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Front cover: Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping speaking at the opening ceremony of the China International Friendship Cities Conference (November 8, 2008)

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China International Friendship Cities Conference Held in Beijing

Our Staff Reporter

With the theme of “A Harmonious World: Enjoying Friendship, Furthering Cooperation, Building Peace, Seeking Development Together”, the China International Friendship Cities Conference convened in Beijing from November 8 to 9, 2008. It was co-sponsored by the CPAFFC and the China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA). About 500 representatives from provincial, regional and municipal governments in China, and over 70 provinces, states and cities in 34 countries as well as leaders of foreign local governments and sister cities organizations participated in the conference. Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony and delivered a speech entitled “Enhancing Exchanges and Cooperation between International Friendship Cities to Promote Friendship among the People of the World”. Beijing Mayor Guo Jinlong, CPAFFC President Chen Haosu, Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei, among others, also attended the opening ceremony, over which CPAF-

FC Vice President Li Xiaolin presided.

Vice President Xi Jinping said in his speech that the Chinese Government attaches great importance to and supports international friendship-city activities and expects to work continuously to raise to a new level China's friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation with all cities in the world. He put forward three principles for strengthening cooperation under the new circumstances: “The principles of stressing friendship, mutual benefit and practical results.” (See full text of the speech on p.4)

In his speech, CPAFFC President Chen Haosu reviewed the development of international friendship cities in China. He pointed out that China's friendship-city activities have become an important platform for opening up to the outside world, an important carrier of city diplomacy, and an important aspect of people-to-people diplomacy. (Full text of the speech on p.6)

Also speaking at the opening ceremony were

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping (middle) attending the opening ceremony of the China International Friendship Cities Conference



The meeting in session

Isao Uzaki, vice mayor of Kobe of Japan; Nancy Huppert, honorary board member of Sister Cities International of the United States; Sergey Paramonov, executive vice president of the Russian Twin Cities International Association; Galal M. Said, governor of Faiyum of Egypt; and Hanson Mataskelekele, wife of the president of Vanuatu and president of Vanuatu-China Friendship Association.

The 50 Chinese and foreign participants speaking at the conference focused on pushing forward exchanges and cooperation between international friendship cities. They held that in the new 21st century, practical cooperation between local governments and cities should be strengthened, which is conducive to all countries revitalizing their economies and carrying forward their social and cultural undertakings along the road of development they have chosen. They analyzed the difficulties and the problems in the exchanges, and emphasized that they would overcome difficulties and make progress by increasing personnel and bilateral exchanges and carrying out practical cooperation. In their speeches, they stressed the necessity of conducting multilateral exchanges in the field of locality and city cooperation, especially holding influential multilateral cooperation forums.

The topic of city diplomacy drew participants' attention at the Conference. They held that with the acceleration of the urbanization process, cooperation between cities would take an increasingly more important place in the world. International friendship-city activities have developed from bilateral to multilateral cooperation, exerting ever greater influence in the international organi-



zation of United Cities and Local Governments, which is the common development prospect for all countries.

The development of China's international friendship cities was reviewed at the conference. From the first pair of international friendship cities twinned in 1973 till the two pairs signed at the current conference, all together 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government and 327 cities in China have established 1,499 pairs of friendship-province/state or friendship-city relations with 350 states (provinces, prefectures and regions) and 1,070 cities in 120 countries in the world.

During the conference, the Chinese and Russian representatives held the Forum on Exchanges and Cooperation between Chinese and Russian Cities and Chinese and African participants held the Third Seminar on Cooperation between Chinese and African Local Governments. The CPAFC and the CIFCA conferred the Friendship-City Exchange and Cooperation Award to 25 Chinese provinces, municipalities and cities and special award to the provinces of Gansu and Fujian.

A photo exhibition on China international friendship cities was mounted at the conference hall. More than 400 valuable photos showing the achievements of exchanges and cooperation in the economic, scientific and technological, cultural, personnel and other fields between the Chinese provinces and cities and their twinned counterparts in other countries. □

Speech by Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping At the Opening Ceremony

The China International Friendship Cities Conference is now convening here in Beijing today. First of all, on behalf of the Chinese government, I'd like to extend warm congratulations on the convocation of the Conference and warm welcome to all the representatives to the Conference, especially the foreign friends

coming from afar.

This year marks the 35th anniversary of the launching of China's international friendship-city activities. In 1973, Tianjin of China and Kobe of Japan were twinned as the first pair of friendship cities, opening an important channel for Chinese local governments to carry out external exchanges and co-

operation. In 1978, China ushered in a new historical era of reform and opening up and its international friendship-city activities entered a stage of all-round and rapid development. Up to now, 1,497 pairs of friendship cities have been twinned between China and other 120 countries. The international friendship-city activities have become an important component part of bilateral relations between China and the relevant countries, giving impetus to the exchanges and cooperation between them and enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between their peoples.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of China's adoption of the policy of reform and opening to the outside world. In the past 30 years China has achieved the historic transition from a highly centralized planned economy to a vibrant socialist market economy and from a closed or semi-closed society to one that is fully open to the outside world. The 1.3 billion Chinese people on the whole lead a relatively comfortable life. This year, with the support and assistance by the people of other countries in the

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping speaking at the opening ceremony



world, China made major victory in its rescue and relief endeavours following the devastating Wenchuan earthquake and successfully held the Beijing Olympics and Paralympics. China's development in the past 30 years is attributed to reform and opening up, and likewise its future development will also depend on reform and opening up. China will unswervingly continue to take the path of reform and opening up which is full of life and vitality.

China's international friendship-city activities are benefited from reform and opening up and at the same time play an active role in promoting the country's reform and opening up. It is reform and opening up that has enabled China to better understand and march towards the world and the world to learn more about China. China's deepened reform and opening up will surely further enhance the friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation between the Chinese cities and cities of other countries.

Currently, all countries in the world are faced with excellent opportunities as well as unprecedented challenges. Global issues such as climate change, environmental degradation, the spread of infectious and contagious diseases, natural disasters, and energy and food security are becoming more and more conspicuous. In particular, the severe international financial crisis sweeping the whole globe has brought factors of instability

and uncertainties to the world economic development. To cope with these challenges, all countries are closely cooperating. All cities in the world should follow the trend and further strengthen their friendly exchanges, and expand and deepen their cooperation in various fields. Here, I would like to suggest under the new circumstances, international friendship-city activities should adhere to the following three principles:

First is the principle of stressing friendship. Cities in different countries differ in size, history and culture. However, they should treat each other with sincerity on equal terms, fostering the spirit of mutual respect, tolerance and mutual understanding, and cultivate friendship and warm feelings among all peoples so as to play the role of bridges and links for realizing lasting world peace.

Second is the principle of stressing mutual benefit. In spite of different development levels, all cities in the world are endowed with some advantages. International friendship cities should learn from each other to make up for each other's deficiencies and create favorable conditions for common development through mutually beneficial cooperation.

Third is the principle of stressing practical results. All cities in the world are shouldering the same or similar responsibilities in developing economy, providing public services and city management, maintain-

ing social stability, protecting environment, etc. International friendship cities should reinforce cooperation and share experience in these fields to bring benefits to the local people.

The world today is an open one. China can not achieve development in isolation of the world, nor will the world sustain its development in the absence of China. The Chinese government adheres to combining domestic development with opening up to the outside world, linking China's development with that of the world, and integrating the fundamental interests of the Chinese people with the common interests of the world people, and works hard and actively for world peace and development while striving to build China into a moderately prosperous society in all respects and accelerating the country's socialist modernization drive. China will unswervingly pursue peaceful development, persist in a win-win open strategy of mutual benefit, and remain committed to the promotion of building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

The Chinese government attaches great importance to and supports international friendship-city activities, and expects to work together with you all to continuously raise to a new level its friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation with all cities in the world.

In conclusion, I wish this conference full success. □

Speech by CPAFFC President Chen Haosu at the Opening Ceremony

First of all, on behalf of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and the China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA), I would like to pay deep respect to the state leaders attending the Conference, express sincere welcome to the delegates and guests from home and abroad, and cordial greetings and heartfelt thanks to local government officials, and representatives and staff of friendship cities in China and other countries for their unremitting efforts and great contributions to the development of international friendship cities over a long period of time.

The theme of this Conference is "A Harmonious World: Enjoying Friendship, Furthering Cooperation, Building Peace and Seeking Development Together". We hope to combine the four major purposes of China's people-to-people diplomacy, namely, friendship, cooperation, peace and development, with the common aspirations of humanity to build a harmonious world. And we

hope to discuss with friends from various countries, regions and cities across the world issues concerning international friendship cities, exchange successful experiences, solve difficulties in development, and strive to achieve the grand objective of sustainable development of international friendship cities.

As far as I know, the history of international friendship cities (also known as sister cities) began in Europe after the First World War. It is a form of cooperation arising from the aspirations of the peoples to oppose war, safeguard peace, and enhance people-to-people exchanges between countries. It is generally believed that the first pair of international friendship cities was established between Kerry of Britain and Poit of France. After the Second World War, international friendship-city activities boomed in all Europe and spread to North America and the developing countries. Such activities have promoted the political, economic and cultural exchanges and coop-



CPAFFC President
Chen Haosu addressing the conference

eration between cities of different countries, strengthened the communication, understanding and friendship between different peoples, and become an important factor for world peace and development, making great contributions to the solidarity and progress of humanity.

The activities of China's international friendship cities began in 1973, when Tianjin and Kobe were twinned as the first pair of international friendship cities between China and Japan. By the end of 2007, 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government and 327 cities in China have established 1,497 pairs of friendship provinces, states or cities with 348 states (provinces, prefectures, regions, etc.) and 1,068 cities of 120 countries in the five continents.

We are now commemorating the 30th anniversary of China's implementation of the reform and opening up policy. International friendship-city activities in this country have lasted for 35 years. The first five years covered a period of initiation and exploration; it is during the latter 30 years that steady progress and leap-forward development were really achieved. Therefore, we are proud of our activities for international friendship cities as positive result of the implementation of the reform and opening up policy, which may be summed up in three phrases: It is an important platform for opening up to the outside world, an important carrier of city diplomacy, and an important aspect of people-to-people diplomacy. For more than three decades, following the principles of stressing friendship, mutual benefit and practical results, the relevant cities in China have made comprehensive use of the valuable resources of international friendship cities, strengthened friendly exchanges with their counterparts in other countries, carried out all-round pragmatic cooperation in politics, economy, culture as well as science, technology, education, sports and personnel, and thereby vigorously pushed forward the economic, cultural and social development of our cities and localities in a healthy way. International friendship-city activities have become the main channel for China's cities and localities in ex-

changes with other countries, and play an irreplaceable important role in the process of socialist modernization.

Here I would like to focus on the question of city diplomacy.

In the remote past, the birth of cities was an important symbol for the dawn of human civilization. Exchanges between city-states and diplomacy between dukedoms essentially belong to the scope of city diplomacy, and constituted the earliest form of diplomacy. In modern times, cities in terms of local governments no longer occupy the central position of diplomacy and are no longer responsible for dealing with state relations on major issues such as war and peace, but city diplomacy is still a component part of modern diplomacy, making contributions to world peace and development. In all countries and regions, cities are centres of economy, politics, culture, science, technology and education, embodying in a concentrated way the comprehensive strength of a nation and its international competitiveness. In the process of globalization, cities play an increasingly important role in international relations, whose concrete expression is the revival of city diplomacy.

City diplomacy is an important part of the overall diplomacy of a country, with almost no exception in the world. City diplomacy is subject to and serves overall diplomacy; and imbued with local characteristics, it stresses serving urban development, and emphasizes pragmatic cooperation beyond sentimentality. Judging by its basic properties, city diplomacy is a kind of semi-official diplomacy, because compared with pure people-to-people diplomacy, it has the official features of a local government, and compared with pure official diplomacy carried out by the central government, it has the unofficial features of being closer to the people. Since the local governments have a considerable influence on the central government in policy, the intermediary characteristics of city diplomacy should not be ignored. The three major roles of city diplomacy are: to supplement overall diplomacy, to participate in global governance and to promote local development.

China International Friendship Cities Conference

Now let's return to the theme of the Conference. In many countries, international friendship-city activities serve as one of the major carriers of city diplomacy. Take China as an example. Activities of the international friendship cities have received widespread attention from the Central Government and all sectors of society. They have increased rapidly in composing a big family of nearly 350 main bodies and 1,500 twinned counterparts. The widespread activities of international friendship cities in China testify that its city diplomacy has matured, given powerful impetus to the cities' own development, and, as an important indicator in China's urbanization, played an active role in promoting the socialist modernization.

The CPAFFC has been in charge of the approval, coordination and management of China's international friendship-city activities from the very beginning. It initiated the establishment of China International Friendship Cities Association in 1992, and held the China International Friendship Cities Conference in 2000, gradually bringing into shape a comprehensive management mechanism of international friendship cities with Chinese characteristics. In 1999 the CPAFFC joined the International Union of Local Authorities as the representative of Chinese local governments, and in 2004 it joined United Cities and Local Governments as a founding member, exerting a positive impact on the cooperation between local governments and between cities. This process shows that China's international friendship-city activities have traversed a long way of innovation. To put it in a nutshell, the CPAFFC has not disappointed the trust of the Central Government, and made positive contributions to the promotion of city diplomacy in its management of international friendship-city activities.

On the basis of the past 35-year experiences, we are holding this International Friendship Cities Conference to review the successes already achieved and plan the future development, with the hope of establishing a continuous operation mechanism and building an influential platform for exchanges. We are grateful to

Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai, Chairman Deng Xiaoping, President Jiang Zemin, President Hu Jintao and other central leaders of successive generations for their strong support to the international friendship-city activities. We are grateful to the cities and localities for their active participation and innovation for the continued progress of these activities. We are also grateful to countries, regions and cities all over the world for their compliance with our desire to make friends and carry out cooperation in twinning about 1,500 pairs of friendship cities with China, which has enabled our work to be fruitful. In recent years, we have given proper guidance to different kinds of international friendship-city activities. We strive to achieve a balanced layout and scientific management, raise the exchange level and gain more practical results. At this conference, we introduce in a variety of ways the achievements of international friendship-city activities in the past 35 years to friends from home and abroad. We perceive a vast developing space in this endeavour, and there is much to be desired for improvement. We expect that under the guidance of our Central Government, with the support of various departments at home and the enthusiastic assistance of international friends, China's international friendship-city activities will score even greater development in the days to come, and make even greater contributions to enhancing people's friendship, furthering international cooperation, safeguarding world peace and promoting common development, to pushing the leap-forward development of China's localities and cities, and to approaching a prosperous and harmonious world for humanity.

I believe that the international friendship-city activities will achieve new progress in the next few decades, and the significance of city diplomacy will be even more remarkable. When we recall our work at that time, we will enjoy the great satisfaction of pushing the progress of history. Let us embrace this future glory with the confidence of optimism, together with friends of all countries, regions and cities in the world! □

Speech by Isao Uzaki, Vice Mayor of Kobe, Japan (Excerpts)

Kobe and Tianjin are the first pair of friendship cities China has twinned with a foreign country. Therefore, I'm greatly honoured to have the opportunity to speak here today.

Chinese cities have established friendship relations with many cities in the world and carried out active exchanges in various fields. According to the statistics compiled by Japan, at present, Japan has twinned a total of 1,567 pairs of friendship cities with 61 countries in the world, of which 326 pairs are twinned with China.

Such exchanges between international friendship cities have promoted mutual under-

standing and friendship between the people of various countries in the world with different cultures and life styles, contributed to world peace and acquired great significance. State-to-state relations, in the final analysis, must be based on people-to-people relations. The multi-tiered in-depth contacts between the people can build up mutual trust and the exchanges between international friendship cities constitute an important part of such contacts.

Kobe and Tianjin. In 1973, Tianjin and Kobe established friendship-city relations, becoming the first pair of friendship cities between China and

other countries. Over the past 35 years, the two cities have conducted uninterrupted fruitful exchanges in wide fields including culture, education, sports, environment, economy, ports, etc., and played a pioneering role in the ever flourishing exchanges between the friendship cities of China and Japan. We feel very proud for this and, at the same time, the great responsibility to further such exchanges.

Kobe's contact with China. Kobe has profound historical relations with China. It became Japan's base of trade with China across the sea as early as the Song Dynasty in the middle

Vice Mayor Isao Uzaki speaking at the conference



of the 12th century. Now, the number of Chinese living and working in Kobe has reached 13,000, forming an important part of development of the city. In Kobe there are many places related with China, for instance the China town known as Nankin-Machi, Kanteibyō (the Temple of Guan Yu), the Kobe Chinese School with over 700 Chinese students, the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, etc.

At present, of the cargoes handled by the Kobe port, those imported from and exported to China have both taken up over one fourth of the total, occupying the first place. Trade between Kobe and China is also increasing.

In 1995, a big earthquake hit Kobe, causing tremendous losses. With the help and assistance from home and abroad, Kobe has recovered like a phoenix reborn from the ashes. We think that we in Kobe have the responsibility to pass on to the world our experience in earthquake. We have been actively providing relief aid to places suffering from natural disasters both in Japan and other countries.

After the earthquake struck Wenchuan of Sichuan Province, we immediately set up a relief mechanism, dispatching to the quake-stricken areas goods and material needed for reconstruction, sending specialists, receiving study groups and providing various technical knowledge on reconstruction.

In the meantime, we also

hope to take the reconstruction aid projects as an opportunity to further the economic relations between Kobe-Hanshin region and the region of the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River. Currently, we have launched the Shanghai-Yangtze Valley Trade Promotion Project to give impetus to our economic exchanges with Jiangsu, Shanghai, Anhui and Jiangxi.

In September 2007, the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention was held in Japan for the first time and 3,600 overseas Chinese came from all over the world to Kobe to take part in the convention.

Kobe has a long history of contact with China and we are willing to continue to carry out exchanges in more fields with China.

Prospects for international friendship-city exchanges. Exchanges between international friendship cities have born rich fruit in promoting mutual understanding of the life and cultures of the people of different cities as well as their economic exchanges. In the future, efforts should be made to resolve problems confronting both cities and increase beneficial and substantial exchanges between them.

2008 marks the 35th anniversary of the friendship-city ties between Kobe and Tianjin. Both cities hope to carry out exchanges and cooperation in areas of common concern such as environmental protection, disaster prevention and alleviation, community construction, etc.

Not long ago, the two cities jointly held in Tianjin the symposium on business environment and the symposium on disaster prevention and earthquake relief. Just four days ago on November 4, we received a 220-member Tianjin citizens delegation headed by the Mayor of Tianjin. We held a seminar exchanging opinions on the role of communities in urban development in Kobe.

In addition, new agreements have been reached between the two cities on pushing forward exchanges and cooperation in areas including beautification and greening of our cities, and tourism. Kobe and Tianjin have achieved fruitful results in cultural and economic exchanges. We will continue to press ahead with such practical and substantial exchanges and strive to realize the development goals of the two cities.

(Translated from the Chinese translation)



Speech by Nancy Huppert, Honorary Board Member of Sister Cities International of the U. S

On behalf of Sister Cities International I would like to say that it is an honour to be here today at the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) conference. I want to first of all thank Mr. Chen Haosu, president of the CPAFFC, Madame Li Xiaolin, the vice chair of the CPAFFC, Mayor Guo Jinlong, mayor of Beijing and all the delegates and honoured guests of the CPAFFC. Thank you.

As most of you are aware, Sister Cities International's mission is to "promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time." Our work is a critical component that helps our society to focus on fostering partnerships through sustainable development, arts and culture, youth and education, and humanitarian assistance.

Born from an initial idea at a White House Conference by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, for more than a half century, Sister Cities International has worked to foster citizen to citizen partnerships with individuals from the United States and the international community. This network has grown to more than 700 U.S. cities partnered with more than 2,500 international cities all around the world. U.S. Sister Cities International stretches across 6 continents in 134 countries.

In 1979 the very first citizen partnerships were formed between the United States and People's Republic of China, San Francisco and Shanghai, China formed the first "friendship city."

Today, Sister Cities International represents 184 partnerships between American communities and communities in China. Over the past thirty years, these longstanding relationships have

helped to promote economic and business development, cultural and professional exchanges, humanitarian assistance and promoted good will between the people of the United States and China.

For example, Washington, D.C. and Beijing have had a 20-year relationship, strengthening friendly ties and promoting US-China relations. Chicago and Shanghai established their Sister Cities relationship in 1985. Both cities have hosted numerous exchanges for youth, artists, poets, journalists, and government committees.

Following the devastating earthquake on May 12, 2008, members of Phoenix Sister Cities led an important role hours after the news of the earthquake surfaced. Phoenix made contact through email with all of its members as well as with the entire Sister Cities International community in the U.S. Phoenix set up an Earthquake Fund where donations could be sent and within a week, more than \$20,000 USD was generated. To date, well over \$120,000USD has been raised specifically for this cause.

Sister City programmes are truly amazing and can take many different shapes and sizes. Whether the exchange is through arts and culture, humanitarian efforts or through business to business trade missions, these citizen exchanges are a powerful way to engage both communities. Sister City programmes bridge language and cultural barriers and create long lasting friendships that are truly second to none.

Thank you again for the opportunity to take part in this conference and to network among friends who are dedicated to the achievement of world peace, one individual, one community at a time. Thank you. □

Speech by Sergey Paramonov, Executive Vice President of Russian Twin Cities International Association

(Excerpts)

On behalf of the delegation of Russian local governments, and entrusted by Boris Gromov, president of the Russian Twin Cities International Association and governor of Moscow Oblast, I would like to extend our sincere greetings to all the participants of the China International Friendship Cities Conference.

The Russian delegation consists of nearly 50 people. The number and composition of the Russian delegation prove Russian cities' growing interest in expanding cooperation between cities and improving the quality and efficiency of cooperation under the current conditions.

Concerning the exchanges between Russian and Chinese friendship cities, I would like to point out that, a prerequisite to the growing of interest in the cooperation between friendship cities is that the rapid economic growth of our two countries increases the local governments' budgets for international friendly cooperation. In fact, the interest in exchanges between the

people of the cities in both countries has been expanding.

The current Russian-Chinese relations are characterized by sustained rapid development, having a solid legal basis, good coordination between different institutions and active contacts at all levels. The principle of the relations, the main directions and fields of bilateral cooperation are all reflected in the Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, which was signed in Moscow in 2001.

Cooperation in economy, trade and investment has been effectively active. In 2007 the bilateral trade volume reached a new record of \$40 billion.

In May this year, President Medvedev of the Russian Federation made his first official visit to China. In August this year, Prime Minister Putin came to Beijing to attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games. During the visit, he met with Chinese President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jia-

obao and reiterated the policy of adhering to the mutually beneficial and constructive cooperation.

At the same time, a Russian delegation took part in the Beijing Olympic Games. This event reflects the high level of national and economic development, and the full preparation and openness of the whole society of China, one of the major powers in the multi-polar world. Inter-regional exchanges are vigorously developing. More than 60 Russian cities have close friendship-city relations with Chinese cities. In fact, every major city in Russia has partners in China. Over 100 agreements of cooperation have been signed between local governments at all levels.

The cooperation in the cultural fields is a major part of bilateral relations. The two sides have made a large cooperation plan, including holding annual cultural festival, setting up joint university, promoting traditional Chinese medicine therapy in Russia, and strengthening tourism and sports exchanges in

Speech by Beijing Executive Vice Mayor Jin Lin

It gives us great honour to host the 2008 China International Friendship Cities Conference here today. This conference is a grand get-together for international friendship cities, cooperation and development in the new situation. Here, on behalf of the Beijing Municipal Government and all its citizens, I would like to extend warm congratulations on the convening of the conference, as well as welcome and good wishes to all the participants from home and abroad. The Beijing Olympics and Paralympics as the world spotlights were successfully concluded not long ago. From bidding to hosting, the municipal government and

residents of Beijing have been sincerely assisted by local governments and citizens around the world including those from our friendship cities. I'd like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation to you.

Beijing has been committed to strengthening exchanges and cooperation with world local governments since reform and opening up in 1978. In March 1979, Beijing and Tokyo signed the friendship-city agreement, marking the official beginning of Beijing's friendship-city contact with the rest of the world. We are happy to see in the past 29 years Beijing has maintained a healthy and

a planned way.

The Year of Russia in China in 2006 and the Year of China in Russia in 2007 are unprecedented in the history of bilateral exchanges and a clear reflection of the high-level Russian-Chinese relationship. Over 600 activities in the fields of politics, economy and trade, science and technology, and culture were held. The current cooperation focuses on youth exchanges. It is planned to hold the Year of Russian Language in China in 2009 and the Year of Chinese Language in Russia in 2010.

Russian cities have broad and comprehensive ties with foreign cities. The Russian Twin Cities International Association has been in charge of this work for more than 40 years. I would like to take this

opportunity to inform all the participants that our association is going to hold the 45th anniversary celebrations. I hope to meet you all during the celebrations from April 25 to 27, 2009. We will learn from the experience of our Chinese friends in hosting this international friendship cities conference.

Our association also took part in the activities organized by some international organizations. We are one of the co-founders of UCLG Euro-Asian Regional Section. Their useful work has received good response from Russia and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

I would like to express welcome again to the initiative of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China

International Friendship Cities Association for holding this conference. I would also like to reiterate that we are willing to adhere to the practical and mutually beneficial exchanges between Russian cities and Chinese cities and cities of all countries where the participants of this conference come from.

I would like to call on you, distinguished participants of the 2008 China International Friendship Cities Conference, to continue the exchanges between cities, and to learn from Chinese local governments' experiences.

Wishing you all and leaders of all countries success in improving the living standards of the billions of people living in the multi-polar world!

(Translated from the Chinese translation)

steady momentum of development in its relations with world local governments, including those of its friendship cities.

—Growing friendship with world cities. The number of Beijing's friendship cities has been continuously increasing over the recent years. At present, Beijing has twinned friendship ties with 43 cities in 39 countries. In addition, the friendly exchange mechanism has been established between Beijing and another 19 foreign cities.

—Frequent exchange of high-level visits, political mutual trust and mutual understanding enhanced. From 2004 to 2007, more than 200 delegations and groups of municipal level from foreign countries were received and more than 2,510 occasions involving foreign guests were attended by leaders of Beijing Municipal Government. The active high-level exchanges have made inter-city relations closer and deeper.

—Broader scope of relations yields fruitful results. The expanded relations now cover such multiple areas as culture, economy, trade, sci-tech, education and sports. The form of exchange has developed from mutual visits and exchange of goods to sharing technologies and information concerning all aspects of urban construction and management.

These facts prove that the relations between Beijing municipality and world local governments are solidly based with huge potentials for future growth. With this good momentum, we should seize the opportunity, give full play to each other city's strength and break new grounds in our exchanges and cooperation, aiming at promoting economic and social development of our cities.

With preparing for the Olympics on top of the agenda of the municipal government in recent years, Beijing has been growing along with the progress of preparation. The reform and opening up as well as the modernization drive were pushed ahead by materializing the vision of "green, sci-tech and people's Olympics". Now we have stronger capacity for sustainable development, much better air and rapidly expanding public transit system. Social programmes are improving, giving us better education and social security.

Progress is also scored in urban-rural development, environment improvement and response system for public emergency incident. People are living a much better life and working for greater prosperity.

The success of Beijing Olympics and Paralympics injected new vitality into the city's economy and society. In the years to come, at an accelerated rate, Beijing will be more urban, market-oriented, international and modern. Open wider to the rest of the world, Beijing's economy will be more closely linked with the world economy, and have a wider range for shifts of elements of production and industries. The new situation and trend provide broader prospect and set higher demand for the future exchanges and cooperation between us. In coming days, our efforts will be focused on the following four areas in developing the international relations:

First, stepping up contact and exchanges and enhancing mutual trust and friendship. Mutual trust and friendship are fundamental to effective cooperation and facilitate exchanges in various fields. To pursue peace, development and cooperation has become the trend of our times, which enable us to forge closer ties with our friendship cities and world local governments, find new exchange mechanisms, develop both bilateral and multilateral relations and create favourable environment for exchanges and cooperation.

Second, sharing the Olympic experience and building new platforms for exchanges and cooperation. Through hosting Olympics and Paralympics we have accumulated experiences in institutional innovation, venue operation, security and city management, meanwhile good sports facilities and rich cultural heritage have been left to us. We will take the opportunity to expand international exchanges and cooperation by sharing Olympic legacies with world cities.

Third, working together to respond to challenges arising from urbanization and building up cities' capacity of sustainable development. The sustainability of Beijing in city development has been strengthened over the recent years through materializing the vision of "green, sci-tech and

30th Anniversary of Signing of China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship Marked in Beijing

Our Staff Reporter

In Japan on October 23, 1978, the then Vice Premier of the State Council Deng Xiaoping and Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda attended the ceremony of exchanging the instruments of ratification of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship. The Treaty formally came into force and became one of the basic documents guiding the development of China-Japan relations. On October 24, 2008, the CPAFFC and the China-Japan Friendship Association (CJFA) held a grand reception at the Great Hall of the People to celebrate

the 30th anniversary of the Treaty. President Hu Jintao and Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso attended the reception and spoke on the occasion. Li Jianguo, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Dai Bingguo, state councillor; Sun Jiazheng, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; Comrade Tang Jiaxuan; Song Jian, president of the CJFA; Yang Jiechi, foreign minister; Wang Yi, director of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council; Cai Wu, minister

of culture; Chen Haosu, CPAFFC president, Jing Dunquan, CPAFFC vice president, as well as leading officials of the ministries, commissions and organizations concerned, and Chikako Aso, wife of Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso; Tomiichi Murayama, former Japanese prime minister; Masahiko Komura, president of the Dietmen's League for Japan-China Friendship; Koichi Kato, president of the Japan-China Friendship Association; Takeshi Noda, president of the Japan-China Society; Takashi Tsujii, president of the Japan-China Cultur-

people's Olympics". But we are fully aware that there is still a long way to go to overcome the constraints caused by population, resources and environment. So the Beijing Municipal Government decided to carry further the Olympic vision for a more people-friendly, technology-empowered and greener city, and strive to make the economic and social development coordinating with the condition of population, resources and environment. We are willing to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with world cities in environment protection, transportation and other areas of city management and construction, and to learn from each other so as to improve governance of the city and achieve sustainable development.

Fourth, deepening people-to-people exchanges. People-to-people exchange is an important part of a city's international relations and

gives a broad base supporting the exchanges and cooperation between the local governments. Cultures around the world are different, but also similar and could have much interaction with one another. We will further encourage and push forward people-to-people exchanges in all areas and at all levels, particularly among our youths, and build a multi-level system of exchanges.

Looking into the future, we have confidence in further deepening friendship and cooperation with the local governments in the world. We open our arms for visitors, investors and entrepreneurs coming to Beijing. On the basis of consolidating the achievements of the Olympics, we will continue to upgrade the construction and management of the city, as well as render better services in more fields to the citizens. May our exchanges and cooperation achieve new successes! □

al Exchange Association; Yoshiro Hayashi, president of the Japan-China Friendship Centre; Yoshimasa Hayashi, former minister of defense; Koki Chuma, member of the House of Representatives; and representatives of other Japanese organizations and various social circles of China and Japan totalling over 500 people were present at the reception.

In his speech, President Hu Jintao said, 30 years ago, statesmen of the older generation of the two countries including Comrade Deng Xiaoping and Mr. Takeo Fukuda by sizing up the situation and taking a broad and long-term view, made the strategic decision to push the two countries to sign the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship. The Treaty is another important historic document in the course of development of China-Japan relations since the two governments signed the Sino-Japanese Joint Statement and normalized the bilateral relations in 1972.

It has for the first time set down in legal form the general direction of peaceful coexistence and long-term friendship between China and Japan, two close neighbours separated only by a strip of water, reaffirmed the important principles put forth in the Sino-Japanese Joint Statement and played an important role in advancing the development of bilateral relations in the correct direction.

Hu Jintao stressed, over the past 30 years since the signing of the Treaty, despite some difficulties and twists and turns, peace, friendship and cooperation have remained the mainstream of China-Japan relations. Great progress has been made in the bilateral friendly cooperation in all fields. The two sides have successively issued the China-Japan Joint Declaration and the China-Japan Joint Statement on All-round Promotion of Strategic Relationship of Mutual Benefit. These two documents together with the Sino-Japanese Joint Statement and the Chi-

na-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship constitute the four political documents guiding the development of relations between the two countries and have laid a political foundation for the long-term stable development of the bilateral relations.

Hu Jintao pointed out, the achievements in the current China-Japan friendly cooperation have not come by easily. For a long time despite changes in the international situation and the situation in China and Japan, personages of insight of various circles of the two countries including the seven Japanese friendship-with-China organizations have always had confidence in China-Japan friendship, untiringly pursued the cause of friendship, made conscientious and assiduous efforts, did a great amount of painstaking and fruitful work and made important contributions. "Here, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, I wish to extend my high respect to all the Japanese



Building Bridge of Friendship Between Chinese and Arab Peoples

——On the Second China-Arab Friendship Conference

Jia Ling

Ancient City Welcoming Guests from Afar

From October 28 to 30, 2008, Damascus, capital of Syria and a Western Asian city known as “the living ancient city in the world”, “the fragrant city” and “the Pearl of the Orient”, opened its arms to welcome friendship envoys from afar—the Chinese Delegation for China-Arab Friendship. The 110 Chinese friendship envoys, together with friends of the League of Arab States (LAS) and the 18 delegations of Arab friend-

ship-with-China organizations, attended the second China-Arab Friendship Conference (CAFC) which was co-sponsored by the China-Arab Friendship Association (CAFA) and the LAS and hosted by the Syria-China Friendship Association (SCFA). Friends old and new happily gathered together talking about the traditional friendship between China and Arab countries and important plans for future friendship with the aim of building a bridge of friendship between the Chinese

friendship-with-China organizations and personages of various circles who have made contributions to China-Japan friendship,” Hu added.

Hu Jintao said, China-Japan relationship is now at a new historical starting point and facing a new important period of opportunities and a broader space of development. We are willing to stand together with the Japanese side, firmly grasp the correct orientation of the development of bilateral relations, enhance mutual political trust, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, and expand friendly exchanges so as to promote a steady, sound and in-depth development of the China-Japan strategic relationship of mutual benefit.

In his speech, Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso said,

in the past 30 years, Japan and China have carried out continuous exchanges and cooperation in extensive fields. The good development of Japan-China relationship today should be attributed to those who have been working hard for it. Japan and China are permanent neighbours, and Japan-China relationship is a mutually indispensable partnership. The two countries should continue to carry out dialogue and exchanges at varied levels and in the spirit of mutual benefit and seeking win-win results strengthen consultation and cooperation to realize common development and work for stability and prosperity in Asia and the world.

In his speech, CJFA President Song Jian said, guided by

the consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, both Chinese and Japanese nongovernmental organizations will carry on and develop the fine tradition of nongovernmental exchanges between the two countries and take the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty as a new opportunity to carry out extensive exchanges and cooperation in various fields and make unremitting efforts to realize the grand goal of “peaceful coexistence, lasting friendship, mutually beneficial cooperation and common development” of the two countries.

Before the reception President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Taro Aso had pictures taken with the Chinese and Japanese friendly personages who attended the reception. □



Some representatives to the conference at the opening ceremony

and Arab peoples and further popularize the spirit of peace, friendship and cooperation.

At the opening ceremony, messages of congratulations from Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, LAS Secretary General Amre M. Moussa and Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem were read out, and Mohammed Saeid Bekheitan, deputy secretary of the Regional Leadership of the Baath Arab Socialist Party and president of the SCFA; Ahmed Abdel-Rahman Mohamed, secretary general of the Federation of Arab-China Friendship Associations; Tomur Dawamat, president of the CAFA; Sima Bahous, assistant secretary general of the LAS, made speeches. They affirmed and highly appraised the important role people-to-people friendship work had played in enhancing traditional friendship and promoting political, economic and trade, cultural, educational and local government exchanges and cooperation between China and Arab countries since the first conference, and placed high hopes on its future development.

Orientation of Work Set

During the conference, the participating parties reached consensus on further expanding the scope of cooperation between the people-to-people friendship organizations of China and Arab countries and bringing into play the advantages of nongovernmental diplomacy to promote exchanges and cooperation in the political, econom-

ic and trade, cultural, educational, local government and other areas by organizing impact-producing activities. A press communiqué adopted at the conference included events to be held in China in 2009 such as the meeting of the heads of Arab friendship-with-China organizations, the conference of China-Arab friendship cities and local governments, receptions marking anniversaries of diplomatic ties between China and Arab countries, economic and trade talks, academic seminars, inviting a press delegation organized by the Arab side to visit China and choosing through public appraisal outstanding figures for China-Arab Friendship Award. It called on the governments and their agencies of these countries to attach more importance and gave greater support to people-to-people friendship work. The conference adopted the action plan of people-to-people cooperation between China and the Arab countries for 2008-2010, setting the direction of China-Arab friendship work and putting forth concrete exchange programmes for the coming two years.

Bridging Role

The conference served as a platform for the Chinese local governments, scholars and people of the business circles to establish links and communicate with their Arab counterparts. During the conference, local government representatives on the Chinese delegation got to know local govern-

ment officials of Arab countries and discussed with them the promotion of local government exchanges. The scholars on the delegation visited the Syrian Baath Party Research Centre and Damascus University, exchanged opinions with the scholars there on how to further China-Arab relations and agreed on university-to-university programmes such as exchanging visiting scholars and publications, jointly conducting scientific researches and holding seminars. The entrepreneurs held business talks with their Arab colleagues and reached intent on cooperation in many areas including Muslim food, air-conditioner and building material, information technology and construction projects. All the members of the Chinese delegation held that they had benefited a lot from this conference. They not only experienced the deep feelings of the Arab people for the Chinese people and their ardent expectations. At the same time, they realized the importance of people-to-people friendship work and its irreplaceable role in making friends for the country and serving as a bridge between various social circles of China and their counterparts in other countries.

Adding Colour to CACF

The China-Arab Friendship Conference is one of the mechanisms within the framework of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum (CACF) and

an item of activity included in the Forum's Action Plan for 2008 to 2010. The first CAFC which was held in Khartoum, the Sudan in November 2006 announced the establishment of the Federation of Arab-China Friendship Associations (FACFA). The FACFA existed only in name for it did not have a working team. At this second conference major progress was made in building up the CAFC mechanism. Firstly, the conference adopted the Statutes of the FACFA and elected a 10-member Executive Committee according to the Statutes. Putting in place the organizational structure of the FACFA signaled the formal inception of the federation, thus perfecting the mechanism of the conference organizational wise. Secondly, the CAFC Follow-up Action Committee composed of five parties—China, the LAS, the Sudan, Syria and the FACFA was set up. It is in charge of checking up the implementation of the resolutions passed at the conference, supervising over the execution of the Action Plan by friendship associations of the participating countries, and assisting the FACFA to provide guidance to the friendship associations in their friendship-with-China activities. The setting up of the Committee has further perfected the mechanism of the conference. The improvement of the conference mechanism and the new ways it has

(Continued on p.21)

Mohammed Saeid Bekheitan (middle in the front row), president of the Syria-China Friendship Association, with some members of the Chinese delegation



25th Anniversary of Publication of *Voice of Friendship* Celebrated

Our Staff Reporter

2008 marks the 25th anniversary of the publication of *Voice of Friendship*. On December 15, a meeting in celebration of the occasion was held at the Friendship Museum of the CPAFFC. CPAFFC President Chen Haosu, Vice Presidents Li Xiaolin, Jing Dunquan and Li Jianping, and Secretary General Luo Qin, among over 40 people, attended the meeting and extended warm congratulations. In their speeches, President Chen Haosu and Vice President Li Xiaolin fully affirmed the work of the Editorial Board and its contribution to promoting mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of China and other countries over the past two and a half decades.

As the journal of the CPAFFC, an important people's

organization engaged in people-to-people diplomacy in China, *Voice of Friendship* adopts the Association's purposes of enhancing people's friendship, furthering international cooperation, safeguarding world peace and promoting common development as its own and works hard to publicize China and the work of the CPAFFC. Since the first issue published in June 1983, *Voice of Friendship* has carried articles about China's reform and opening up in various fields and covered all major events and activities organized by the Association, enabling friendship-with-China organizations and personages of other countries in the world to know more about China, about the Chinese people and the CPAFFC. Our friends in other coun-

tries have also contributed to *Voice of Friendship*, sharing their views and the experiences of their China visit with our readers throughout the world. *Voice of Friendship* has facilitated the exchange of information between the CPAFFC and friendship-with-China organizations in other countries.

By the end of 2008, 152 issues, both Chinese and English editions, of *Voice of Friendship* have been published.

At the meeting the staff of the Editorial Board thanked all those who had cared for and supported its work over the years and expressed the willingness to work with added efforts to enrich the contents of *Voice of Friendship* and make the reading more enjoyable. □

CPAFFC President Chen Haosu, Vice Presidents Li Xiaolin, Jing Dunquan and Li Jianping, and Secretary General Luo Qin attending the meeting marking the 25th anniversary of the publication of *Voice of Friendship*



UCLG Co-President and Guangzhou Mayor Zhang Guangning Attends Fourth World Urban Forum in Nanjing

Guo Lei

The 4th World Urban Forum, with the theme of “Harmonious Urbanization”, was held in Nanjing on November 3, 2008. Participating in the event were nearly 4,000 people from home and abroad including three heads of state and over twenty ministers. The World Urban Forum is an important international forum on global urban development sponsored by the UN-Habitat. Zhang Guangning, mayor of Guangzhou, attended the opening ceremony in his capacity as co-president of the UCLG and vice president of the China Association of Mayors and made a keynote speech at

the plenary session. Zhang Guangning stated that in order to effectively solve urban problems of over-population, lack of resources, and environment pollution, the leading role of local governments should be given full play. He stressed that Guangzhou is willing to join the efforts of the local governments of all countries in the world and the international community to create mutually beneficial and complimentary relations between rural and urban areas, tradition and innovation, localities and the globe, and jointly build harmonious cities. □

Mayor Zhang Guangning (middle) at the Fourth World Urban Forum



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adopted added colour to the CACF.

Ancient Music in Praise of Friendship

To enhance China-Arab cultural exchanges and add a lively atmosphere to the conference, a 44-member Xinjiang Mukamu Art Troupe went to Syria as part of the Chinese delegation. During the conference, the art troupe and the Syria Inanna Art Troupe staged a joint performance. The artists of the two countries presented an art feast to the

participants of the second China-Arab Friendship Conference and the local people, praising the traditional China-Arab friendship in their unique way and expressing their aspiration for better China-Arab friendly relations in the future.

Mukamu, known as the Pearl of Oriental Music, is the refined classic music of the Xinjiang Uighur ethnic minority group. It was approved by UNESCO as oral and intangible cultural heritage of mankind on November 25, 2005. □

CPAFFC President Chen Haosu Gives a Speech in Japan

Wang Lin



Takeo Kawamura (left), Japanese chief cabinet secretary, shaking hands warmly with CPAFFC President Chen Haosu (right)

On the evening of November 18, 2008, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association (JCCEA) held a lecture meeting entitled “Looking into the Future of

China-Japan Cultural Exchanges” in Tokyo. About 300 personages of the Japanese cultural and various other circles attended it.

In his keynote speech at the meeting, CPAFFC President Chen Haosu spoke highly of the contributions to normalization

of China-Japan diplomatic relations and development of relations between the two countries made by the JCCEA as an important channel for China-Japan cultural exchanges in the past half a century. President Chen said, the present situation of China-Japan relations has not come easily and should be cherished all the more. The people of the two countries should strive to accomplish the lofty goal of peaceful coexistence, lasting friendship, mutually beneficial cooperation and common development. We advocate taking history as a mirror for the purpose of attaining a better future. To realize the great aspiration of lasting friendship between the two countries needs joint efforts by all the friends who love peace and treasure friendship. We up-

The delegation at Premier Zhou Enlai Poem Tablet at Arashiyama in Kyoto, Japan



US Lt. Governors' Delegation Visits China

Liu Yi

An 11-member US Lt. governors' delegation sent by the Council of the State Governments of the United States and led by Barbara Lawton, chairwoman of the National Lt. Governors Association (NLGA) and Lt. Governor of Wisconsin, paid a visit to Beijing, Chengdu and Shanghai from October 5 to 12, 2008. Members of the delegation included Lt. Governor of Kansas Mark Parkinson, Lt. Governor of Alabama Jim Folsom, Lt. Governor of Connecticut Michael Fedele and Lt. Governor of Nevada Brian Krolicki as well as their spouses or assistants. The five

states are respectively located in the northern, central, southern, northeastern and western parts of the United States, and the five Lt. governors respectively belong to the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. Hence, the delegation was highly representative. Tung Chee Hwa, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, met with and entertained the delegation in Beijing. The delegation paid official calls on Qiu Baoxing, vice minister of construction; Huang Yanrong, deputy governor of Sichuan Province; Tang

hold promoting governmental relations through nongovernmental channels, promoting political relations through economic exchanges and cooperation and promoting friendship through culture. By promoting strategic mutual trust between the two countries through people-to-people friendly contacts, promoting political mutual trust through economic development and promoting mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples through cultural exchanges, we will continue to work for the friendship between the two peoples to last from generation to generation.

In his speech at the meeting, Takashi Tsujii, president of the JCCEA, said, it is encouraging that the political relations between the two countries have warmed up in recent years. The

JCCEA is willing to make efforts to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation between the two countries in the cultural and other fields and enhance friendship between the two peoples. He stressed, the financial crisis that is spreading globally verifies the flaws of free-market capitalism. To overcome worldwide economic crisis needs full cooperation by the people of all countries in the world. China's vigorous economic growth will make important contributions to overcoming the economic crisis in the world and help China strengthen its international status and push the Japan-China relations to a higher level.

The speeches by the two presidents were well received by the participants at the meeting. Invited by the JCCEA, CPAFFC President Chen Haosu

led a CPAFFC delegation to visit Japan starting November 17, 2008. During its one-week visit in Japan, the delegation paid official calls on Takeo Kawamura, chief cabinet secretary; Ryu Shioya, minister of education, culture, sports, science and technology; Yasutoshi Nishimura, parliamentary vice minister for foreign affairs, and Akira Fujiwara, mayor of Nara. The delegation had extensive and in-depth discussions and exchanged views on further developing China-Japan relations and strengthening exchanges and cooperation in the political, economic and cultural fields with personages of the cultural circles including writers Senji Kuroi and Teru Miyamoto, director Masahiro Shinoda, playwright Ren Saito, sculptor Kichi Sumikawa and pottery artist Soji Suzuki. □

Dengjie, vice mayor of Shanghai and Liu Jieyi, assistant foreign minister. CPAFFC Vice President Li Xiaolin accompanied the delegation throughout the visit. In Beijing the delegation took part in the exchanges between Chinese and US friendship provinces and states, had talks with the representatives of Heilongjiang, Hubei and Henan Provinces and visited the Olympic Games venues. In Sichuan it visited earthquake-stricken Mianyang City and Beichuan County, and in Shanghai it visited the Pudong New Area and an American company Rohm and Haas China, Inc.

China-US Relations

The members of the delegation unanimously held that China-US relationship is one of the most important bilateral relationships in the world. Through this visit they gained a deeper understanding about the relations between the two countries. They said, they support free trade and globalization and China-US trade has brought benefits to both countries and those in the United States oppose China-US trade mainly for political aims. Ms. Lawton said, the US-China relationship at present is more important than any time in history. The two countries have extensive common interests in the fields of trade, investment, finance, environmental protection, education and energy. The future of the two countries is closely linked together. Besides in charge of economic and environmental affairs, one of the important aspects of

the Lt. governors' work is to promote people-to-people exchanges. Exchanges between the American and Chinese people which help extend friendship and cooperation to every stratum of society are the foundation of friendship between the two countries. She expressed her thanks to the Chinese government and people for inviting them to visit China, which gave them a chance to have contacts with ordinary Chinese people and enhanced their friendship with and understanding about China. She said, when the United States is in difficulty, the friendship from China seems especially precious. Lt. Governor Fedele said, peace, prosperity and life of high quality are the common pursuit of the two peoples. Thus, the two countries have a common mission and face common challenges. Therefore, the two countries should continue to enhance mutual understanding and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation so as to benefit the people of the two countries. Lt. Governor Folsom said, globalization has made the countries in the world more interdependent and interacting. Only by strengthening cooperation, can the United States and China achieve win-win progress. Several Lt. governors said that this visit was the beginning of their future long-term friendly cooperation with China. Lt. Governor Krolicki said, many US local officials have visited Taiwan, but have not visited the mainland of China; as a result, they do not have a clear understanding of the Taiwan question and have prejudice against

US Lt. Governors' Delegation visiting the Beichuan Middle School



The delegation at the National Stadium known as the Bird's Nest



the mainland of China. If more Lt. governors can visit China, it will greatly enhance important local political figures' understanding of and friendship with China. All the Lt. governors said that after returning home they would tell the people in their states what they had seen and heard in China and encourage them to know more about China.

China's Development

Among the members of the delegation, Lt. Governor Lawton and Lt. Governor Fedele visited China for the first time. The economic growth, social stability and people's hospitality in the cities they visited left a deep impression on them. Ms. Lawton said, the American people's knowledge about China is one-sided and out of date. Only coming to China, can one really know about the country and experience its booming growth. Lt. Governor Folsom said, in the past 30 years since reform and opening up, earth-shaking changes have taken place in China. Economy has been growing with vigour and noticeable progress has been made in democracy and freedom. If China develops along this track, it will have a bright future. Lt. Governor Parkinson said, vice regional director of the Asia-Pacific Region of Rohm and Haas told him that American enterprises make investment in China not because labour in China is cheap, but because China has a huge market and more clients. This has made him realize that China does not scramble for employment opportuni-

ties by taking advantage of its cheap labour; therefore, the United States should not blindly blame China for its unemployment problem, but should find causes from itself. Lt. Governor Krolicki said, China has made achievements that attract worldwide attention since reform and opening up and is opening its door wider to the outside world. He expressed his thanks to China for permitting Nevada State to set up a tourist office in Beijing and vigorously promoting the development of tourism in the two countries. When visiting the Olympic Games venues, Lt. governors said, the Beijing Olympic Games are unique and gave the people of the world a pleasant surprise. The Olympic Games have demonstrated long-standing Chinese culture and built a national image of prosperity and hospitality, which will exert positive and far-reaching influence on China's future development.

Reconstruction of Disaster Areas

Before coming to China, the delegation expressed hope to visit the Sichuan earthquake-stricken areas to extend their sympathy and support for the local people. After arriving in Beichuan County Town, the delegation carefully examined the losses caused by the earthquake and listened to the briefings given by the local cadres. When learning the devastating destruction caused by the earthquake, many members of the delegation shed tears. In Leigu Town the delegation

Activities in Celebration of 30 Years of Jiangsu's International Friendship-City Exchanges

Zong He

As a part of commemoration of the 30th anniversary of China's adoption of the policy of reform and opening to the outside world, a series of activities with the theme of "friendship, harmony, cooperation and development" were held in Nanjing from October 28 to 31, 2008 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Jiangsu's international friendship-city exchanges. These activities aimed at reviewing the development, summing up the experience and displaying in a systematic way the

achievements in Jiangsu's international friendship-city work over the past 30 years and further consolidating and deepening exchanges and cooperation between Jiangsu and its twinned counterparts in other countries.

One hundred and seventy-two delegations and groups with 1,106 people from 45 countries, 480 representatives of foreign experts in the cultural and educational fields working in Jiangsu and foreign students studying in the province, leaders of the International Department

of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CPAFFC, the Foreign Affairs Office of the Central Committee of the CPC and Jiangsu Province as well as personages of all circles in Jiangsu, totalling more than 7,000, took part in the activities. Alfred Gusenbauer, federal chancellor of Austria, John Brumby, premier of Victoria State of Australia, and Kim Han-kyu, chairman of the 21st Century Korea-China Exchange Association of

learnt about the reconstruction work after the earthquake and listened to the reconstruction plan. At the Changhong Training Base in Mianyang, the delegation visited the temporary campus of Beichuan Middle School. They were greatly moved by the students' warm reception, optimistic attitude and hard study. The Lt. governors handed Wan Lianpo, vice mayor of Mianyang, a letter expressing sympathy of the people in their states for the people in the earthquake-stricken areas. Ms. Lawton said, it was really extraordinary that the people of Sichuan displayed the spirit of unity, optimism and mutual help and carried out reconstruction soon after the earthquake. Mr. Fedele expressed appreciation of the Chinese government for allowing international aid teams to enter the disaster areas and accepting aids of various forms from the international community which reflects China's open-

ness and humanitarian spirit. When learning the dedication spirit of sacrificing the lives of their own family members in order to save people's lives and putting others' interests ahead of their own displayed by the cadres in the disaster areas, Mr. Folsom said, these local leaders are real civil servants serving the people. Under their leadership, the reconstruction work in Sichuan disaster areas will achieve great success. Mr. Parkinson said, though in recent years the United States have suffered natural disasters such as hurricanes many times, the destruction caused by those disasters are incomparable to the devastating destruction caused by the earthquake in Sichuan. The fact that China can relocate such a large number of victims of the disasters in such a short time fully reflects the Chinese government's remarkable capability of organization and mobilization. □



The art troupes from 13 countries giving a joint performance

the Republic of Korea, sent us messages of congratulations.

Enhancing Mutual Trust and Friendship

In the 30 years of China's reform and opening up, Jiangsu has scored brilliant achievements in its economic and social development. Great changes have taken place in its cities and rural areas, people's living standards have been improved remarkably and various undertakings developed vigorously, of which friendship-city work has played an important role. Up to now, the province has twinned

200 pairs of friendship cities and established 184 pairs of friendly exchange relations with its counterparts in 43 countries. They serve as an important platform for Jiangsu to carry out exchanges and cooperation with foreign countries. In recent years, through its friendship-city channel the province has introduced over 1,000 foreign investment projects and helped more than 600 enterprises go global, winning good development results. More than 1,000 foreign friends gathered in Jiangsu to participate in the celebration, many of whom visited the

province for the first time. The trip left on them deep impressions, enhanced their favourable opinions of Jiangsu and increased their confidence in co-operating with it. The fact that all the twinned counterparts of Jiangsu sent delegations to take part in the activities despite the long distance showed the importance they attached to developing friendly relations with the province. During the celebration, ceremonies to confer the title of Honorary Citizen of Jiangsu and Friendship Ambassador were held in recognition of the outstanding contributions



The meeting in session

made by those foreign friends who have persisted in promoting friendship, bilateral exchanges and cooperation with China. Five foreign friends received the title of Honorary Citizen of Jiangsu and two the title of Friendship Ambassador.

Practical Exchanges

Friendship is the prerequisite and cooperation the basis. To let these activities produce more practical results, Forums on “internationalization of higher education”, “international environmental protection policies and practices”, “opportunity, challenges and future of modern service in Jiangsu”, and “economic cooperation and trade with the theme of ‘mutual benefit, win-win cooperation and economic globalization’” were held. Representatives of higher-learning institutions from 13 countries and relevant personages from 40 universities and colleges in Jiangsu, totalling over 200 people, attended the education forum; 310 representatives from 21 countries and relevant departments and enterprises in the province took part in the forum on modern service industry, 400 government officials, specialists and representatives of enterprises of friendship cities from 14 countries participate in the forum on environmental protection, and more than 200 entrepreneurs from home and abroad held business talks and exchanges at the meeting of exchanges between environmental protection enterprises. At the

celebration meeting, signing ceremonies were held. Eight cities and counties, five departments, two universities and a museum in Jiangsu signed with their foreign counterparts 18 agreements on the establishment of friendship-city and friendly exchange relations, involving cooperation in the areas of administration, education, culture, people-to-people exchanges, etc. These activities showed that by twinning friendship-city ties we harvested not only friendship, but also fruits of practical cooperation.

Ordinary People's Extensive Participation

Apart from these practical exchanges in the fields of economy and trade, education, environmental protection and modern service industry, colourful cultural and art programmes as well as such activities as exchanges and interaction between ordinary citizens were also included in the celebration with more than 2,000 people taking part in them. Art troupes from 11 countries put on programmes with distinctive national characteristics. Twenty-two interaction areas were set up at the site of celebration by friendship organizations from five countries and ten cities in the province. Nantong City sent an acrobatic troupe and a puppet troupe, Suqian City a martial art troupe, Xuzhou City a farmers' orchestra and the cities of Huai'an, Taizhou and Yancheng sent folk arts and handicrafts demonstration teams. More than 300 pro-

fessional actors and actresses, folk artists and amateurs from various cities in the province came to Nanjing to join the celebration and have exchanges with the foreign delegations and the citizens of Nanjing. The art troupes from 13 countries staged a joint performance entitled “Making Friends Throughout the World”. In the 2-hour performance, the audience interacted with the performers, and the joyous singing and dancing reciprocated with cheers from the audience. It was really a grand gala of friendship cities.

Showing Achievements of Friendship-City Work

The Retrospective Expo on Jiangsu's 30-Year International Friendly Exchanges was held during the celebration activities. The more than 1,000 photos displayed on 500-odd boards systematically showed the achievements of Jiangsu's friendship-city work in economic, social and cultural exchanges. Over 40 foreign friendship city delegations and some 400 foreign guests visited the exhibition. The visitors spoke highly of the exhibition and many wrote down on the visitor's book their impressions. □



10th China-Japan-Korea Friendship Cities Conference Held in ROK

Hong Lei

The 10th China-Japan-Korea Friendship Cities Conference was held in South Cholla, the Republic of Korea from November 4 to 5, 2008. About 300 representatives of local governments of the three countries came to the conference. CPAFC President Chen Haosu led a 41-member Chinese delegation attended the event.

Jointly held by the China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA), the Korea Local Authorities Foundation for International Relations (KLAFIR), and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) of Japan, the China-Japan-Korea Friendship Cities Conference has been hosted in turns by the three countries starting 1999. The successful holding of the conference in the past decade has made it an important platform for the local governments of the three countries to carry out exchanges and information communication. The theme of this year's conference is "activating local economy, promoting regional development".

On the evening of November 4, the welcoming reception and opening ceremony of the conference were held in Yeongam county of South Cholla. Park Joon-yung, governor of South Cholla, delivered his welcoming speech as the host and

Lee Sang-ho, president of the KLAFIR, spoke on behalf of the organizers of the conference. President Chen Haosu and Michihiro Kayama, chairman of the Board of Directors of the CLAIR also made remarks on the occasion. The three sides unanimously emphasized that it was of great significance that the local governments of China, Japan and Korea strengthened their cooperation in the current international economic situation.

The plenary session on November 5 consisted of three contents: Jung Yong-duck, president of the Korea Institute of Public Administration (KIPA), made a keynote speech entitled How to Further Promote Regional Development, examining the issue of unbalanced regional development from the academic perspective; Vice Governor Park of South Cholla and Ding Zhanghua, secretary of the CPC Committee of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Yangzhou Municipal Government, China, and Kiyoshi Ejima, mayor of Shimonoseki, Japan, gave their keynote speeches on the theme of the conference, talking about their local social and economic development strategies from local administration perspective; Three representatives from each of the three countries briefed about their own successful experience in developing

The opening ceremony of the China-Japan-Korea Friendship Cities Conference



Delegation of Federation of French-Chinese Associations Visits China

Xing Shuhua

At the invitation of the CPAFFC, a delegation of the Federation of French-Chinese Associations (FFCA) paid a visit to China from October 29 to November 5, 2008 with the aim of having talks with the relevant Chinese departments to know about the formulation and implementation of the policies on China's urban planning and protection of cultural heritage in the process of modernization.

The FFCA is France's largest friendship-with-China nongovernmental organization having over 20 branches throughout the country. Since its founding in the 1990s, by holding lectures, cultural and art exhibitions and performances, Chinese language teaching and study on specific subjects, the FFCA has done many useful work for enhancing understanding and friendship between the

French and Chinese people. It is CPAFFC's important cooperative partner in France and the two organizations have carried out mutual visits and exchanges for many years.

The delegation visited Shanghai, Guangzhou and Beijing.

In his meeting with the delegation, CPAFFC Vice President Li Jianping expressed his thanks to the FFCA for the con-

tourism resources, protecting ecological environment and promoting convention and exhibition industry, and had discussions with participants present.

At the closing ceremony of the conference, the South Cholla Declaration was adopted by all participants. It was announced at the conference that the 11th China-Japan-Korea Friendship Cities Conference would be held in Changchun, China in 2009. Bo Zhongtang, deputy director of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Changchun Municipal Government, on behalf of the next host city, sincerely invited the representatives of the three countries. A short video and an *erhu* solo performance with typical Chinese flavour let them see and feel the city's charm in advance.

Local government representatives from China, Japan and Korea actively participated in the conference, making full use of the event as a platform for exchanges and interaction. Besides speaking at the conference they distributed material on their own cities. At the same time, they learned about stories of success and gathered valuable information as they listened to others.

During the conference, two pairs of friendship-city relationship were established between Chinese and Korean cities. Before the opening ceremony, Liang Yinan, mayor of Longquan of Zhejiang Province, led a delegation to Gangjin County, Korea for a visit and signed the agreement on twinning friendship cities between Longquan and Gangjin County with the Korean counterpart. At the closing ceremony, Huang Yujian, mayor of Zhangshu of Jiangxi Province, and Eom Tae-young, mayor of Jecheon of Korea, signed the Agreement on the Establishment of Friendship-City Relations between Zhangshu and Jecheon.

At the banquet of the closing ceremony, 5 female musicians from China, Japan and Korea teamed up and formed a folk music band called "Lulu" and played traditional music with 5 traditional stringed instruments of the three countries. This harmonious music brought the event up to its climax. It was shared by all participating representatives that after 10-year's efforts, the China-Japan-Korea Friendship Cities Conference has become a cheerful gala for the reunion and exchanges of the local governments. □

tributions it had made since its founding to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the people of the two countries. Li said, it is particularly commendable that friends of the FFCA often come out boldly when the relations between the two countries meet difficulties, and on different occasions objectively publicize China's policies so as to dispel misunderstanding. FFCA President Alain Labat said, to China the year 2008 is a very special year in which China suffered rare natural disasters but successfully held the Beijing Olympic Games. The two events have changed the French people's negative views of China resulting from the media's misguiding. The French people greatly admired the Chinese people's spirit of uniting as one to fight against natural disasters after the Wenchuan earthquake and perfect organization of the Beijing Olympic Games and excellent performances of the Chinese athletes in the Games. The disruption that the Olympic torch relay met in Paris does not represent the will of the broad masses of the French people. It is, of course, not a one day's job to clear the destructive effect and bad influence made by the media, the FFCA will as always work hard to push forward France-China friendship. Alain Caporossi, secretary general of the FFCA, on behalf of the Federation, donated 380 euro in cash to the Sichuan earthquake-hit areas and asked the CPAFFC to pass on this donation to the disaster areas. So far,

the FFCA has donated altogether 21,445 euro including 4,000 euro in the form of transfer made in October and donations through other channels to the Sichuan earthquake-hit areas. CPAFFC Vice President Li Jianping extended his thanks for the donation and said that the CPAFFC would pass on the donation via the Sichuan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries to the victims of the earthquake as soon as possible.

Cai Fangbai, the former Chinese ambassador to France had a talk with the French guests on the history, present situation and development of China-France relationship. Ambassador Cai said, the reason why there was such a big contrast in the China-France relationship before and after the France-China Culture Year lies in that the French people have lacked knowledge about China for a long time. In recent years France has encountered many problems such as lots of state capital transferred to Asia, rise of unemployment, etc. The media have chosen to shift the cause of economic crisis onto China; as a result, the ordinary people have been misguided by the media as they had no other sources to get objective information. There were bubbles of demonizing China in France, bringing China-France relationship to an impasse. Because China successfully held the Beijing Olympic Games, and in addition, various countries in the world need to cooperate with China to tide over the global e-

conomic crisis, the media have lowered their noises of opposing China. Ambassador Cai stressed that only by handling the China-France relationship from the strategic perspective, can it be maintained and developed.

The delegation paid an official call on the Beijing Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage and had discussions on Beijing's modernization drive and protection of cultural heritage with the leading officials of the Administration who gave a detailed briefing about the policies and measures on protection of cultural heritage adopted by China, particularly Beijing, in urban planning. Alain Caporossi said, Western media wantonly criticize China for its rapid development built on blind expansion of construction disregarding protection of cultural heritage. The valuable and convincing information provided by the Administration can help the delegation after returning home publicize China's policy on the protection of cultural heritage to the French people and check the media's biased propaganda so that the French people can have a true picture of China's present situation.

During its stay in Shanghai and Guangzhou, the delegation visited the Shanghai Global Financial Centre, the Shanghai World Expo Site, the Dongtan eco-city on the Chongming Island, and the Guangzhou Pearl River New City, and paid an official call on the Bureau of Urban Planning of Guangzhou Municipality. Through the visit,

Fostering Friendship Between Schuan and Fryslan of the Netherlands

Shen Zaiwang

At the invitation of the Sichuan Provincial Government, Sjoerd Galema, vice commissioner of the Queen in the Province of Fryslan of the Netherlands, led a delegation to visit Sichuan Province and attended the 9th Western China Economic and Trade Fair held from October 20 to October 27, 2008.

Since Sichuan and Fryslan established friendship-province relations in 2001, the leaders of both sides have made frequent visits. The Fryslan Government attached great importance to forging the link with Sichuan and bilateral cooperation in the fields of economy, science and technology, culture and education, and has got substantial results. To express goodwill, the Fryslan Government presented three Fryslan horses as gifts to Sichuan in 2007. Now the three horses are living very well in a horse club of Chengdu. Mr. Galema is the new vice commissioner of Fryslan. This is his first visit to Sichuan and China.

Zhang Zuoha, deputy governor of Sichuan met with Galema and his party. He expressed appreciation of Fryslan's efforts to promote friend-

ship between the two provinces. He hoped that the bilateral cooperation in agriculture would achieve good results. Qin Lin, president of the Sichuan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (SIFA), was present at the meeting.

Vice Commissioner Galema attended the reception jointly given by the Sichuan Provincial Committee of the CPC and the Sichuan Provincial Government and made a speech at the Fifth International Tourism and Culture Promotion Conference sponsored by the CPAFFC. Before the conference Li Xiaolin, vice president of the CPAFFC, and Huang Yanrong, deputy governor of Sichuan, had a friendly talk with Mr. Galema. The delegation members participated in the opening ceremony of the Fair and the Western China International Cooperation Forum.

When the Wenchuan earthquake suddenly shook Sichuan, the Fryslan Government was deeply concerned about it. At the early moment Mr. Galema sent a letter to Sichuan Governor Jiang Jufeng expressing condolence and sympathy.

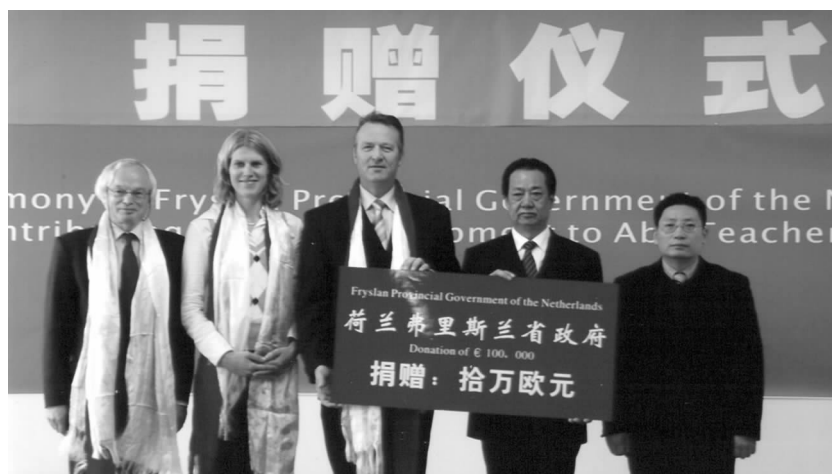
the delegation not only fully appreciated the modern architecture of China's international metropolises, but also got some knowledge about China's increasingly mature and developing concepts of architecture and urban planning.

The French guests said, China's successful holding of the Beijing Olympic Games has made the world recognize China's strength and influence. Now, China is paying more attention to the basic concepts and local cultures and trying to f

ind China's own path of urban development from the models of the times. The construction plan of the eco-city on the Chongming Island and the 2020 urban planning blueprint of Guangzhou both indicate that China is striving to build an eco-society featuring the coordination of housing, industries and environment, and paying attention to the distribution of forces of production and market impact. These thoughtful considerations and adoption of policies under the condition of

rapid development have amazed the European countries while feeling fully confident in China's future.

During the visit, the FFCA delegation got a deep understanding of China's policies and practices on urban planning and protection of cultural heritage, which will play a positive role in publicizing China's actual situation of development to the French people and enhancing understanding and friendship between the people of the two countries. □



On behalf of the Government of Fryslan, Vice Commissioner Sjoerd Galema presenting 100,000 euro to Aba Teachers College

thy. The Fryslan Government sent Mr. Postma, deputy director of Economic Department to Sichuan in July to make investigation. Postma visited the temporary office of Aba Teachers College which had been located at the epicenter and had to move to the rural suburb of Chengdu. He met with Jing Yaxin, secretary of the CPC committee of the college, and learnt of their huge losses. When Mr. Postma brought back the photos and reports on Aba College's disastrous situation, the Fryslan Government decided to donate educational equipment to the college.

Mr. Galema and his party visited the temporary school of Aba Teachers College in Pixian County. At his meeting with the college leaders

Mr. Galema extended salute to them and the teachers and students on hearing the State Council of China had honoured them as the National Heroic Collective. He announced Fryslan's donation of 100,000 euro to the college for purchasing digital educational equipment and opening a new library. In addition he made a proposal on establishing sister relationship between Aba Teachers College and Fryslan College for conducting joint research in ethnic languages and culture. He visited the college's photo exhibition of the earthquake and relief work, expressed solicitude to the teachers and students and praised their courage against the disasters and confidence in overcoming the difficulties.

Vice Commissioner Sjoerd Galema playing table tennis with a student



Forum on Exchanges and Cooperation Between Chinese and Russian Cities Held in Beijing

Wen Guangmei

To promote more extensive, in-depth and sustained exchanges and cooperation between the Chinese and Russian local governments, on November 8, 2008 the CPAFFC held the Forum on Exchanges and Cooperation between Chinese and Russian Cities, the only bilateral activity within the framework of the China International Friendship Cities Conference.

The Forum was jointly presided over by He Jifeng, director-general of the Department of European and Asian Affairs of the CPAFFC, and Sergey Paramonov, executive vice president of Russian Twin Cities International Association. CPAFFC President Chen Haosu and Vice President Li Jianping

were present at the forum. Over 70 people including a part of the delegates who attended the China International Friendship Cities Conference and delegates from 15 Russian cities participated in the forum.

At the forum Chinese and Russian delegates spoke one after another and had in-depth and extensive discussions and exchanges on the achievements, present situation and prospects of friendly contacts and cooperation between the Chinese and Russian localities. Both sides unanimously held that non-governmental and city diplomacy plays an indispensable role in enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the people of various countries in

the world and promoting cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, science, technology, culture, tourism, etc.

In his speech at the forum, CPAFFC President Chen Haosu said, the Chinese side attaches great importance to the exchanges between Chinese and Russian localities, and friendship cities between the two countries have a great potential for further development. Through holding this kind of dialogues, the cooperation between Chinese and Russian localities will continue to develop, and the number of China-Russia friendship cities will further increase. Chen also spoke highly of the great significance of the activities soon to be held in cel-

Mr. Galema and his party visited the Memorial Hall of Wenchuan Earthquake and Relief Work at the Jianchuan Museum in Dayi County. He was shocked and greatly moved by those photos and objects collected from the seismic region. Tears filled his eyes. He wrote in the museum's guest book to express his condolence for the dead and respect for the heroic people.

The delegation also visited the Sichuan Provincial Agricultural Academy and exchanged ideas with the academy's leaders on jointly making research in potato improvement and processing. The delegation made a proposal to Sichuan

Province for jointly establishing a training centre in Chengdu on water treatment and environment protection for which Frysland agreed to provide 1.31 million euro.

Feeling satisfied with his visit to Sichuan, Mr. Galema said: "It is my first visit to China and Sichuan. I have never expected that in western China the economy is so vibrant and Sichuan has recovered from the earthquake so quickly. When Europe is facing economic crisis, I see vitality and hope in Sichuan, China. I am really reluctant to leave here, and I am sure to come back in future." □



celebration of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia as well as the Year of Russian Language and the Year of Chinese Language.

Sergey Paramonov, head of the Russian delegation, extended his congratulations on the successful convening of the China International Friendship Cities Conference and thanks to the Chinese side for specially arranging this activity. He believed that the Friendship Cities Conference and this Forum would become important platforms and effective channel for the two sides to help supply each other's needs, exchange experiences and promote future development and cooperation.

The delegate of Shanghai briefed about the cooperation and exchanges featured with political mutual trust, economic mutual benefits and cultural interaction between Shanghai and St. Petersburg since the two cities twinned as the first pair of friendship cities between China and Russia in 1988. He also

gave a detailed briefing about the Pearl of the Baltic Sea, a large-scale project in Russia being constructed by Shanghai and the preparation for the 2010 Shanghai World Expo.

The delegate of Shandong Province briefed about the high-level contacts between Shandong and the local governments of Russia. He hoped that Shandong and the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia will formally sign the agreement of forming friendship city ties during the Tatarian President's coming visit to Shandong at the end of November.

Sosnovy Bor Mayor Dmitry Pulyevskiy and Yaroslavl Mayor Victor Volonchunas respectively talked about their cities' exchanges with friendship cities in other countries. Mr. Volonchunas said, Yaroslavl will hold activities in celebration of the millennium of the founding of the city in 2010 and Russian President Dmitri Medvedev himself is in charge of the celebration preparation committee. He said, his city hopes to hold an exhibition at

the Shanghai World Expo to publicize the city's history and features to the Chinese people and forge friendship ties with Chinese cities.

The Russian delegates hoped that the two sides would actively conduct exchanges of personnel and carry out substantial exchanges and cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, science, technology and nuclear energy as well as in the social and cultural aspects. □



Opening Ceremony of *Ping Pong Diplomacy* *Photo Exhibition* and Conferring Title of China-Japan Friendship Envoy on Atsushi Goto Held in Beijing

Guan Yong

In commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, the China-Japan Friendship Association (CJFA), the Chinese Table Tennis Association (CTTA), the Japan-China Friendship Association of Aichi Prefecture (JCFAAP) and the Chinese Consulate General in Nagoya jointly held the Photo Exhibition of Ping Pong Diplomacy—China-Japan Friendship in Beijing on November 14, 2008. At the invitation of the CJFA, Atsushi Goto, president of the JCFAAP and his party totalling 15 people specially came to Beijing for the photo exhibition and related activities.

On the morning of November 14, the opening ceremony of the exhibition was held at the CPAFFC. Jing Dunquan, vice president of the CPAFFC and the CJFA; Yu Bin, vice president of

the CTTA; Atsushi Goto, president of the JCFAAP; Zhuang Jiafu, Liang Youneng, Hu Bingquan, Cen Huaiguang and Liang Geliang, retired players of the Chinese National Table Tennis Team, and university students in Beijing were present at the occasion.

In his speech at the opening ceremony, Jing Dunquan said, in 1971 Koji Goto and his friends of the Japan Table Tennis Association resolutely invited the Chinese ping pong delegation to the 31st World Table Tennis Championships in Nagoya, despite all sorts of obstacles and disturbances, and thus, set up the stage for China's world famous Ping Pong Diplomacy, realizing its undertaking of using the "small ball" to push forward the "big ball" that shocked the world and laid an important foundation for the normalization

CJFA Vice President Wang Xiaoxian and Atsushi Goto with veteran players of the Chinese National Table Tennis Team



CJFA Vice Presidents Wang Xiaoxian (right) and Jing Dunquan (middle) having a cordial conversation with Atsushi Goto (left)



of Sino-Japanese relations. The 50 precious photos of the history displayed at the exhibition vividly reproduced those historical moments of the Ping Pong Diplomacy between China and Japan. Jing Dunquan continued, as an old Chinese saying goes: “When you drink water, remember the well digger”. In today’s situation as the Sino-Japanese relations are enjoying good progress, we should bear in mind the significant contributions made by the pioneers of the two countries to exploring and pushing forward the bilateral relations. Now, the Sino-Japanese relations have arrived at a new historical starting point and are faced with important new opportunities and wider space for development. The CJFA hopes to work together with all its friends in concerted efforts to achieve the goal of realizing peaceful coexistence, passing on friendship from generation to generation, carrying on cooperation of mutual benefit for common development.

Yu Bin and Kyuhei Muraoka also delivered speeches at the opening ceremony. Vice Presidents of the CJFA Wang Xiaoxian and Jing Dunquan, Yu Bin, Kyuhei Muraoka, Atsushi Goto, and Takeshi Mori, former staff of the JTТА who witnessed the 31st World Table Tennis Championships, cut the ribbon for the photo exhibition. On display were photos of the historical moments of the Ping Pong Diplomacy including Premier Zhou Enlai meeting with Koji Goto, Premier

Zhou Enlai meeting with members of the Organizing Committee of the Asia-Africa Table Tennis Friendship Tournament, Koji Goto talking with Chinese players Zhuang Zedong and Lin Huiqing, Chinese players Zhang Minzhi and Liang Lizhen talking with Japanese audience.

After the ribbon cutting, Vice President Wang Xiaoxian, on behalf of the CJFA, conferred the honorary title of China-Japan Friendship Envoy on Atsushi Goto, son-in-law of Koji Goto, in recognition of his active role in promoting the development of China-Japan people-to-people friendship, the sports exchanges between the two countries and the friendly relationship between Jiangsu Province and Aichi Prefecture over the years.

Atsushi Goto thanked the CJFA for receiving the title. He said, besides the former officials of the JTТА and players who experienced the 31st World Table Tennis Championships, he also brought his daughter, son and daughter-in-law, his granddaughters who were college students, and his 2-year old grandson with him for this visit. He wanted to foster in them friendly feelings towards China through getting to know the country and the history of Ping Pong Diplomacy, so that they would always remember the hard-won friendship between China and Japan and pass on the friendship between the two peoples from generation to generation. □

2008 Friendship Competition Among Ambassadors on Knowing Chinese Culture

Duan Beisheng

After a full month's intensive training and competitions, 2008 Friendship Competition among Ambassadors on Knowing Chinese Culture (*taijiquan*) sponsored by the CPAFFC was declared successfully closed at the gymnasium of the No. 4 Middle School of Handan City, Hebei Province. CPAFFC Vice President Jing Dunquan attended the press conference in Beijing and spoke on the occasion. CPAFFC President Chen Haosu was present at the closing ceremony in Handan. In the course of the competitions, about 300 foreign ambassadors to China, their wives and envoys from over 90 countries entered their names for the competitions. Atmosphere on the spot was very enthusiastic. The ambassadors unanimously praised this meaningful event and said that they learned quite a lot from it.

Conscientiously Learning *Taijiquan*

The ambassadors and their wives have been interested in the Chinese ancient *taiji* culture for a long time and some of them had practiced it. They knew that one can not master the essence of Chinese *wushu* (martial art) in a single day, it needs to practise very hard. So, after the close of the Beijing Paralympics, the Sports and Culture Centre of the Beijing Dongsi Olympic Community received a special group of students—foreign

diplomatic envoys to China.

With the purpose of learning *taijiquan*, Eve from Namibia came to the class with her parents. She took pictures of the whole process of how her mother was learning *taijiquan* as mementoes.

Ms. Magdalene Teo, Brunei ambassador to China, had once watched the performance of *taijiquan*, but she didn't expect that she felt entirely different from what she had imagined when she practised it. She said, "*Taijiquan* should be done very slowly, quite different from jogging and playing golf that I usually do." Though she did the *taiji* movements very slowly, she would sweat all over in a short time. She said that after mastering the series of movements she would keep practising, for she believed that keeping practising *taijiquan* for a long period of time is good for health.

Chuah Chee Meng, attaché in charge of education in the Malaysian Embassy in China who had just come back from his business travel in ROK, hurried to the Sports and Culture Centre. He said that many Chinese in Malaysia were practising *Taijiquan*, but he had no time to learn it as he was very busy with his work. He hoped that in future this kind of useful training would be held regularly so as to further carry on the quintessence of the Chinese culture.



The contestants at the competition

Doing Taijiquan Beautifully in Competition

After a period of time of earnest practice, the ambassadors and their wives entered the finals of the competition.

During the competition, the diplomatic envoys in white kungfu costumes did every movement naturally and smoothly. Though they came from different countries and had different cultural backgrounds, their *taijiquan* movements of outward softness but inward firmness began to demonstrate the unique profound truth of *taiji*.

Mr. Ismail Gurgun from Turkey recorded this precious moment with his video camera and said: "Today my wife took part in the competition. I think she has done it wonderfully. My son and I are proud of her. I was so intoxicated during the competition that sometimes I even forgot to record it with my video camera." After the competition, Mr. and Mrs. Gurgun and their youngest son won the prize of harmony and mutual assistance.

Even after the competition, Carolina Villagas Carvajal, wife of Minister Counsellor Federico Perez Botero from Colombia, still asked the coach to tell her the main points of *taijiquan* technique. Because of language barrier, she asked an interpreter to help her while she posed to do the movements. Her earnest attitude attracted the attention of other competitors. Some of the competitors even invited the instructors to be their private coaches in future.

Mr. and Mrs. Botero won the winner's prize and the prize of the best movements respectively. Mr. Botero said: "The Chinese *taijiquan* with broad and profound contents makes me feel calm and concentrated. It is simply a beautiful art."

Munshi Faiz Ahmad, Bangladeshi ambassador to China, who won the championship, said that as his wife was quite interested in *Taijiquan*, recently they had kept practising it. In the future they would introduce this traditional Chinese sports to other members of his family and friends. As an envoy of cultural exchanges, he hoped that he could better publicize the Chinese culture.

Love of Chinese Culture Growing

During the competition, the ambassadors and

their wives attended the cultural festivals held in the Heping District of Tianjin and Bazhou of Hebei Province, and the 11th International *Taijiquan* Sports Meet in Handan, Hebei Province, and visited the former residence of Yang Luchan, founder of the Yang Style *Taijiquan*. Many of them said these activities increased their interest in the Chinese culture.

Colonel Kenekoo Pholsena, defence attaché of the Laotian Embassy in China, had taken part in similar activities organized by the CPAFFC more than once. He said: "I appreciate the way China publicizes its culture to the world and lets the world know about Chinese culture."

Sophia Hiniadou-Cambanis, wife of the Greek ambassador to China who was the champion of the last Friendship Competition among Ambassadors on Knowing Chinese Culture (Chinese poems), has been very interested in Chinese culture and this time she learned *taijiquan*. She said, these two traditional Chinese arts, though one literary and the other martial, there is similarity in content and make people have an inner peace. She wants to continue to learn *taijiquan*.

Sir James Michael Ah Koy, Fijian ambassador to China, and Elma Campbell, Bahamian ambassador to China, said, through this event, they have not only increased their understanding of the ancient Chinese culture, but also visited some places that they had never heard of before, enriching their knowledge and experience which will be very useful for them to work for friendship with China.

At the closing ceremony, to express their thanks, the diplomatic envoys presented the Handan Municipal Government a plaque on which is inscribed "China Handan International *Taijiquan* Sports Meet—the Chinese Festival Most Welcomed by Foreign Embassies in China".

After the competition, all the participating diplomatic envoys signed and issued a declaration saying: *Taijiquan* belongs to China, more to the world. *Taijiquan* culture is an important component of human civilization. We have the responsibility and obligation to promote the exchanges and development of *taijiquan* culture in the world. □

Exhibition in Commemoration of Dr. Norman Bethune Held in Canada

Ma Hairong

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of internationalist fighter Dr. Norman Bethune's aid-China medical mission, the Exhibition of Fine Arts Works and Stamps in Commemoration of Dr. Norman Bethune co-sponsored by the CPAFFC and the Canada International Cultural Exchange Centre (CICES) was held in the museum of Chilliwack City of British Columbia Province of Canada from October 18 to November 8, 2008. The CPAFFC collected a number of representative fine arts works from China and the CICES many

good paintings and other fine arts works from Canada to be displayed at the exhibition. Many Chinese stamps provided by the Canada China Friendship Society of Ottawa-Gatineau (CCFSOG) were also displayed at the exhibition. My colleague Zhang Yaqin and I were fortunate to come to Canada to make preparations for the exhibition and attended its opening ceremony, which has left me happy memories.

Chilliwack is a small scenic city with a population of over 70,000 and surrounded by green mountains and rivers in

British Columbia. It is only about 100 kilometres from Vancouver. October 18 was Saturday. The early winter sunshine warmed this enchanting small city. Artists, professors and scholars as well as over one hundred viewers came to the city museum one after another. Sharon Gaetz, candidate of the city's new mayor; Ron Denman, curator of Chilliwack Museum; Hoi Sai Wu-Brandt, president of the CICES; C.K. Ng., president of the CCFSOG; and William Ma, vice president of the Vancouver-Guangzhou Friendship Society (VGFS),

The author (R.1) with the Jasters, all of whom having works on display



Visitors looking at the Chinese stamps with interest



were invited to the museum to cut the ribbon for the exhibition. At 12 o'clock at noon, the opening ceremony formally began. Prof. Ian Fenwick, on behalf of the Canadian sponsor, first spoke at the ceremony, welcoming friends from far-away China and from eastern Canada and Vancouver as well as the local people. In his speech Ron Denman said, he was very happy to see so many important and first class arts works were displayed in their museum, it was a great honour to the city, the museum and the citizens.

The Chinese and Canadian sponsors spent 3 years in preparing for this exhibition. I know how hard the work was. It was particularly not easy for the CICES, a spontaneously formed mass organization, and its president Ms. Hoi Sai Wu-Brandt who not only offered money but also worked hard to prepare this excellent exhibition as there was short of hands. Therefore, in my speech besides expressing my thanks to the municipal gov-

ernment, the museum and the artists for all they had done for this exhibition, I specially extended my thanks to Ms. Hoi Sai Wu-Brandt for her tireless work. In order to help viewers to know about Bethune, I especially talked about his touching deeds related to the exhibits. For example, Bethune as a doctor had a high sense of responsibility and noble medical ethics. He studied medical techniques assiduously and constantly improved and innovated medical apparatus and instruments. With his deep sympathy for the labouring people, he regarded curing patients' illness as his own duty and finally sacrificed his precious life for supporting the Chinese people's fight against foreign aggression. Bethune's noble medical ethics and great internationalist spirit of dedication have touched the Chinese people and won respect and love from them. The name of Bethune has long been known to every household in China. Thanks to Dr. Bethune, the Chinese people are particu-

larly friendly to the Canadian people. Bethune has long become a tie of friendship between the Chinese and Canadian people. Many viewers were deeply moved after hearing my speech. They said they felt proud that they had such a fellow countryman as Bethune, and meanwhile the distance they obviously felt in their hearts between them and China and the Chinese people immediately shortened.

The works displayed at the exhibition were rich in contents and the artists of these works came from various circles and places. The exhibits from China mainly came from the Bethune Military Medical College and the Bethune International Peace Hospital of the PLA. Those early works in traditional ink and wash vividly reproduced the then war scenes and Bethune's spirit of self-sacrifice and selflessness in healing the wounded and rescuing the dying, and the will of the Chinese and Canadian people fighting hand in hand a-

Calligraphy Exhibition of Inscriptions On Ancient Chinese Coins Held in Japan

Gao Weimin

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, a calligraphy exhibition of inscriptions on ancient Chinese coins was held in Kanazawa City of Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan from October 15 to 19, 2008. The exhibition was jointly sponsored by the CPAFFC, the Japan Hokushi Seal Cutting Society (HSCS), the Ishikawa Prefecture Japan-China Friendship Association, the Hokkoku Shimbun and the Japan-China Exchange of Arts Council and sup-

ported by the Chinese Embassy in Japan and the departments concerned of Ishikawa Prefecture and Kanazawa City. Over 200 exhibits including coins, rubbings, photos and calligraphic works by Chinese and Japanese amateurs of contemporary calligraphy were displayed.

The exhibition centring on the inscriptions on ancient coins was to show the calligraphy and charm of Chinese writing, and the course of their development in China. The art of calligraphy and seal cutting is the cream of the ancient coin cul-

against the enemy. The viewers showed great interest in those large Chinese paintings, calligraphic and sculptural works.

The Canadian artists showed great enthusiasm for the exhibition. Painters in Vancouver and Chilliwack created a large number of works, among which over 20 were selected to be displayed at the exhibition. Most of them were either oil or water colour paintings, and some exhibits were novel paper sculptures and cloth-pasted pictures. These works vividly portrayed Bethune at different periods of times and his firm character. The works by the overseas Chinese painters from Vancouver showed the painters' unique perspectives and understanding and embracing of both Chinese and Canadian cultures. All the Canadian artists said, through

creation of those works, they came to know better about their fellow countryman Norman Bethune.

I feel that this exhibition, different from ordinary painting exhibitions, is not only rich in contents, but also vivid and diverse in form. To help the Canadian people know better about China, the sponsors showed ingenuity in displaying the Chinese stamps from 1990 to 2005 presented by the CPAFFC to the CCFSOG two years ago. These stamps were also rich in contents. Some of them were specially issued by the China Post in commemoration of Dr. Bethune. Others with the themes of China's sceneries, fauna and flora, historical figures, the twelve animals used to symbolize the year in which a person is born, folk customs, lit-

erary stories, etc. showed the colourful Chinese culture and social changes. Many viewers lingered in front of the exhibiting boards, looking at the stamps with great interest. Those Canadian who had never been to China said they wanted very much to visit China to see with their own eyes the mysterious oriental country. I saw some pupils and students of primary and middle schools looking at the exhibits very carefully, and thought that the words "China" and "Bethune" would remain in their memories for a long time. Some of them would, perhaps, become successors to the cause of friendship between Canada and China. I sincerely wish the friendship forged by the older generation including Bethune will pass from generation to generation and last forever. □

ture. The inscriptions on the coins of various Chinese dynasties reflect the development of calligraphy and seal cutting art in China, and constitute a vivid history of their development.

On the morning of October 15, the opening and ribbon cutting ceremony of the exhibition was held. Wang Xiuyun, director general of the Department of Cultural Exchanges of the CPAFFC; Dai Zhiqiang, deputy director general of the Council of the China Numismatic Society; Hiroshi Kanahara, honorary president of the Ishikawa Prefecture Japan-China Friendship Association; Masami Yamamoto, chief of the Bureau of Project of the Hokkoku Shimbun; Sakae Mikuni, director general of the Ishikawa Government Tourism Bureau; and Nanen Kitamuro, president of the HSCS, cut the ribbon for the exhibition. About one hundred local influential personages attended the ceremony. In their speeches, the Chinese and Japanese sponsors recalled the history of cultural development of the two countries, and unanimously held, the two countries have a several-thousand-year history of exchanges, through which cultures of the two countries have influenced and learned from each other, and reached the goal of common development. The exhibition held in Kanazawa City of Ishikawa Prefecture that has profound foundation of traditional Japanese culture will help deepen mutual understanding between the two countries and pro-

mote cultural exchanges between the two peoples. On the afternoon of that day, Dai Zhiqiang, expert in ancient Chinese coins, gave a lecture entitled “Calligraphy and Seal Cutting Art—the Cream of the Ancient Chinese Coin Culture”. All seats in the auditorium were occupied. The audience had discussions with the lecturer about the influence of ancient Chinese characters on the coins on the development of Chinese writing. The Japanese calligraphy lovers who attended the lecture said, it was very good to hold a lecture during the exhibition. The exhibits plus the lecture helped them better understand Chinese culture.

In the evening of the same day, Nanen Kitamuro, president of the HSCS, held a reception in honour of the Chinese delegation and to celebrate the successful opening of the exhibition. Besides the chief guests who attended the opening ceremony, over 80 people including chairperson of the Ishikawa Prefectural Assembly, and presidents of the Ishikawa Prefecture Japan-China Friendship Association and the Kanazawa Japan-China Friendship Association as well as friendly personages in the surrounding areas attended the reception. The participants congratulated on the success of the exhibition, spoke of the course of cultural development of the two countries, and expressed their wishes to continue to make contributions to the friendship and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

From left: Masami Yamamoto, Hiroshi Kanahara, Namen Kitamuro, Wang Xiuyun, Dai Zhiqiang and Sakae Mikuni cutting the ribbon for the opening of the exhibition



Memorandum of Understanding On Cooperation Between CAFA And BCSR Signed

Jia Ling

The Seminar on Chinese Pattern of Economic Development, co-sponsored by the China-Arab Friendship Association (CAFA) and the Bahrain Centre for Studies and Research (BCSR), was held in Bahrain on November 4, 2008. Jia Ling, secretary general of the CAFA; Prof. Zhao Zhongxiu, dean of the School of International Trade and Economics of the University of International Business and Economics, together with personalities of the political and busi-

ness circles of Bahrain and other Arab countries, local entrepreneurs and investors, attended the seminar.

Prof. Zhao Zhongxiu delivered a report entitled Global Financial Crisis and China's Economic Development Mode, in which he talked about the current international financial crisis and other hot issues and China's successful experience in reform and opening up in the past three decades. His report was well received and highly appraised by the participants.

The event was reported by major media such as the Bahrain State Television, the *Gulf News* and *Ayam*. Chinese Ambassador to Bahrain Li Zhiguo was present at the seminar.

During the seminar, CAFA Secretary General Jia Ling and BCSR Secretary General Abdulla Al Sadiq signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation on behalf of their respective organizations. The two sides will cooperate in holding seminars, special training courses, etc. with the aim to further expand channels of cooperation between the CAFA and the Gulf countries including Bahrain.

Founded by the King of Bahrain, the BCSR is under the direct leadership of the Crown Prince and its chairman is appointed by the King. □

The event was the 15th exhibition on Chinese writing co-sponsored by the CPAFFC and its old friend the HSCS since their cooperation in 1994. The rich Chinese exhibits including ancient coins and rubbings and excellent calligraphic works by noted modern calligraphers have won favourable comments from relevant Japanese organizations.

The local people of Ishikawa visited the exhibition enthusiastically and left their comments

on the visitors' book expressing their wishes of Japan-China friendship.

Sakae Mikuni, director general of the Ishikawa Government Tourism Bureau, spoke highly of the exhibition, saying that it gave the people of Ishikawa an artistic treat and let more Japanese people know about excellent traditional Chinese culture and long-standing cultural relations between the two countries. He said, the exhibition helped further deepen friendship between the people of the two countries. □



Works by Japanese calligraphy
and seal-cutting lovers