, 125 provinces and municipal cities and 35 city organizations, including Uganda Vice President Edward Sekandi, former Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and over 300 Chinese delegates from 115 cities from 31 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities), including Jiang Chaoliang, Hubei Provincial Party Secretary, Hubei Governor Wang Xiaodong, Li Xiaolin, president of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and China International Friendship Cities Association, Ma Guoqiang, Wuhan Municipal Party Committee Secretary and Wuhan Mayor Zhou Xianwang attended the meeting. The total attendance was over 700.

The 57th Annual Meeting of Orient and Southeast Asia Lions Forum was held in Haikou City on November 16, with the theme of "Service, Sharing and Progress". Over 6,000 delegates from 18 countries and regions including China attended the meeting. Jia Yong, vice chairman of the China Disabled Persons' Federation, president of the China Council of Lion Clubs, and chairman of the annual meeting, announced the opening of the meeting. Zhang Haidi, chair of the China Disabled Persons' Federation, addressed the opening ceremony.

The 2018 China International Public Relations Conference hosted by the China International Public Relations Association was held in Beijing on November 16. Han Zhiqiang, director-general of the General Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, addressed the conference on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Zhao Dali, executive vice president and secretary general of the association, presided over the opening ceremony and delivered a keynote speech. A total number of 400 people including senior experts, professionals, media personnel, educators and government officials in the circle of public relations from China and other countries attended the conference.

The 2nd China-Denmark Local Government Cooperation Forum co-sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Danish Embassy to China, the Central Region of Denmark and Aarhus City

was held in Aarhus, Denmark's second largest city on November 20. More than 300 guests including Danish Minister of Environment and Food Ellerman-Jensen, Danish Ambassador to China Dai Shige, Danish Central Region Chairman Kunau, Mayor of Aarhus Bond Gard, Mayor of Copenhagen Jensen and President of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Xie Yuan, Vice Chairman of the Beijing CPPCC Li Wei, and Chinese Ambassador to Denmark Deng Ying attended the event.

The 2018 International Summit of Women Entrepreneurs jointly hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, China Association of Women Entrepreneurs and National School of Development at Peking University was held in Guangzhou City, Guangdong province from November 20 to 21. Themed on "Innovation and Growth: Women Empowerment to Win the Future", the Summit focused on the relationship between technological innovation and women's development, shared the experiences and results of women entrepreneurs over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, centering around smart manufacturing, green economy, health, new business modes and other fields. More than 600 entrepreneurs, institutional leaders and government officials from 16 countries including Switzerland and Italy attended the event.

The 2018 Themed Session: Diplomats to China in Dialogue with Academicians on the theme of "Smart Agriculture" was hosted in Beijing on November 22. The event was hosted by the Beijing Science and Technology Association and the Beijing Municipal Foreign Affairs Office and co-hosted by Beijing Society for Information Technology in Agriculture and Beijing Research Center for Information Technology in Agriculture. 10 diplomats in the science and agriculture circle from Russia, France, Germany, Australia, Cambodia, Morocco and other countries attended the meeting. Zhao Chunjiang, member of the Standing Committee of the Beijing Association for Science and Technology, deputy director of the 9th Committee on Work Related to Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering attended the event and made a special report.

The 8th America-Oceania Friendship Forum jointly organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Hainan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries was held on November 23 in Haikou City, Hainan Province. Vice Chairman Xie Yuan of the Chinese People's Association for

Friendship with Foreign Countries attended the forum and delivered a welcome speech. Around 100 foreign guests, including representatives from 18 friendly organizations from 15 countries and regions including the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Bahamas, Fiji, French Polynesia, Jamaica, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon, Tonga and Vanuatu and the Ambassador of Tonga to China attended the forum.

The 2018 Mekong-Lantsang Civil Society Organization Forum, part of a series of events of the 2018 Mekong-Lantsang Cooperation Expo and Mekong-Lantsang Cooperation Dianchi Forum, was opened on November 23 in Kunming, Yunnan Province. The theme of the forum is "Sustainable Development of Regional Social Economy in Mekong-Lantsang Area". This forum was organized by China Association for NGO Cooperation and co-organized by Yunnan Association for NGO Cooperation and Kunming-ASEAN International Trade and Investment Promotion Association and supported by the US Environmental Protection Agency Beijing Representative Office. The forum aims to promote poverty eradication, enhance economic growth and improve people's livelihood, achieve regional sustainable development, and lay a solid foundation for people-to-people cooperation in the Mekong-Lantsang region. More than 100 people from relevant government departments, civil organizations, enterprises, experts, scholars and media from China, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Cambodia participated in the forum.

Zheng Yao, deputy secretary-general of the Chinese Association for International Understanding, met with the Governor of Rivera Province of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay Marné Osorio Lima, and the Ambassador to China Fernando Luggis, in Beijing on November 23. The two sides exchanged views on strengthening non-governmental exchanges, enhancing mutual understanding and conducting cross-civilization dialogue.

Yuan Zhibing, secretary-general and Zheng Yao, deputy secretary-general of the Chinese Association for International Understanding exchanged ideas with Kang Huaide, the chief representative of the Beijing Representative Office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Germany on November 27th in Beijing. The two sides exchanged views on further strengthening cooperation under the new legal framework and preliminary considerations for the work in 2019.

Ai Ping, vice president of the Chinese Association for International Understanding, met with Andrei Chevlev, director of the UNESCO Asia-Pacific

Office, in Beijing on November 29. The two sides introduced the activities carried out by their respective institutions and exchanged ideas on cooperation in humanities exchanges and cross-civilization dialogues. Deputy Secretary-General Zheng Yao attended the meeting.

Vice President Liu Hongcai of the Chinese Association for International Understanding met with the visiting president of the Japan Youth Conference in 2019, Mr. Sakata, and the delegation led by the president of the Japanese Youth Conference Aizawa Aizumi. The two sides held consultations on current Sino-Japanese relations and non-governmental exchanges as well as exchanges between the two sides next year.

Deputy Secretary-General Liu Kaiyang of the China NGO Network for International Exchanges met with Vice-President Dong Weiluo of the Cambodian Civil Society Organization Alliance Forum in Beijing on December 7. The two sides exchanged views on the development of the alliance forum, the coordination and cooperation between Chinese and Cambodian civil organizations, and exchanged in-depth views on future cooperation intentions.

The 3rd International Symposium on Data Science for the Disabled was held on December 8th in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. The conference was jointly sponsored by Nanjing Special Education Normal College and the Institute of Statistics and Science of the National Bureau of Statistics. More than 200 experts and scholars participated in the event. Zeng Yuping, the chief statistician of the National Bureau of Statistics, delivered a speech. Lu Shiming, vice chairman of the China Disabled Persons' Federation and member of its party committee, attended the meeting and delivered a speech. The China Disabled Persons' Federation Information Center made a keynote report on "Building a Smart Federation for Disabled Persons Based on Big Data for Persons with Disabilities".

Chen Zhu, vice chairman of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and president of the Chinese Red Cross Society, visited the Iranian Red Crescent Society on December 9. Chen Zhu inspected the Iranian Red Crescent Volunteer Organization, Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Relief Center, visited the museum at the Iranian Red Crescent Headquarters, and inspected the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Rehabilitation, and held talks with its President Ali Asga Pavandi in the Nur Arsha Hospital. The two sides have

conducted in-depth exchanges on establishing institutionalized links between the Chinese and Iranian Red Cross societies and on more pragmatic cooperation in the humanitarian field.

The Symposium to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was held in Beijing on December 10. The event was jointly organized by the China Human Rights Research Association and the China Human Rights Development Foundation. About 150 people from the relevant units of the joint meeting mechanism of the National Human Rights Action Plan and human rights experts and scholars attended the symposium.

The 6th China-France Local Government Cooperation High-Level Forum was successfully held in Toulouse, Oxita, France from December 11 to 13. The forum was co-sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Cities Alliance. With the theme of "Innovation to Promote Local Cooperation", this forum explores the cooperation prospects between China and France on the three sub-topics including innovative tourism, green agriculture and sustainable development. About 400 people from local governments at all levels, business circles and experts from China and France attended the forum.

Chairman of the All-China Women's Federation Shen Yueyue met with the UN Under-Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women Nmarbo Nuka in Beijing on December 12. The two sides have further strengthened exchanges and cooperation, especially in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the promotion of countries to implement the commitments of the Global Women's Summit, serving the development of the "Belt and Road" and the promotion of women's overall development in all countries.

Zhang Mingqi, vice president of the Chinese Law Society, met with Davidson, Chairman of the China-Britain Association, and Ge Zhenzhu, Executive Director of the British-Chinese Association, in Beijing on December 12. The two sides discussed the preliminary idea of the 4th China-UK Rule of Law Roundtable to be held in the UK in 2019, reached a principled consensus on the topics of the round table and the future deepening of cooperation, and said that they both will continuously improve the level of rule of law cooperation between China and Britain.

The Third Meeting of the Mekong-Lantsang Joint Working Group on Poverty Alleviation Cooperation

and the Seminar on East Asia Poverty Reduction Cooperation Initiative was held in Vientiane, Laos on December 12-13. The meeting was co-sponsored by the Comprehensive Department of the State Council Poverty Alleviation Office and the Rural Development and Cooperatives Department of the Lao Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and supported by the China International Poverty Alleviation Center. A total of 23 representatives from the China International Poverty Reduction Center, the Ministry of Rural Development of Cambodia, the Lao Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Lao-China Cooperation Committee, the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation of Myanmar, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Thailand and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended the meeting.

The 2018 Beautiful Country Boao International Summit was held on December 13 in Qionghai City, Hainan Province. Wang Jianrui, Chairman of the China Soong Ching Ling Foundation, and Gu Xiulian, Director of the China Care for the Next Generation Work Committee, attended the event. The theme of this year's summit is to build a platform for regional interaction, cross-border cooperation and cultural exchanges, and one that enables the government and enterprises to be heard and to discuss the rural revitalization strategy. Nearly a thousand representatives of Chinese and foreign agricultural and rural industries, the financial sector and the media attended the meeting.

Xu Jianguo, secretary-general of the China Peace Development Foundation, met with the delegation of Myanmar Bright Foundation in Beijing on December 13 and the two sides held meetings. The Myanmar side informed matters concerning 9 school projects within the "Silk Road Friend" to China Peace Development Foundation. The two sides exchanged in-depth views on project cooperation in the field of people's livelihood in 2019.

Xiong Meng, Executive Vice President and Secretary General of China Federation of Industrial Economics, met with A delegation of young cadres from the United Russia Party led by Janis Kravchenko, Vice-Chairman of the Russian State Council, and Vice Chairman of the State Duma Economic Policy, Industry, Innovation and Enterprise Activities Committee in Beijing on December 13. The two sides discussed and exchanged their respective business development and mutual cooperation.

The “Candle Memorial Ceremony • International Peace Rally” was held on December 13th in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. More than 300 people from the domestic anti-war memorial hall, representatives of relatives of international friends who rescued Chinese refugees during the Nanjing Massacre, representatives of Japanese friendship groups, representatives of Chinese and Japanese monks, and student representatives used candlelight to condole the victims of the Nanjing Massacre and pray for the world peace. An Yuejun, Secretary General of the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, participated in this event.

The Research on International Poverty Reduction and Development Trend expert seminar was held in Beijing on December 13-14. The event was co-organized by the China International Poverty Reduction Center and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Su Guoxia, Director of the Comprehensive Department of the State Council Poverty Alleviation Office, Zuo Changsheng, Director of the China International Poverty Reduction Center, and Chief Representative of the Beijing Representative Office of the Gates Foundation Yinuo and more than 20 people from the World Bank, Duke University, VU University Amsterdam, Youcheng China Social Entrepreneur Foundation, Beijing Normal University, Renmin University of China, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences attended the meeting.

The 3rd Belt and Road Security Cooperation High-level Forum was held in Shanghai on December 15. The forum was hosted by the Silk Road Think Tank Association, Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, and the China-Shanghai Cooperation Organization International Judicial Exchange and Cooperation Training Base and the China Center for Contemporary World Studies. More than 150 experts and scholars participated in the discussion on the transformation of China-US relations and the new challenges of the Belt and Road.

The China-Azerbaijan Friendship Concert was successfully held on December 17 at the Concert Hall of the National Grand Theatre in Beijing. The event was co-sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Azerbaijan Embassy to China and the Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Shao Hong, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Akhmetov, Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, Li Xiaolin, president of the National Association of Friends of Foreign Countries, and more than 1,400

people from all walks of life attended the concert.

2018 Belt and Road Business Forum and China-Nepal Business Development Themed Forum was held in Beijing on December 17. The forum released the “One Belt and One Road” China-Nepal Business Report by the Research Institute of the Ministry of Commerce, which is the first in this series of national series. With solid data and empirical evidence, the report provides a detailed analysis of China-Nepal's business development and potential markets, and will provide scientific basis and decision-making reference for economic and trade development, enterprise investment and related research in China and Nepal. Vice President Wang He of the China International Contractors Association attended the meeting.

The training course on “Blue Sky Rescue Emergency Capacity Building in Myanmar” was held in Monywa, Sagaing Province, on December 21-23. The training included basic training of fire ropes and first aid training. Hundreds of people from all walks of life in Myanmar participated.

Zhu Jijun, president of the Gansu NGO Network for International Exchanges and Rajm, president of the Nepal-based Himalayan Friendship Association, exchanged views on December 27 in Lanzhou, Gansu Province. The two sides conducted in-depth discussions on the conclusion of the Friendship City relationship, the Gansu Association and the Gansu Provincial Social Organization to carrying out the charity assistance activities for the poor students in the fifth province of Nepal.

The Annual Meeting of the Chinese Council of the BRICS Think Tank Cooperation and the First Wanshou International Situation Seminar: China and the World in the New Era was held in Beijing on December 29. The meeting was hosted by the Chinese Council of the BRICS Think Tank Cooperation, Renmin University of China, and undertaken by the Chongyang Financial Research Institute of Renmin University. The meeting exchanged ideas and discussed on the future work plan of the Chinese Council, the relationship between the major countries and global governance, the Belt and Road Initiative and South-South cooperation, political party politics and theoretical thoughts.

(Translated by Liu Junwang)