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Statement of CPAFFC and China-Japan Friendship Association

Disregarding repeated solemn representations of the Chinese side, the Japanese Government announced on September 10, 2012, the implementation of the so-called “nationalization” of China’s Diaoyu Island and its affiliated islands. This is a flagrant encroachment onto China’s sacred territory. The move has brought grave damage to China-Japan relations and hurt the feelings of the 1.3 billion Chinese people. The Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China-Japan Friendship Association express strong indignation over and opposition to the Japanese move, along with deep concern about the adverse impact this move is having on bilateral relations as well as upon the friendly sentiments between the two peoples.

Diaoyu Island and its affiliated islands have been China’s inherent territory since ancient times. The implementation of the so-called “nationalization” of these islands by the Japanese Government in disregard of historical facts and international jurisprudence is illegal and invalid, and utterly unacceptable to all Chinese people. This act of self-deception by the Japanese side can by no means change China’s sovereignty over the Diaoyu Island and its affiliated islands.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan. Over the past four decades, bilateral relations have achieved unprecedented development in various fields, bringing benefit to the people of both countries and contributing to peace, stability and prosperity of Asia and the world at large. This is the result of common efforts by both peoples and embodies the unremitting and painstaking efforts made by people of several generations of the two countries, which we should treasure and care for dearly. To develop friendship between China and Japan is the general trend and common aspiration of the people that are irresistible. The sound and steady growth of Sino-Japanese relations conforms to the fundamental and long-term interests of the people of our two countries.

The Chinese people love peace, but they will never swallow the bitter fruit of damaging their own interests. The CPAFFC and the CJFA hope that the Japanese side will, proceeding from the larger interest of China-Japan friendship, reverse its erroneous decision concerning the Diaoyu Island and its affiliated islands and restore bilateral relations back onto the normal track of development by concrete step.

Beijing, September 14

Deng Pufang, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), met with Makiko Tanaka, daughter of former Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, and her husband Naoki Tanaka, former Japanese Defense Minister, on the afternoon of September 28, 2012.

Present at the meeting were Wang Shenghong, Deputy Secretary General of the CPPCC National Committee, Jing Dunquan, Vice President of the CPAFFC, and Xiong Bo, Deputy Director General of the Department of Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Vice Chairman Deng Pufang extended welcome to the Japanese visitors at a time when Sino-Japanese relations faced difficulties and highly praised the historical contribution made by former Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka to the normalization of diplomatic relations.

The Vice Chairman said, forty years ago, Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai and Prime Minister Tanaka worked together to realize this normalization. Since then, bilateral relations had largely maintained steady development, and exchanges in the political, economic, cultural and other fields had been carried out smoothly. In the present complex international environment, all countries faced difficulties in their development. Under such situation, it was of great importance that China and Japan live in peace and friendship. The present predicament in the bilateral relationship was not one anyone wished to see.

CPPCC Vice Chairman Deng Pufang Meets Foreign Affairs Committee Chairperson Makiko Tanaka of Japanese House of Representatives

Wang Zhanqi

It was not that the Diaoyu Island issue did not exist at the time of normalization, but leaders of the two countries at the time, acting in the larger interest of China-Japan relations, reached tacit understanding and common ground on “leaving the issue to be resolved later.”

This showed the political wisdom of the older generation of leaders of the two countries. Such acts of great statesmen no ordinary politicians could perform. Deng noted that his father, Deng Xiaoping, visited Japan on the occasion of exchanging instruments of ratification of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978, he pointed out that as both sides had agreed not to touch upon this issue (Diaoyu Island) when normalizing diplomatic relations, it should not be mentioned when negotiating the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

Deng Xiaoping told reporters that the present generation was not wise enough to find a rational solution of the issue, but the next generation would possess that wisdom — a well-known remark of his. Undoubtedly, dispute on the issue of the Diaoyu Islands existed between China and Japan, and it could not be resolved in one day or two, Deng Pufang said

Confrontation was unavoidable over the issue and would fluctuate over time, but it should not affect China-Japan friendship. A farsighted attitude

was necessary to carry China-Japan friendship through this most difficult time. China always held that the key to resolving the issue was to proceed from the common interests of the people of the two countries.

China and Japan were close neighbors and were inextricably linked in all fields including history, politics, economy and culture, and nobody could separate them. Though difficulties sometimes appeared in bilateral relations, it was vital to stick to the general orientation of peace, friendship and cooperation.

Deng told Makiko Tanaka that, as offspring of great parents, they must dare to hold high the banner of China-Japan friendship, especially in times of difficulty. This was vital not only for the people of our two countries, but also for Asia and the world.

Makiko Tanaka expressed agreement with Deng Pufang and said Deng Xiaoping’s policy of reform and opening up had not only boosted China’s development, but also benefited neighboring countries and the whole world. The success of China’s reform and opening up was gratifying. This year marks the 40th anniversary of normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, but the “island issue” cast a dark shadow.

She said that, as a matter of fact, before coming to Beijing, many friends and people from the media had tried

to persuade her not to make the visit. But she believed this was nothing compared with the difficulties her father had faced when he made the decision to visit China 40 years ago. As a politician in service, it was all the more important to make such a visit at such a time to exchange views with Chinese friends and learn what the Chinese people really thought.

She said the history of humankind was one of confrontation of interests frequently arising from different perception and understanding of things. What was most important was to solve the issue by persisting in dialogue with great patience instead of resorting to arms.

For the statesmen of the two countries, they should use all channels available, not only in the political field, but also in the economic, cultural, academic and other fields to carry out exchanges and active contacts, and seek solution by pooling the wisdom of all with calmness and frankness. This was a new trial for the statesmen of our two countries.

This was the third meeting between these two offspring of famous leaders in Beijing, after those in 1992 and 2002 respectively. The two recalled with great feelings scenes of the previous meetings. The Japanese visitors also revisited the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse where they had stayed during their visit to China together with Kakuei Tanaka 20 years before. ■

Statement on the Conflict Between China and Japan Over the Sovereignty of the Diaoyu Islands

In reference to the sovereignty of the Diaoyu Islands, whether from historical tradition or the recognized international agreements, from the literary works by Japanese writers over the past centuries, or the territorial maps published in Japan, these islands are a proven part of China in the same way as its sovereignty over Taiwan Island.

We are worried that doubts on this indisputable fact of China's sovereignty over the Diaoyu Island and the relative islets have aroused increasingly extreme conflicts and confrontations in the world.

China has been a peaceful nation since ancient times. The construction of the Great Wall of China is an expression of the desire to avoid invasions and confrontations. China follows a foreign policy that aims to safeguard world peace, promote common development and build a harmonious world with lasting peace and common prosperity. Chinese philosophers and writers, including Laozi, Confucius, Mencius, all preached integration in harmony and balance.

It even seems a little contradictory that the famous masterpiece by Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, talks more of defense than attack. It is in this context that any discussion or questions about the Diaoyu Islands, China always clarifies its sovereignty on a level of dialogue and friendship.

Nations have their own diplomatic ministries and institutions to deal with issues related to the world around them. China has added the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign

Countries (CPAFFC) to its diplomatic system, which is something not seen in other countries. For Chinese people, friendship is the foundation of any diplomatic relationship.

The Latin America and Caribbean Federation of Friendship with the People's Republic of China, like the Chinese people who advocate peace and integration, hereupon issued a statement that any doubts or questions about the sovereignty of the Diaoyu Islands should be resolved by way of negotiation and dialogue.

Latin American and Caribbean countries agree with the policy implemented by China under the leadership of President Hu Jintao, that is to insist on a path of a comprehensive and people-oriented development, and make technology development serve the progress and improvement of science, culture, society and ecosystem rather than destruction.

The Latin America and Caribbean Federation of Friendship with the People's Republic of China, together with the People's Republic of China, calls on all parties with an interest in the Diaoyu Islands to understand that these islands have been part of China since ancient times, and calls for friendly dialogues to resolve all disputes.

Ximena Barrientos Sanchez,
President of the Latin America and Caribbean Federation of Friendship with the People's Republic of China

(Translated from Chinese text)

International friendship-city activities are an important bridge for cities to enhance understanding and friendship and conduct exchanges and cooperation. We should adhere to the principle of mutual respect and win-win cooperation, carry forward traditional friendship, strengthen cultural and personnel exchanges and make joint efforts to create a better future for the cause. Lu Yongxiang, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, made this remark at the closing ceremony of the 2012 International Friendship Cities Conference.

Held in Chengdu, Sichuan Province from September 11 to 13, it attracted more than 720 representatives from 95 foreign cities (provinces or states) in 49 countries and 90 Chinese cities. State Councilor Dai Bingguo sent a congratulatory message.

The Chinese leaders present were Lu Yongxiang; Liu Qibao, Secretary of the CPC Sichuan Provincial Committee; Li Xiaolin, CPAFFC President; Wei Hong,



2012 China International Friendship Cities Conference Held in Chengdu

Our Staff Reporter

Executive Vice Governor of Sichuan Province; Huang Xinchu, Secretary of the CPC Chengdu Municipal Committee and Ge Honglin, Mayor of Chengdu. The chief foreign guests were Romano Prodi, former Italian Prime Minister and former President of the European Commission, Saloto Lupepauu Tuita, Princess of Tonga and Rosita Marie Meredith, wife of the Samoan Deputy Prime Minister.

Lu Yongxiang, Li Xiaolin, Romano Prodi and Lupepauu Tuita respectively spoke at the opening or closing ceremony.

The Conference was co-sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

(CPAFFC) and the China International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA) and hosted by the Chengdu Municipal People's Government. Under a theme of "Happy City, Green Life", 43 Chinese and foreign representatives delivered speeches and exchanged experiences on the five topics closely related to the future development of cities i.e. city internationalization strategy, city transformation and leap-forward development, city orientation and investment direction, urban emergency response system and disaster relief, and aging of the urban population.

In his message, Dai Bingguo pointed out that international friendship-city activities had become an im-

portant part of China's friendly contacts with other countries, giving impetus to the exchanges and cooperation between them and enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between their peoples. China's development over the past 30 years could be clearly attributed to the reform and opening up policy which would be unswervingly adhered to in future. (See full text on page7)

In her speech, Li Xiaolin said that, in the past four decades of development of international friendship-city work, a pattern of external contacts covering all dimensions, extensive area and multiple levels had taken shape. International friendship-city activities were now the principal channel for



Chinese localities and cities to promote exchanges with other countries and also played an irreplaceable role in China's socialist modernization drive. In the new period, it was vital to adhere to the principle of openness and inclusiveness, enhance mutual benefit and trust and seek sustainable development so as to establish a model of mutually beneficial cooperation and jointly promote the development of international friendship cities. (See full text on page8)

Wei Hong, on behalf of the CPC Sichuan Provincial Committee and the Provincial Government, extended his congratulations on the convocation of the conference and spoke about the international friendship-city work in Sichuan Province. So far, 62 pairs of international friendship-city relations and more than 40 friendly and cooperative ties had been established between Sichuan Province, its cities and counties and their foreign counterparts across the world, he said. Friendship cities carried out pragmatic fruitful coopera-

tion in the fields of economy, trade, investment, education, culture, science, technology, environmental protection, personnel training, etc., playing a significant role in social and economic development on both sides.

In his speech at the closing ceremony, Romano Prodi said China's achievements in urbanization were obvious to everyone. To share the experiences in urban construction in energy, transport, schools and sewage facilities would benefit the people of China and other countries.

To promote substantial exchanges and cooperation between friendship cities, the Conference set up the Friendship City Award for Exchanges and Cooperation with China. Eighty foreign provinces, states and cities received the award in recognition of their outstanding contributions to exchanges and cooperation in recent years. The Chinese International Friendship City Award for Exchanges and Cooperation was conferred on 38 Chinese provinces and

cities, and the International Friendship City Special Contribution Award to four Chinese cities. The CPAFFC conferred the title of Friendship Ambassador upon Mr. Avraham Avi Rabinovich from Israel.

A signing ceremony was held for the five pairs of newly-twinning friendship cities: Chengdu with Maastricht of the Netherlands, Chengdu with Horsens of Denmark, Sichuan Province with the Region de Champagne-Ardenne of France, Yuncheng of Shanxi Province with Marmande of France, and Baoshan of Yunnan Province with Tamar of Israel. So far, 1,911 pairs of friendship cities/provinces or states between China and 130 countries have emerged.

The China International Friendship Cities Conference is held every two years and this one was the third, after earlier meetings in Beijing and Shanghai. The next conference, in 2014, will be held in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. ■

Lu Yongxiang, Vice Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, presenting the Friendship City Award for Exchanges and Cooperation with China to the recipient city representatives



Jointly Write a New Chapter on Development of International Friendship Cities

—Speech by State Councilor Dai Bingguo at the Opening Ceremony

The 2012 International Friendship Cities Conference is now convening here in Chengdu. Firstly, 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, especially foreign friends coming from afar.

China's international friendship-city activities have been carried on for 39 years. In 1973, Tianjin of China and Kobe of Japan became the first pair of friendship cities, opening an important channel for the Chinese local governments to conduct external exchanges and cooperation. 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, 1,906 pairs of friendship cities have emerged between China and 130 other countries. International friendship-city activities have become an important component part of China's friendly contacts with other countries, giving impetus to the exchanges and cooperation between them and enhancing mutual understanding and friendship.

After over 30 years of efforts in reform and opening up, China's eco-

nomical strength has been markedly enhanced; its GDP has increased by a wide margin and its opening to the outside world has reached a new level. In 2011 China's GDP was 47.2 trillion yuan, an increase of 9.2 percent over the previous year; government revenue was 10.37 trillion yuan, an increase of 24.8 percent; and the country's grain output reached a record high of 571.21 million tons. China is the first country that has realized the United Nations Millennium Development Goals of "halving by 2015 the number of people living in abject poverty". China's development over the past 30 years is attributed to reform and opening up, and likewise its future development must also depend on reform and opening up. China will unswervingly continue to take this path full of vigor and vitality.

Currently, the international financial crisis is deepening and spreading. Global issues such as climate change, environmental degradation, natural disasters, and energy and food security are becoming more and more conspicuous. Regional turbulence and hotspots keep flaring up. All this has introduced factors of instability and uncertainties into the world economic development. Facing the complex and volatile international situation, all countries

should make concerted efforts, further strengthen friendly exchanges and expand and deepen their cooperation in various fields. The international friendship-city work as the main channel for deepening international cooperation will play a more outstanding role and cover more areas. Here, I would like to make the following three suggestions for the future development of international friendship cities:

First, to develop international friendship cities, we need to enhance friendship. Sound relations between states lie in amity between people. International friendship cities should treat each other with sincerity on equal terms, fostering the spirit of mutual respect, mutual understanding, mutual trust and tolerance; and actively promote exchanges and contacts among people of various social sectors so as to enhance mutual understanding and friendship among the people.

Second, we need to foster innovative thinking. At a new stage in the new century, in our international friendship-city work, we should progress with the times, make innovations, find and know well the new trends, grasp new laws and work out a new model of international friendship-city work under the new situation.

Speech by CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin At the Opening Ceremony



CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin

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'd like to express our profound respect to the state leaders present here, a sincere welcome to the delegates and guests representing various cities in China and other countries, and, finally, cordial greetings and heartfelt thanks to all the friends who have over the years made unremitting efforts to the development of the cause of international friendship cities.

After the successful convoca-

tion of the China International Friendship Cities Conference in Beijing and Shanghai in 2008 and 2010 respectively, today we are in Chengdu. At this conference with the theme of "Happy City, Green Life", we will discuss the issues closely related to the future development of cities, such as development strategies of city internationalization, city transformation and rapid development, city orientation and investment direction, etc. We hope that through this conference, friendship city ties between China and other countries will lead to strengthened dialogue and understanding, and will continue to

Third, we need to deepen cooperation. International friendship cities should continue to deepen practical cooperation in the fields of economic development, science and technology, public service, city management, environmental protection, etc. We should put the consensus reached by the two sides into practice and effectively make the fruits of development benefit the broad masses of people.

China is a big, responsible developing country ready to accept and

fulfill its obligation. The more China develops, the more opportunities and contributions it will present to the world. We will fully implement the 12th Five-Year Plan, accelerate the transformation of the pattern of economic development and carry out economic structural adjustments and upgrading to increase the sustainability of development. At the same time, China will unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development and a win-win strategy of opening up, and work together with the people of all

countries to build a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

China is willing to continue to work hard with all the delegates present here to push the friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation between Chinese and other countries' cities to a new height. Let us join hands and make concerted efforts to build a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

Finally, I wish the Conference full success. Thank you. ■

boost pragmatic and deeper cooperation to promote common development.

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 cooperation. Up to now, 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government (excluding Taiwan Province, and Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions) and 398 cities in China have become involved in 1,906 twinning arrangements with 434 provinces (states, prefectures, regions, etc.) and 1,320 cities in 130 countries on five continents. In the past four decades, following the principles of stressing friendship, mutual benefit and practical results, the relevant cities in China have actively strengthened friendly exchanges with counterparts in other countries. International friendship-city activities have expanded from initial bilateral cooperation to multilateral cooperation with the areas of cooperation extending from economy and trade to culture, education, urban construction, environmental protection and personnel exchanges. A pattern of external contacts featuring all dimensions, extensive area and multiple levels has taken shape. International friendship-city activities have become the principal channel for Chinese localities and cities to have exchanges with other countries and are playing an irreplaceable role in our socialist modernization drive.

On the basis of the experience summed up for the past four decades' development of international friendship cities, today we convene the confer-

ence again to review the achievements made in the past and plan the direction of their future growth so as to promote their new development. To this end, I think we should pay attention to the following three aspects in international friendship-city work in the new era.

First, in our efforts to promote the development of friendship cities, we should adhere to the principle of openness and inclusiveness. We should face the objective reality squarely that friendship cities in different countries are at different stages and levels of development, and have different interests and requirements for cooperation. In the process of promoting their development, we should stay open and inclusive, respect different history, cultures, religious beliefs and social systems and, with an open mind and broad heart, work hard to build a model of win-win cooperation. Only by doing so, can we build consensus and give full play to each other's advantages in promoting deeper cooperation, and ensure friendship cities in all countries to enjoy equal rights for development.

Second, we should enhance mutual benefit and mutual trust. Now the world has entered the era in which countries are more interdependent than ever before. The enhancement of mutual trust benefits all and leads to win-win progress. We should respect the interests of each country in efforts to develop friendship cities; and, on this basis, enhance friendship between each other, strengthen people-to-people exchanges, promote dialogue and cooperation in various fields and treat each other with sincerity so as to further enhance mutual understanding and trust. No matter what frictions may occur,

we should proceed from the viewpoint of win-win cooperation and common development and properly handle and resolve them.

Third, we should seek a sustainable development. Under the present situation of vigorous development of friendship cities, we should innovate the development model, take the road of development in a scientific way and formulate scientific and effective policies. We should make our policies more targeted, effective and sustainable. Meanwhile, we should integrate and utilize friendship-city resources and pay greater attention to the coordinated development of the quantity and quality of friendship cities so as to satisfy the urgent needs of present development while giving full consideration to future potential development. We must constantly improve the friendship cities' quality, effectiveness and capacity for sustainable development.

Along with the rapid development of China's urbanization, the friendship-city relationship, as one of the main channels for Chinese cities to open to the outside world, is playing an ever more important role. We hope this conference will provide a platform of mutual help and emulation for friends from different cities, localities and nations, and contribute to realizing rapid development of Chinese localities and cities, promoting common development of international friendship cities and building a harmonious world of common prosperity for humanity.

Let us join hands and make concerted efforts to achieve the great goals of the cause of international friendship cities and build a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity. ■

First Forum on China-Africa Local Government Cooperation Held in Beijing

Tang Ruimin

The First Forum on China-Africa Local Government Cooperation was held at the China National Convention Center from August 27 to 28. Vice Premier Li Keqiang spoke at the opening ceremony to over 1,700 local government officials and entrepreneurs from China and more than 40 African countries and related international organizations, while State Councilor Dai Bingguo addressed the closing ceremony.

Two important sub-forums, the China-Africa Local Government Officials Summit and China-Africa Economic Forum were also held.

The event was sponsored by the CPAFFC and United Cities and Local Governments Africa (UCLGA), hosted by the Chinese-African People's Friendship Association (CAPFA) and the Wenzhou Enterprises Chamber of Commerce in Beijing, and assisted by the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT).

Uganda Vice President Edward Ssekandi, Burundi First Vice President Therence Sinunguruza, former Togo Prime Minister Edem Kodjo and former Burundi First Vice President Yves Sahinguvu were among the attendees.

In his speech, Vice Premier Li said: "China and Africa are facing similar situations and common missions of development. Therefore, China-Africa cooperation which has a very constructive basis and is of a growing nature, is an effective way for the two sides to



Chinese Vice Premier Li Keqiang speaking at the China-Africa Local Government Cooperation Forum

work together to revitalize their economies and make progress in development. This, in turn, will attract international community to pay more attention to Africa and to developing countries. It is also conducive to common development and continuous prosperity of the world."

He stressed: "China is, as always, willing to strengthen local government cooperation with African countries, continuously expanding it in width and depth. In the next five years, China will make efforts to double the number of paired friendship cities and help Africa train more qualified personnel. The two sides should learn from each other and facilitate the exchange of visits between 1,000 local officials, entrepreneurs and personages of all circles."

Burundi First Vice President Therence Sinunguruza, in response, said that, given the current political and economic situation, especially the rapid development of industrialization and urbanization, decades of deep friendship between China and Africa was bound to continue prospering. The two sides should bring China-Africa cooperation down to the local government level, so as to promote the development of friendship cities through the joint efforts of local governments and Chinese and African entrepreneurs.

To date, China has established 111 pairs of friendship provinces/cities with 33 African countries, and this number will surely rise with the growth of China-Africa relations.

At the parallel China-Africa Local Government Summit, participants had in-depth discussions on subjects of mutual concern including natural resource exploitation, infrastructure construction, industrial restructuring, economic transformation, human resource development, etc. based on the theme of

Burundi First Vice President Therence Sinunguruza making a speech



“Enhance Local Cooperation and Promote Common Development”.

Representatives from Gansu Province briefed about the utilization of wind energy and solar energy; delegates from Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region briefed on the processing of sugar cane and cassava; while people from Ningxia talked about its rice cultivation projects in African countries. Meanwhile, Hawa Abdulrahman Ghasia, Minister of State in the Prime Minister’s Office (Regional Administration and Local Government) of Tanzania, Elaine Trepper, Mayor of Windhoek in Namibia, Beugre Robert Mambe, Governor of Abidjan of Cote d’Ivoire; Frederick Fidelis Gumo, Minister of Regional Development Authorities of Kenya, all expressed their opinions on Africa’s need for funding and the great demands for electric power development.

During the China-Africa Economic Forum, participants spoke about the prospects of Chinese enterprises’ investment in Africa, opportunities and challenges of China-Africa cooperation, and how to coordinate effectively the cooperation between local government and the non-governmental organizations.

Gao Xiqing, General Manager of the China Investment Corporation and Chi Jianxin, President of the China-Africa Development Fund, briefed on the situation of Chinese enterprises’ investment in infrastructure, housing construction and natural resources in African countries.

At the closing ceremony, State Councilor Dai Bingguo said: “Local government cooperation is an important component of China-Africa relations. It has played an irreplaceable

important role in expanding wide-ranging and in-depth cooperation, enhancing people-to-people friendship and deepening economic and trade cooperation between China and Africa. Especially now that more and more ordinary people are directly participating in exchanges and cooperation between China and Africa, they have increasing expectations for development of China-Africa relations. People of both sides can benefit more from such cooperation, and by taking part in it, they will help their countries to accomplish their overall objectives. Therefore, China-Africa local government cooperation has a promising prospect and is an area with great potential.”

In order to take an effectual step following the achievements of the Forum, the first Council of the Forum on China-Africa Local Government Cooperation was established at the closing ceremony. Uganda’s Vice President Edward Ssekandi was elected Director General of the Council on the African side, while the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Vice Chairman Abdul’ahat Abdulrixit was elected on the Chinese side. The Permanent Secretariat of the Forum on China-Africa Local Government Coop-

eration was set up in Beijing to handle routine duties and engage in ensuring that the Cooperation Forum became institutionalized.

The Forum will be held every two years. Moreover, the China-Africa Governors Dialogue, China-Africa City Development Forum, China-Africa Friendship Cities Conference, African Local Government Officials Training Program and various seminars on special topics will also be held regularly.

The China-Africa Business Summit will be held during the Forum to encourage enterprises of both sides to establish contact and carry out charity activities. The China-Africa Local Government Exchange Fund will be set up to carry out charity activities, finance the training programs of African local government officials, provide scholarships to African students studying in China, help Chinese and African enterprises find business opportunities, etc.

Various exchange mechanisms have been established since the China-Africa Cooperation Forum was first held in 2000. The holding of the First Forum on China-Africa Local Government Cooperation fills a gap in China-Africa exchanges. ■

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin and UCLG Africa President Taraiya Ole Kores signing a cooperation agreement



Fourth China-Arab Friendship Conference Held in Yinchuan

Zhang Yue



Chinese Vice Premier meeting with the delegates attending the Fourth China-Arab Friendship Conference

The Fourth China-Arab Friendship Conference (CAFC) with the theme of “promoting cooperation through friendship and pursuing development through exchanges”, jointly sponsored by the CPAFFC, the China-Arab Friendship Association (CAFA) and the League of Arab States (LAS) and hosted by the People’s Government of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, was held in Yinchuan from September 13 to 14, 2012.

Before the opening ceremony, Vice Premier Li Keqiang met with delegation heads of the Arab countries’ friendship-with-China organizations participating in the conference.

The opening ceremony was attended by leading members and council members of the CAFA; former Jordanian Prime Minister Abd Al-Salam Al-Majali; delegations of the Federation of

Arab-China Friendship Associations (FACFA), the LAS, friendship-with-China organizations of 17 Arab countries; and diplomatic envoys of some Arab countries in China, as well as Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Chairman Wang Zhengwei, leading officials of relevant departments of the Autonomous Region, representatives of enterprises and media, totaling over 100 people.

CAFA Vice President Chen Jianguo, former Jordanian Prime Minister Abd Al-Salam Al-Majali, Chairman Wang Zhengwei, FACFA Secretary General Ahmed Abdel-Rahman Mohamed, Libya-China Friendship Association President Adel Elhamasi all spoke at the opening ceremony. Ambassador Wu Chunhua, in charge of China-Arab Forum Affairs of the Foreign Ministry, and Ahmed Mustafa Hafez, Charge d’Affaire of the LAS Representative Office in Beijing respectively read out the messages of congratulations from Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and the Secretary General of the LAS.

Two plenary sessions were held. CAFA Secretary General Hu Jianhuai and FACFA Secretary General Ahmed Abdel-Rahman respectively made re-

ports on their associations’ work in the past two years. The participants discussed how to improve channels for people-to-people friendly exchanges in various fields to promote smooth development of relations under a new situation, as well as how to further deepen and consolidate the conference mechanism and enrich its contents.

The Fourth China-Arab Friendship Conference Declaration and the Action Plan of Exchanges between China and Arab Countries for 2012-2014 were approved during the meeting.

During breaks, Arab delegations attended the opening ceremony of the China-Arab Economic and Trade Forum and the 2012 China (Yinchuan) International Muslim Entrepreneurs Summit, watched a performance organized by the People’s Government of the Autonomous Region and visited the China Hui Culture Park and Shahu (Sand Lake) scenic area.

Both Sides Attach Great Importance to the Conference

It was the first time the CAFC was held in China and both sides attached great importance to this. On the Arab side, more than 40 representatives of FACFA, LAS, and friendship-with-China organizations of 17 Arab countries, namely, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria,

Sudan, Iraq, Oman, Palestine, Comoros, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Mauritania and Yemen attended the conference. Compared with the previous three conferences, this was best attended.

In his meeting with the heads of the delegations of the friendship-with-China organizations of Arab countries, Vice Premier Li said friendly ties between China and Arab countries had a long history. More than 2,000 years ago, the ancient Silk Road linked the people of both sides. In recent years, China-Arab relations had been developing smoothly, establishing a strategic cooperative relationship based on comprehensive cooperation and common development that now faced new opportunities.

China was ready to work together with Arab countries to push forward a strategic cooperative relationship to benefit the people of both sides. He believed the CAFC would play its due role as a bridge in deepening China-Arab cooperation and promoting common development.

Former Jordanian Prime Minister Al-Majali extended his congratulations on the convening of the conference. China was an important cooperation partner of Jordan, he said. The trade

volume between them now reached over US\$2 bn. He hoped cooperation could be further strengthened. He proposed the two sides should jointly set up a foundation to support the start-up of small and medium-sized business and a training center to help entrepreneurs of both sides to conduct cooperation.

Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Chairman Wang Zhengwei described the CAFC as an important platform for both China and Arab countries to enhance mutual understanding and carry out collective dialogue and practical cooperation. Ningxia had longstanding cultural, geographic and industrial superiorities in carrying out cooperation with the Arab world. The conference in Ningxia gave Arab friends a chance to learn more about the region. He hoped the CAFC platform would be further developed, enriched and deepened.

FACFA Secretary General Ahmed Abdel-Rahman expressed his appreciation to the Chinese side for the efforts in preparing the conference and conveyed the congratulations of the Sudanese Foreign Minister. The Chinese people were good brothers of the Arab people, he said. Despite the radical changes in the international and regional situation, the Arab people had con-

tinued to develop friendly cooperative relations with China. He also hoped China would take a more proactive stance on such issues as the Palestine issue.

In their messages of congratulations, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and LAS Secretary General Nabil El-Araby stressed the important role played by the CAFC in promoting people-to-people friendly relations.

Exchange Views Extensively

At the plenary sessions, CAFA Vice Presidents Wu Sike and Liu Zhiming respectively spoke on China-Arab political relations and economic and trade exchanges. Zhang Jianzhong, CAFA council member representing business circles, briefed about the Beijing Crescent Great Wall Investment Management Co. Ltd. Ma Lirong, CAFA council member and Deputy Director of the Middle East Studies Institute under the Shanghai International Studies University, talked about the model of exchanges between the peoples of China and Arab countries in history. Representatives of Arab friendship-with-China organizations gave brief accounts of the friendly exchanges by their associations in the past two years, and their ideas and suggestions for future work.

The opening session of the conference



President of the Yemen-China Friendship Association (YCFA) Jamal Al-Khawlani said, the YCFA had always supported China's stance on the Diaoyu Islands and the South China Sea issue. Vice President of the Comoros-China Friendship Association (CCFA) Said Moustoifa said Taiwan was an inalienable part of China. Vice President of the Egypt-China Friendship Association (ECFA) Ahmed Waly said, the Diaoyu Islands were Chinese territory, and the ECFA, being concerned about the situation, was keeping close contacts with the Chinese Embassy in Egypt, and helping dispel rumors. President of the Palestine-China Friendship Association (PCFA) Adnan Samara said the PCFA had recently established a Political Committee and an Information Committee with the aim of strengthening political understanding with China, publicizing China's support for the just cause of the Palestinian people and legitimacy of China's exercise of sovereignty over the concerned islands and safeguarding of territory integrity, and disseminating information about China and its important events. President of the Mauritania-China Friendship Association (MCFA) Taki Ould Sidi said China and Arab coun-

tries should strengthen media cooperation to lessen the effects of negative publicity by the Western media.

Foreign Participants Place Importance on Cultural and Tourist Cooperation with China

FACFA Secretary General Ahmed Abdel-Rahman said the Arab side attached great importance to strengthening cultural relations with China and encouraged tourist cooperation.

In his report entitled "Role of Chinese and Arab Friendship Organizations in Promoting Cultural Exchanges", President Massoud Daher of the Lebanese-Chinese League for Friendship and Cooperation suggested that a supreme council of Arab-China cultural exchanges and an Arab-China translation organization be set up; universities of both sides should include each other's cultural courses in their curriculum and conduct joint research; the two sides should also cooperate in holding an Arab-China culture week and academic seminars, show each other's films, publish each other's books, exchange cultural and performing arts delegations, etc.

Leading officials of the friendship-with-China organizations of Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Algeria and Sudan said the Chinese language was now taught in some schools of their countries. The Government of the United Arab Emirates has set up the Shiekh

Zayed Book Award to recognize personages making an outstanding contribution in the field of translation. The leading official of the Oman-China Friendship Association (OCFA) present said Oman was planning to compile an Arab-Chinese Dictionary. The leading official of the PCFA described how resources were being mobilized to set up an institute of Chinese culture to include the teaching of the Chinese language. The members of the CCFA hoped to learn more about Chinese culture and suggested that social, cultural, youth and tourist exchanges should be strengthened, particularly in teaching of the Chinese language and culture in senior middle schools and institutions of higher learning in Arab countries. Cooperation in media and art should also be increased.

Cooperative Relations with Newly-founded Kuwait-China Friendship Association Established

Yousef Al-Amiri, President of the Kuwait House for National Works, talked about the Kuwait-China Friendship Association (KCFA) founded in August 2012 with himself as President. Members were drawn from the elites from various social sectors. He said his association hoped to sign an agreement of cooperation with CAFA, and work was begun immediately on drafting such a document. The Agreement on Cooperation between the China-Arab Friendship Association and the Kuwait-China Friendship Association was signed at the closing ceremony. The KCFA is the fourth friendship-with-China organization among Gulf states after Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman. ■

The China-Arab Friendship Association and the Kuwait-China Friendship Association signing a cooperation agreement



Seventh Conference on China-ASEAN People-to-People Friendship Organizations

Zhan Xiushuang

The Seventh Conference on China-ASEAN People-to-People Friendship Organizations, with the theme of “Solidarity, Friendship, Cooperation, Development”, co-sponsored by the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations (VUFO) and the Vietnam-China Friendship Association (VCFA) was held in Hanoi from August 16 to 17. The delegation of China-ASEAN Association led by President Gu Xiulian, and representatives of the people-to-people friendship organizations of the 10 ASEAN countries made up the approximately 200 people attending the conference.

During the conference, various activities including meetings between friendship organizations, Smart City Exhibition, China-ASEAN Forum on Labor Force and Employment, China-ASEAN Forum on Corporate Culture and China-ASEAN Youth Dance Exhibition were held. At the conference the 2012-2013 China-ASEAN People-to-People Friendship Organizations’ Cooperation Plan was approved and the venue of the 2013 conference in the Philippines in November was decided.

Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Vice Chairwoman of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, met the delegates. Nguyen Thien Nhan, Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister, attended the opening ceremony and spoke. Nguyen Fang Ah, Vietnamese Vice Foreign Minister, attended the



Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Vice Chairwoman of Vietnam’s National Assembly, meeting with the delegates to the conference

banquet in celebration of the successful convening of the conference. Vu Xuan Hong, Chairman of the VUFO, participated in all activities of the conference.

Conference Highly Appraised by Vietnamese Leaders

Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, meeting delegates on the afternoon of August 17, extended her congratulations on the successful convening of the conference and spoke highly of the contributions it had already made in promoting people-to-people exchanges. China and ASEAN were close neighbors with a long history of friendly relations. The year 2012 marked the 21st anniversary of the initiation of dialogue between China and ASEAN. Vietnam would work

to promote bilateral relations and peace and common development between ASEAN and China.

She affirmed the important role played by friendship organizations of various countries in promoting people-to-people cooperation and said that she would continue to work for promoting multi-faceted cooperation in various fields between political parties, governments and people of ASEAN and China and encourage people-to-people friendship organizations to play a bigger role as a bridge in boosting exchanges, cooperation and development in future.

In his speech at the opening ceremony, Nguyen Thien Nhan affirmed the positive role played by the conference. The ASEAN-China relationship

was one of the most effective and dynamic relationships between the regional bloc and its foreign partners. To strengthen all-sided and constructive ASEAN-China relationship was conducive to peace and prosperity of the region. Vietnam would continue to try, together with other ASEAN countries and China, to promote relations, friendship and cooperation between the two sides in all areas.

Gu Xiulian expressed her thanks to the Vietnamese leaders for meeting the delegation. China puts its relationship with neighboring countries, including those of ASEAN, in an important position in its ties with other countries and was willing to closely cooperate with ASEAN countries, continue to enhance neighborliness and mutual trust, deepen pragmatic cooperation, keep up the good momentum of all-round development of the bilateral strategic partnership, and jointly promote sustained healthy development to further benefit the people of various countries. She hoped that Vietnamese government would continue its concern for and support of the people-to-people cooperation between China and ASEAN.

People-to-People Friendly Cooperation Discussed

The Conference on China-ASEAN People-to-People Friendship Organizations, as the 10+1 China-ASEAN nongovernmental consultation mechanism held once a year in rotation in China and ASEAN countries, has formed a relatively fixed mode of cooperation. At this conference, leaders of friendship organizations of various countries briefed on the exchange activities they had carried out in the past year, stressing that they could learn

from each other in organizing activities and the exchange of experiences was significant in expanding communications among them.

Gu Xiulian said the success of previous conferences had boosted exchanges and cooperation between China and ASEAN. The conference had become a strong platform for the people-to-people friendship organizations of China and ASEAN countries to promote friendship and development. It was an important component of China's efforts to carry out all-round cooperation with ASEAN, playing an active role in accelerating regional cooperation among nongovernmental organizations. Gu proposed to hold a China-ASEAN youth summer camp at an appropriate time in China in 2013. Her proposal received a positive response.

CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zuoku addressed the conference, pointing out that bilateral activities between friendship organizations of China and ASEAN countries had now become very active. With a view to promoting further innovation, more multilateral activities ought to be planned such as the China-ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Start-up Forum held in Liuzhou, China; China-ASEAN Youth Dance Exhibition held during the present and previous conferences, etc., so as to further promote exchanges and cooperation.

The participants of the conference realized that as the cooperation between China and ASEAN is becoming closer and extending to more fields, the new situation calls for people-to-people friendship organizations to play a more active role. Tan Kah Hock, Secretary General of the Brunei-China Friendship Association, said friendship orga-

nizations of various countries should make full use of the opportunity provided by the China-ASEAN Expo held in Nanning annually, and proposed that economic and trade activities be held during the Expo at an appropriate time every year.

Abdul Majid, President of the Malaysia-China Friendship Association, expressed his great interest in holding a China-ASEAN youth summer camp, and planned to discuss the matter in detail during his visit to China in the second half of 2012. VUFO Chairman Vu Xuan Hong said such activities as the China-Vietnam Border Friendship Gala, the Chinese and Vietnamese People Friendship Gala, and the Chinese and Vietnamese People's Forum had achieved good results. He believed that, with the concerted efforts of all the friendship organizations, the 2012-2013 Cooperation Plan would surely be effectively implemented and contribute to strengthening friendship.

Representatives of friendship organizations of other countries also made proposals on exchanges and cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, culture, etc.

Smart City Exhibition, Forums, Dance Exhibition Held to Promote Pragmatic Cooperation

At the Smart City Exhibition, representatives from the China Huateng Industry Co. Ltd. briefed participants on schemes of urban development, infrastructure construction, traffic monitor and control. His briefing was well received. At the Forum on Labor Force and Employment, Hua Fuzhou, President of the China Association for Labor Studies (CALs), made a keynote speech. Experts in labor studies and

entrepreneurs from Fujian and Guangdong invited by the CALS briefed participants about China's practice and experience in human resources development, training and employment.

Representatives of the Vietnamese Ministry of Labor, Vietnam Cooperative Alliance, and enterprises also spoke and exchanged views and experiences with participants of other countries at the forum. At the Forum on Corporate Culture presided over by Pham Gia Tuc, Vice President of the VCFA and Vice Chairman of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, entrepreneurs from China, Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore discussed how to further build a corporate culture.

Li Xuxiang, Director of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Liuzhou Municipal Government, briefed on the Third China-ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Start-up Forum to be held in Liuzhou in November; Zhang Yan, General Manager of the Qingdao Rubber Valley Group, briefed about the development of the Qingdao Rubber Industrial Park; and Dang Nan, Vice President of China Huateng Industry Co. Ltd., gave a briefing about the building of corporate culture.

The China-ASEAN Youth Dance Exhibition was held at the Hanoi Art Center on the evening of August 16. About 200 youths from China, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam gave a performance with distinct national cultures and features. Leaders of the Bureau of International Cooperation of the Vietnamese Ministry of Culture watched the performance together with the representatives of various countries. ■

Another Milestone in Friendship with China

R. Jinith de Silva (Sri Lanka)

It was a joyous moment with hopes for a new approach in the age old relations between Sri Lanka and China. In the morning hours of 19th September 2012, something unprecedented was happening around the National Art Gallery in Colombo, Sri Lanka. From 9:30 onwards we noticed people of all walks of life were pouring enthusiastically into the Art Gallery and by 10:00 the Art Gallery was packed with young student painters and fans of arts and culture.

The walls of the Art Gallery were decorated with posters. Hung on the left side wall were paintings by little painters from Suining County of Jiangsu Province, China, and on the right side wall paintings by students of Devi Balika School, Colombo. This event was historic and wonderful as these works fully reflected children's unique observation of the world and their yearning for good life.

The painting exhibition of Chinese and Sri Lankan children was ceremonially opened at 10:00 am. The chief guest of the occasion was Mr. Ren Faqiang, Political Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Sri Lanka, while Secretary General of the Jiangsu People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Mr. Hu Haiou and Deputy Head of Suining County Mr. Mao Xiaoquan graced the occasion by their presence.

This exhibition was jointly orga-

nized by the Sri Lanka China Society and the JPAFFC in collaboration with the People's Government of Suining County and Devi Balika School, Colombo. As a result of the untiring and enthusiastic efforts of the members of the Sri Lanka China Society, Sri Lankans were able to witness the artistic skills and talents of little children of China and Sri Lanka. It is believed that art enlightens heart and soul and culture ushers in communications. In that sense the paintings displayed at this exhibition fully embodied the children's unique way of thinking and their brilliant imagination.

The Sri Lanka China Society, the main organizer of this grand artistic show achieved its intended goal to promote in depth communication between our two people and to lay a solid foundation for the enduring friendship between descendants of our two countries. This attempt opened a new chapter in relations between our two countries and launched an initiative to promote educational cooperation between the children of the two countries. The visit of the Jiangsu Province goodwill delegation to Devi Balika School to appreciate its contribution to the success of the exhibition would be a landmark on the friendship path between the youths of both countries.

The author is Secretary of the Sri Lanka China Society.

Vice President Xi Jinping Attends Reception Marking 20th Anniversary of China-ROK Diplomatic Relations

Sun Xueqing



Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping cutting the cake at the reception in celebration of the 20th anniversary of China-ROK diplomatic ties

A reception to mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of China-ROK diplomatic relations, jointly organized by the CPAFFC and the Embassy of the ROK in China, was held in Beijing on the evening of August 31, 2012. Vice President Xi Jinping, attended the reception and unveiling ceremony of commemorative books and envelopes, cut a celebration cake and enjoyed an excellent performance with distinctive national features with the Chinese and Korean guests in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin,

speaking at the reception, noted that it was not only the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations but also the Year of China-ROK Friendly Exchanges, and the presence of Vice President Xi Jinping showed the great importance the Chinese Government attaches to developing a good-neighborly relationship.

It was the common wish of both peoples to consolidate and develop friendly relations. The CPAFFC would like to make joint efforts with friends on the ROK side to promote the continuous development of such good-neighborly and cooperative relations.

Ambassador Lee Kyu-hyung, in his response, expressed his appreciation of Vice President Xi Jinping's presence. He highly rated the 20 years of achievements since the establishment of diplomatic relations and hoped the two countries could continue to be good neighbors forever, working to create a peace-sharing, stable and prosperous future.

Over 400 people attended the reception. Among them were principal leaders of various ministries of China, including Honorary President Luo Hao-cai of the China-ROK Friendship Association, Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, Minister Wang Jiarui of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, Chairman Li Zhaoxing of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, Director Li Haifeng of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, First Secretary Lu Hao of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, as well as friendly personages from various circles in China and the ROK, foreign envoys to China and entrepreneurs.

Xi Jinping Meets Representatives of China- Korea Expert Joint Research Project

Before the reception, Vice President Xi had a cordial meeting with rep-

representatives of the China-Korea Expert Joint Research Project and had his picture taken with them, along with Luo Haocai, Yang Jiechi, Li Zhaoxing, Li Xiaolin and Feng Zuoku.

President Hu Jintao agreed with President Lee Myung-bak on carrying out China-ROK experts' joint research during his visit to the ROK in 2008. The CPAFFC was entrusted to undertake the project by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the visit of Premier Wen Jiabao to the ROK in 2010, an agreement was reached with President Lee Myung-bak to carry out the second round of joint research, which has now been completed.

ROK's Positive Response to Vice President's Presence

Ambassador Lee Kyu-hyung commented that Vice President Xi's presence at the reception broke the usual diplomatic practice and showed the great importance China attached to its relations with the ROK.

The ROK members of the Joint Research Project, who were cordially received by the Vice President, felt deeply inspired and encouraged.

Suh Jin-young, Head of the group of Korean experts, said the meeting was not only a perfect conclusion to the second round of joint research, but also delivered a strong message of friendship to the ROK. ■

“Yingli Cup” China-Germany Friendly Football Match Held in Beijing

Lu Hongwei

On the evening of July 24, the “Yingli Cup” China-Germany Friendly Football Match was held in the Workers Stadium in Beijing. The home team was Football Club (FC) Beijing Guo'an and the visit team FC Bayern Munich. The CPAFFC, as the honorary organizer, participated in the preparation for the match, one of a series of activities celebrating the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Germany.

Bayern Munich is one of the most famous football clubs in Germany, having won 22 championships of German Bundesliga and four European Champions League title. Beijing Guo'an won the China Football Association Super League title in 2009.

Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, Chairman of FC Bayern Munich and former German football star, said before the match that the visit to China was very important to the club, which would send its best players and take the match seriously, in order not to disappoint local fans.

The presence of Mario Gomez, Arjen Robben, Franck Ribery, Tomas Muller and other big names attracted not only a large number of Chinese football fans, but also lots of Germans, including the former German Chancellor Gerhardt Schroeder, who was visiting Beijing at the time, and Dr. Michael Schaefer, the

German Ambassador to China, who had been in Shanghai on business, made a special trip in order to watch the match.

CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zukuo watched the match, and presented the Trophy to the winning team Bayern Munich on behalf of the organizers after their thrilling 6-0 victory.

The match was one of the great events of China-Germany exchanges in culture and sports attracting much attention. The main portals such as Sohu, NetEase, Sina, Xinhuanet, and major newspapers all reported the match that was broadcast live by the Sports Channel of China Central Television.

The match was arranged and sponsored by Yingli Green Energy Holding Company Limited, China, the official senior partner of FC Bayern Munich. Yingli Green Energy is one of the most famous Chinese manufacturers of solar products which was a sponsor of World Cup 2010 in South Africa and has become a sponsor of World Cup 2014 in Brazil. ■



CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin Heads 7th *Say It As It Is* Delegation to the U.S.

Sun Tao

In interpersonal communication, to “tell it like it is”, and listen to others sincerely, is simple yet most admired. This is also applicable to the State-level diplomatic intercourse. The project of *Say It As It Is* came into being as the times required, and has gradually developed into a brand-project in people-to-people diplomacy with the United States. It has helped build a bridge of communication between the Chinese people from all walks of life and US congressmen and given both sides chances to talk about and listen to true stories from their respective countries.

On August 1st, 2012, the 7th *Say It As It Is* delegation, composed of Chinese entrepreneurs of private sector involving real estate, development and

construction of new rural areas, steel trade and cultural industry and led by CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin, visited Washington D.C.

They paid an official call on six US congressmen, namely Lou Barletta (Republican, Pennsylvania), Rob Bishop (Republican, Utah), Ken Calvert (Republican, California), Ben Chandler (Democrat, Kentucky), John Olver (Democrat, Massachusetts) and Rick Larsen (Democrat, Washington State). The two sides had an in-depth and candid dialogue on the China-US bilateral relationship, economic and trade cooperation and cultural exchanges.

Li Xiaolin pointed out that acknowledgement and understanding of each other’s social system, cultural tradition and customs by both Chinese

and Americans provided a solid foundation for the development of friendly relations. The Chinese people hoped to see a healthy and steady development of the China-US relationship and better economic and trade cooperation and cultural and personnel exchanges between the two countries.

There were many people in the US Federal Government and Congress who appeared to have a bias against China and often used such issues as “China threat”, human rights, trade imbalance, RMB exchange rate, etc. to damage the bilateral relationship, she said.

The entrepreneurs in the delegation by relating their personal experience in setting up their businesses presented a picture of the development course of China’s private enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises so as to let the US congressmen have a better knowledge and understanding of China’s economic achievements and its market policy and environment.

Only by maintaining a strong, stable bilateral relationship, could China and the United States conduct normal bilateral economic and trade cooperation, gradually expanding it and achieving win-win results, they said.

All the congressmen the delegation met said that the US-China relationship was the most important bilateral relationship in the world and that it

The delegation with Congressman Ken Calvert in his office at Capitol Hill



was very important to the future development of the world that the two countries maintained good cooperation. They told the delegation that the United States was a very open country and welcomed investments from China.

In terms of economic development, the United States and China, the two largest economies in the world, would either succeed together, or suffer failure together. Many Americans have already fully realized it. As to the problems existing in the US-China relationship, the congressmen said, China was often the victim of US domestic politics.

In the election campaign, American politicians need some targets to censure and some external issues to shift voters' focus from domestic issues. The US and Chinese government officials often cooperate well on concrete policies and measures; but when touching upon political propaganda, China becomes the target of censure by the United States.

Many Americans can look upon China's rapid progress in an objective and impartial way. However, influenced by US political propaganda, there are still some Americans who do not look on China's development in such a positive way.

By telling the truth and being frank and open, the *Say It As It Is* delegation, proved worthy of its name, performed its duty veritably. ■

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin Attends NEGC Annual Meeting

Sun Tao

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin and Liu Guozhong, Executive Vice Governor of Heilongjiang Province, were invited to attend the annual meeting of the US New England Governors' Conference (NEGC) held in Burlington, Vermont from July 29 to 30, 2012.

President Li told the meeting that exchanges between local governments of the two countries were a component part of the efforts to build a China-US cooperative partnership and considered very important by the governments of both countries. The China-US Governors Forum carried the hope of consolidating the basis of the friendly relations between the two countries and enriching the forms and contents of bilateral cooperation. It provided a good platform for Chinese provinces and US states to strengthen cooperation in all fields.

The participation in the NEGC annual meeting by a Chinese delegation was a continuation of the China-US Governors Forum and also an attempt to extend the function of this mechanism to the regional level.

Vice Governor Liu Guozhong gave a briefing about his province's key features, natural resources, competitive industries, foreign economic and trade cooperation, and economic and social development. He expressed willingness to expand cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, agriculture, animal husbandry, education and tourism between Heilongjiang Province and the New

England states on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual support of relative advantages.

Peter Shumlin, Governor of Vermont, on behalf of the New England states, expressed his warm welcome to the Chinese delegation, saying its participation was conducive to strengthening mutual understanding with Chinese provinces like Heilongjiang and furthering exchanges and cooperation at the local government level.

During the meeting Li Xiaolin and Liu Guozhong had discussions separately with Governor Shumlin, Governor Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut, Governor Lincoln D. Chafee of Rhode Island, and Governor Deval L. Patrick of Massachusetts.

The two sides briefed on their relative economic development and prioritized industries and explored fields of future cooperation.

At the high-level policy and business meeting specially organized by the Vermont State Government for the Chinese delegation and entrepreneurs, local officials briefed on investment and immigration policy, and development of agriculture, smart power grids and environmental protection.

The Chinese side asked in detail about Vermont's policy in these areas, and its successful experience and effective practice in agriculture, genetically modified food, environmental protection and urban garbage disposal, and explored opportunities for future bilateral cooperation. ■

Shaanxi Song and Dance Troupe's Performance Tour in Japan

Gao Hui

Sixty-eight performances in 71 days covering 39 cities — that was the incredible achievement of a 50-member Shaanxi Song and Dance Troupe that toured Japan from May 10 to July 15. An audience totaling 90,000 person-times enthusiastically watched the troupe perform the epic song and dance drama *Moon Over Chang'an*.

The troupe was sent by the CPAFFC at the invitation of the Min-On Concert Association of Japan. Diplomats of the Chinese Embassy and consulates in Japan, ambassadors of 12 foreign countries and diplomats from the embassies of 24 foreign countries, eight governors of Japanese prefectures, and mayors, assemblymen and celebrities of various social circles in more than 10 cities watched the performances. Japanese media gave the tour extensive coverage with high praise.

The Shaanxi Song and Dance Troupe and the Min-On Concert Association of Japan worked together for two years to create the epic Tang Dynasty music and dance drama so that it could become one of the important activities of people-to-people friendly exchanges. It is based on the life of Nakamaro Abeno, a noted Japanese



The troupe performing in Japan

scholar studying in China in the Tang Dynasty 1,300 years ago, and covers a period of 50 years. It uses a combination of music, dance, poetry recitation and singing, to portray the prosperous scene of culture and art in the high period of the Tang Dynasty, while at the same time demonstrating the longstanding and well-established traditional friendship between the two countries and expressing the aspiration of the two peoples for everlasting friendship.

During the tour, important Japanese political figures, celebrities, and friendly personages of various localities watched the performance and expressed their deep admiration for traditional Chinese art and its part in promoting friendship in the modern world.

Since the Min-On Concert Association began to invite Chinese performing art troupes to visit Japan in 1975, a model of cultural exchanges has emerged in which the CPAFFC

annually sends first-class performing art troupes to Japan. Up to now, Chinese national and local art troupes of different kinds have toured 47 Japanese prefectures, giving 1,600 performances with a cumulative audience of over three million person-times.

Through joint efforts by the two sides to create artistic refinement in *Moon Over Chang'an*, the performance has emerged as one with a distinct theme and a clear scenario that is easy to be understood and be accepted by the Japanese audience. Such cooperation known as “Chinese stories told in a way foreigners can understand” is a new experiment after years of experience in cooperating with foreign friends and striving to advance with the times so as to make a breakthrough in cultural exchanges with other countries.

At the end of the dance drama, the hero Nakamaro Abeno sang an oft-quoted and widely loved Japanese *waka* in both Japanese and Chinese:

Raising head, I look at the sky in the East,

My thoughts fly back to Nara;

Standing at the top of Sanli Mountain,

I guess a bright moon is round again.

Expressing his profound feeling of homesickness, the poet deeply impressed and moved the audience. Such sympathy that transcended language barriers and national boundaries ensured that Sino-Japanese friendship took deep roots in the hearts of all.

During the performance tour, the Min-On Concert Association specially organized members of the Youth Department of Soka Gakkai's Central

Region Branch for a get-together party with the performers of the Shaanxi Song and Dance Troupe. Zhang Liguo, Chinese Consul General in Nagoya, attended the party after watching the performance and made a speech in which he encouraged the youth of the two countries to strengthen exchanges and enhance mutual understanding.

During the interval of the performance tour in Shikoku, the Min-On Concert Association organized the members of the Chinese delegation to visit an ashram of Soka Gakkai and have a get-together with primary and middle school students of its “Future Department”.

When the members of the Chinese delegation arrived, they were warmly welcomed by about a hundred elementary and secondary students holding Chinese national flags. The warm atmosphere was really touching. Friendly interaction between Chinese and Japanese youth left a deep

impression on both sides.

Daisaku Ikeda, Honorary President of Soka Gakkai, wrote a poem for the performance:

Amid melodious songs and graceful dances,

The Min-On carries on the Silk Road tradition.

Where is the origin of Japanese culture?

I recall the ships sent to China on the heavy seas in the remote Tang Dynasty.

This performance tour with its unique cultural charm has become a bridge linking the hearts of the two peoples and played an important role in consolidating people-to-people friendship between the two countries in the particular period when China-Japan relationship faces difficulty. The Japanese local governments, media, friendship-with-China organizations and the Chinese Embassy in Japan all gave positive comments on it. ■

The troupe at the reception in Tokyo



Chinese Peking Opera Troupe Visits France

Xing Shuhua

At the invitation of the Municipal Government of Marmande, France and the Festival de Sylvanes, a Chinese Peking Opera troupe, drawn mainly from the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts and sent by the CPAFFC, visited France from August 19 to 31 to introduce the quintessence of Chinese culture through their performances.

An additional purpose was to promote exchanges between the two countries in theatrical arts and culture, thus enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between them.

Marmande is located in the southwestern Aquitaine Region. Its mayor, Gerard Gouzes, has been working hard to promote cooperation between French and Chinese local governments in the economic, trade and cultural areas.

The Festival de Sylvanes is a well-known art festival in southern France that aims to promote exchanges and dialogue between different cultures and civilizations through performances of excellent operas, poems, music and dance.

The Chinese troupe's visit came shortly after a change in the French organization handling such international exchanges. The French Agency for the Development of International Relations and Cooperation in Culture and Economy (ADRICCE) was founded in June 2012, succeeding the European Cultural Action Institute (IEAC) that actively carried out



Answering a curtain call at the end of a performance

exchanges of personnel and delegations with China and was one of the channels the CPAFFC had used to conduct long-term cooperation with France with good results. There is every expectation that ADRICCE will carry on this fine work in helping to promote economic and trade exchanges and cooperation of local governments, in addition to continuing with cultural exchanges.

With the help and direct involvement of Alain Joufferay, Chairman of ADRICCE, the Chinese troupe's visit was a great success.

Peking Opera Performance Helps to Enhance French People's Understanding of China

The Peking Opera troupe visited five cities in southern France, where it gave two open classes, two open rehearsals and four performances for

a total audience of over 2,000 people. Traditional classic Peking Opera pieces such as *The Defeat of Xiangyu—the King of Chu*, *The Trident Road* and *The Autumn River* were well received.

After watching the performance, Mayor Gerard Gouzes expressed his thanks to the troupe for giving the French audience such wonderful performances that had helped them to appreciate and understand the profound Chinese history and culture. Amid widespread instability in the world, this art treasure transcending geographical and language barriers enabled people to sit down and try to understand another country and its culture, while also enhancing friendship between the two countries.

Before the Chinese troupe ended its visit, Michel-Francois Wolkwicki, Director of the Festival de Sylvanes,

said that the performances, so different from Western opera, was an eye-opening experience for the French people.

He hoped that, in future, there would be more exchanges and communications so as to shorten the distance between the two peoples. He expressed his hope of visiting China early next year to discuss with the Chinese side future cultural exchanges between the two countries.

Expand Cooperation Between CPAFFC and ADRICCE

During the troupe's stay in France, the ADRICCE assumed responsibility for liaison and coordination and accompanied the troupe throughout their stay.

During the tour, CPAFFC delegates had discussions with the ADRICCE on further cooperation between Chinese and French localities.

Conques, the last city visited by the troupe, is reputed as the "most beautiful village in France". Its well-preserved old city town and new city proper with rich cultural ambience attract millions of tourists from across Europe every summer, and enjoy wide regional fame.

The mayor of Conques, upon learning that the CPAFFC oversees the work of establishing and developing friendship-city relations between China and other countries, immediately expressed his hope that the CPAFFC and the ADRICCE would help him find a Chinese counterpart to establish friendship-city ties for exchanges and cooperation in various fields. ■

Beautiful Friendship and Happiness Accompanied

—Mianyang Qiang Song and Dance Troupe Visits ROK

Chuan You

Gangneung is a city of some 230,000 people in Gangwon-do, on the east coast of the Republic of Korea popular as a tourist site for viewing the sunrise. It also has its annual "Danoje Festival", an event that, since 2005, has always had a strong presence of Chinese performers from Sichuan Province.

In 2012, it was the turn of a 21-member delegation of the Qiang Song and Dance Troupe of the Mianyang Art College of the Sichuan Conservatory of Music to accept an in-

itation from the Yulgok Society to attend the festival under the sponsorship of the Sichuan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (SIFA).

During the Sixth China Flower Expo in 2005, SIFA and the Yulgok Society and its Education Institute established friendly relations of exchanges and cooperation. Since then, the two sides have exchanged visits and conducted substantial exchanges in the fields of art, academy and education to deepen mutual understand-



ing and friendship.

The Sichuan delegation this time was composed of students and teachers of the dance and music specialties of Mianyang Art College. The Troupe's art director Lin Hai choreographed the whole performance based on songs and dances of the Qiang ethnic group such as the toast song *Ermaxinuomu*, marriage song *Sisters Get Married*, male group dance *Sheepskin Drum Dance*, women's group dance *Maiden Erma*, dance for the sacrificial rites at the ancient festival *Waerwozu*, original primitive female duet *Ballad on Clouds*, Qiang *Guozhuang Dance*, etc. vividly demonstrating Qiang culture.

Folk art troupes from Japan, the Philippines and Mongolia also participated in the event.

On the first day, the delegation paid an official call on Kim Jin-sun, Secretary General of the Research Institute of the Yulgok Society, who had once served as mayor of Gangneung and Governor of Gangwon Province, and is now Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games.

Kim expressed his warm welcome to the Sichuan visitors and said the performances given by the delegations sent by the province every year were of the highest quality. He hoped the delegation members, as young envoys, would actively promote cultural exchanges between the two countries.

He also gave a briefing about the 2018 Winter Olympic Games and invited the delegation to visit Gangwon Province again at that time.

During the meeting, the teachers of the Education Institute of Tea Ceremony of the Yulgok Society, in tradi-

tional Korean costumes, performed the Korean tea ceremony.

In the evening, the delegation participated in the parade on the eve of the Danoje Festival. The girls of the Sichuan delegation in colorful Qiang skirts and the boys in the Qiang sheepskin unlined upper garment walked at the head of the parade of foreign performers. KBS TV televised the parade live, and shot many close-ups of the Qiang *Salang* dance performed by the Sichuan delegation.

During the visit, the delegation gave two full-fledged performances in the local cultural center. Sun Yan, deputy head of the delegation and anchor of the Sichuan People's Broadcasting Station, and an anchor of the KBS TV hosted the performance.

Through their songs and dances, the performers fully displayed the rich and beautiful culture of the Qiang ethnic group, known as "people in the clouds". During the performance, the performers presented *Qiang Hong* (a piece of red silk used by the Qiang people as a greeting gift) to the Korean audience, expressing their best wishes.

After the performance, the performers invited audience to the stage to dance merry Qiang *Salang* together. Hand in hand, they sang and danced, created a wonderful climax. Then, they sang the Korean song *Arirang*, the familiar melody resounding throughout the theatre.

At a banquet in honor of the delegation, Cheong Moon-kyo, President of the Education Institute of the Yulgok Society, and Choi Sang-dug, Secretary General of the Yulgok Society, both gave speeches.

Cheong said that from the comments of Gangneung citizens, it was obvious the performance was of a great success. He felt proud of it. He said the performance was the best seen in Gangneung in the recent ten years. He thanked the performers for their earnest work and excellent skills.

Liu Ying, Director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Office of the Mianyang Art College of the Sichuan Conservatory of Music, expressed her heartfelt thanks to the Yulgok Society for its support and meticulous arrangement, particularly to President Cheong for his sincere care for delegation members.

The delegation was invited to attend the luncheon held by the Organizing Committee of the Gangneung Danoje Festival and Gangneung Municipal Government, and had exchanges with artists from various countries. They also visited the venue of the Winter Olympic Games and the Haslla Art World.

The year 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Republic of Korea and is also the China-ROK Friendly Exchange Year with the theme of "Beautiful Friendship and Happiness Accompanied".

The Sichuan delegation's visit to the ROK is of great significance. The people-to-people and cultural exchanges during the visit helped expand the good relationship of mutual understanding and trust between Sichuan Province and Gangwon Province and Gangneung City, helping the two sides to learn from each other, and made new contributions to the enhancement of friendship between the Chinese and Korean people. ■

Chinese Youth Delegation Visits France

Xing Shuhua

At the invitation of Secours Populaire Français (SPF), a Chinese youth delegation composed of members of the Beijing Fengtai Children and Youth Palace and students of No. 1 Middle School of Anyang City of Henan Province, sent by the CPAFFC, paid a visit to France from July 19 to 30, 2012. The aim was to deepen and expand cooperation between the CPAFFC and the SPF and strengthen friendly exchanges between the youth of the two countries and contribute to the cause of international humanitarian assistance.

Founded in 1945, the SPF is a French national non-profit public organization accepting donations to carry out global cooperation in development and training projects with relevant organizations in various countries and providing emergency aid to the people suffering from armed conflicts and natural disasters.

The SPF is an influential public organization in France as well as in Europe, as every year it receives on average 90 million euros in cash donated by more than a million persons and donations-in-kind worth 250 million euros.

Since the CPAFFC and the SPF established contacts in 2007, they have cooperated successfully in several projects including building China-France friendship water cellars,



A group photo at the etching museum in Gravelines

Chinese and French youth participating in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and supporting the reconstruction of the earthquake-hit-areas in Sichuan, which received positive comments from society.

Youth exchanges have become a long-term standardized project of cooperation between the two organizations aiming to promote understanding between the youth of the two countries through cultural exchanges in music, sports, etc. and using this means to let them participate in the cause of international humanitarian aid.

This time, the Association l'Ech-ine made the arrangements for all the

official receptions and accompanied the Chinese youth delegation throughout its tour. The Association was founded in 2009 and all the members of the Organizing Committee are leading members of political and educational circles in Lille City with wide personal connections in northern France.

Since 2008, the Association, as a volunteer organization of the SPF, has been in charge of contacting and implementing cooperation-with-China projects and receiving Chinese delegations.

Manu Lesschaeve, Secretary General of the Association, is Director General of the Department of International

Relations of the Lille Municipal Government. All the proceeds from the concerts given by the Association's band Manu Revol go to SPF aid projects.

Show the charm of modern Chinese youth and help French people have better understanding about China.

The Chinese delegation visited five cities in northern France and attended four official receptions in city halls. Through playing Chinese folk music with traditional instruments such as the cucurbit flute, chorus singing, calligraphy, etc., the members displayed the beauty of traditional Chinese artistry. Through visiting museums and historic sites, watching warm-up matches in Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region for the 2012 London Olympic Games, and having a get-together with children in Les Centres de Loisirs (the Center of Leisure), they showed Chinese youth's warmth, friendliness, optimism, openness and eagerness to learn.

Christian Devos, Deputy Mayor of Gravelines City in charge of sports, spent two days with the delegation and later said he had experienced warmth, kindness, eagerness to learn and a sense of discipline that promised well for China's future. He firmly believed that the cultural links established between youth of the two countries in the fields of music and sports would add beautiful color to French-Chinese friendship.

Hugo Vandamme, an assembly deputy of Lille in charge of international exchanges, said cultural exchanges serve as a bridge to promote

mutual understanding between people and bring them closer. Music and sports, as important parts of culture, can transcend geographical boundaries and language barriers and bring people together to understand and respect each other.

The Federation of North of the SPF held a press briefing to welcome the Chinese youth delegation. Federation Secretary General Jean-Louise Callens said, although China's international position is increasingly elevating, there are still many French people who do not know much about the country. Youth exchanges not only promoted communication between the younger generation, but also enhanced mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples in general. Such exchanges would help remove misunderstanding and overcome prejudice and bring hope and bright future to an imperfect world.

Add new contents and significance to the China-France youth exchanges.

It happened that the 2012 Tour de France bicycle race was nearing its end when the delegation visited France. The SPF, a long-term partner of the Organizing Committee of the Tour de France, was authorized to set up a stand at the Place de la Concorde in Paris. There, the Chinese delegation could watch the closing stage of the race.

The delegation was happy to experience the unique atmosphere of the Tour de France at close quarters and came to know better the Olympic spirit of "Faster, Higher, Stronger". This great spirit of humanity to always make

progress and keep forging ahead is an important foundation for the success of the Tour de France and the Olympic Games as well.

When the delegation visited Douchy-les-Mines City, M. Dominique, President of L'Ecole de Formation des Cyclists (School for Training of Cyclists), expressed his hope to invite 20 Chinese youth to visit France at an appropriate time next summer for cycling training and to race together with his students so as to use sports exchanges as means of promoting Franco-Chinese friendship.

Strengthen cooperation between the CPAFFC and the SPF and the Association l'Echine.

The Association l'Echine, as a supporting organization of the SPF, has participated in all the projects carried out by the CPAFFC and the SPF. The cooperation has been smooth and successful. This time the Association proposed that the CPAFFC invite the Manu Revol Band to give performance in China next May.

The performance will be both a charity and commercial one. The charity performance aims to promote France-China exchanges in music and the proceeds from the commercial performance will be used for aid-China projects (such as donating school buses, building water cellars, etc.).

Thanks to the success of the China-France youth exchange project in the past four years and the positive social response to the Chinese youth delegation's visit to France, the SPF hopes to continue the dialogue between the youth of the two countries for many years to come. ■

Sidelights of China-Japan Friendship Cities Junior Middle School Students Table Tennis Friendship Tournament

Li Kun

The China-Japan Friendship Cities Junior Middle School Students Table Tennis Friendship Tournament, jointly organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), the China-Japan Friendship Association (CJFA), the China Table Tennis Association (CTTA), the Japan-China Friendship Association (JCFA), and the Japan Table Tennis Association (JTTA), was held in Beijing from August 16 to 21 on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

About 900 students from 83 pairs of Chinese and Japanese cities that have friendship-city or friendly exchange relationships took part. In the week-long event, teenagers of the two countries, by living in the same hotel, and eating, practicing and playing together, deepened their mutual understanding and forged valuable friendship.

The Grand Opening Ceremony

A grand opening ceremony was held in the Olympic Sports Center Gymnasium at 10 am on August 17. CJFA President Tang Jiaxuan, CTTA Honorary Vice Chairman Xu Yinsheng,

CPAFFC Vice President Jing Dunquan, Japanese Ambassador Uichiro Niwa, JCFA Vice President Tetsuo Sakai, JTTA Vice President Koji Kimura, together with both Chinese and Japanese players, attended the opening ceremony.

In his speech, Vice President Jing Dunquan said that an exchange carried out between ping pong players of China and Japan opened the gate for sports exchanges between the two countries and played a special role in realizing the normalization of diplomatic relations and enhancing their people's friendly feelings for each other. He expressed the hope the participants would

The opening ceremony





A Chinese boy and a Japanese girl from the Nanchang-Takamatsu joint team playing in mixed doubles

get to know more about each other and make friends through competition, and that the tournament would contribute to furthering exchanges and cooperation to deepen mutual understanding and lasting bonds between the youth of the two countries.

Vice President Tetsuo Sakai said that 2012 marked the 40th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China diplomatic relations. The holding of the exchange activity had far-reaching significance. The fact the paired friendship cities of Japan and China formed joint teams was aimed at showing the vitality of the young people instead of competing for points, and contributing to deepening sports exchanges and friendly relations.

Ambassador Uichiro Niwa noted that people-to-people friendship had always been the most important element in promoting bilateral relations since the normalization of diplomatic ties 40 years ago. This Table Tennis Friendship Tournament was considered to be the most symbolic one among many commemorative activities held this year. He hoped that young players would form close, lasting friendships.

At the opening ceremony, former

world champions Yan Sen and Qi Baoxiang played a demonstration match. Along with a Chinese and a Japanese young player, they also staged a mixed-doubles. Their excellent offensive and defensive skills drew long and warm applause and promoted a happy atmosphere.

China-Japan Joint Teams, A Feature of the Tournament

The main characteristic of the event was the joint teams formed by students from twinned friendship cities of China and Japan. The youth of the two countries cooperated with and not against each other in competition, especially in mixed doubles where boys and girls from the two countries worked together to reach tacit understanding. People might wonder how they communicated with each other without a common language — but they did!

The young players soon found ways to make themselves understood. After a few days of training and playing together, they turned into old friends from strangers. They could take a hint through a simple gesture or a look, and give each other suggestions. They played shoulder to shoulder and cheers from their team mates reverberated in the gymnasium. Many moving and joyful scenes took place.

Li Yuhang, a Chinese boy in his first year of junior middle school from the Ningbo (China)-Ueda (Japan) Joint Team, was an all-round player and played hard and strong. He often got

the upper hand in exchanges of long shots with his opponents despite his young age. Shizuka Sekiya, the Japanese girl paired with him in the mixed doubles, cheered him repeatedly from courtside.

It was the second time for Guo Ying, a Chinese female player from the Beijing-Tokyo Joint Team to take part in the China-Japan Friendship Cities Table Tennis Tournament. Five years ago, she took part in the tournament for primary school students, representing the Beijing Dongcheng District-Tokyo Shinjuku District Joint Team. When asked about her experiences in the two events, she said she had little impression of the first competition being so young. However, she could talk and exchange views with her Japanese peers on many topics of mutual interest now she was older. She also told us that though it was only a few days she and the Japanese female player Kana Takeuchi had already become good friends and exchanged contact information and that she had invited her to visit her home sometime in the future.

Japanese cities attached great importance to this event. Many delegations had been received by local government officials before coming to China. Seita Tanaka, Mayor of Yao-shi in Osaka, presented the two players of the city with the certificates and badges of “Yao-shi Goodwill Ambassador for Children’s International Exchange”, and encouraged them to cooperate with Chinese players to enhance friendship and be little envoys of friendly exchanges between Japan and China.

Visit the Great Wall Together

On the morning of August 20,

young players of both countries went to Juyong Pass to climb the Great Wall — China's most representative of the world's historical and cultural heritage.

Young players gasped in admiration at the spectacular views. Some took pictures; some started climbing hoping to reach the top in one breath and be a "true man" (as the old saying goes about climbing the Great Wall). There and then, win or lose in competition seemed no longer important, only friendship and happiness prevailed.

The youngsters climbed the wall in groups of three and four, excitement showing on their faces. By writing on paper and making gestures, they overcame language barrier, talking and laughing along the way. Their arrival brought vigor and vitality to the ancient and majestic Great Wall.

The Closing Ceremony, Happy Gathering of Youth

In the evening of August 20, the closing ceremony was held in the Great Hall of the People. In the brightly-lit banquet hall cheerful music was played, creating a warm atmosphere. Young players from China and Japan walked into the hall together. They sat around tables, chatting intimately.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin, Vice President Jing Dunquan, CTTA Vice President Yu Bin, JTTA President Takeo Obayashi, Vice President Koji Kimura, and Minister Shigeo Yamada of the Japanese Embassy in China presented awards to the participating teams.

President Li Xiaolin congratulated all the teams on their excellent

performance. She said China and Japan shared a fine tradition of ping-pong exchange. Through this event, young players of the two countries had deepened understanding and enhanced friendship, becoming closer to each other. They harvested both good scores and friendship. She hoped the young players would keep in touch, become good friends and grown into pillars of the cause of China-Japan friendship in the future.

President Takeo Obayashi praised the tournament as one deepening affections and friendship. The profound friendship forged between the youngsters of the two countries during the competition would have far-reaching significance. He believed that this valuable experience would enable them to grow up healthy and strong and motivate them to work hard for the friendly exchanges between Japan and China.

JTTA Honorary Adviser Takeshi Mori who headed the Tokyo Prefecture Delegation to the tournament said it was very commendable that this event, serving as a platform of sharing and exchange, had restored the nature of sport as an athletics enjoyment and a bridge of love and friendship. He said passionately that he turned 80 this year and might not be able to participate in the next event in five years time, but he would always support the table tennis tournament and wish it be held continuously with success. The youth of the two countries shouldered the responsibility for future sports exchange, therefore he hoped that they would work together to contribute to the development of table tennis in the future.

Immersed in such a warm atmosphere of friendship, the young players

were reluctant to part. They seized every opportunity to have pictures taken together and turned the banquet hall into a sea of joy.

After the happy gathering, young players of the two countries said goodbye to the city where they had gone all out to compete in cooperation and embarked on a new journey carrying with them good wishes and friendship. They promised to meet soon in future.

The six-day wonderful experience will always be remembered by the youngsters and the achievements and emotional moments both inside and outside the gymnasium will be shared among more and more people.

Background

China-Japan Friendship Cities Table Tennis Friendship Tournament

China-Japan Friendship Cities Table Tennis Friendship Tournament, jointly organized by the CPAFFC, the CJFA, the CTTA, the JCFA and the JTTA, aims to carry forward the fine tradition of "Ping Pong Diplomacy" between China and Japan, promote exchanges between the two peoples, especially the youth of the two countries, and cultivate successors to the cause of China-Japan friendship with table tennis, a sports activity, as a carrier. Its special feature is competition between joint teams of Chinese and Japanese players from cities that have established friendship-city or friendly exchange relations. The first tournament was held successfully in Beijing in 1990. It has become an event held in every five years since 1992. Thus, it has been held six times so far and become a big event in people-to-people friendly exchanges between China and Japan. ■

Third China Xinjiang International Children's Art Festival

Zhang Jiahu

The Third International Children's Art Festival of Xinjiang, China, sponsored by the Xinjiang People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (XPAFFC) and presented by the Urumqi No. 67 Middle School, was held in Urumqi from July 20 to 26.

Seventeen children's art troupes comprising 300 students in all took part, including nine troupes with 140 students from Russia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Tajikistan, India, the Republic of Korea, and Mongolia. The ROK and India took part for the first time. Eight children's art troupes from Xinjiang also participated.

The festival, consisting of cultural and art performances, talent show, and sight-seeing, opened on the morning of July 21. In his speech at the opening ceremony, Muzhapaer Mijiti, Director General of the Foreign Affairs Office

of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and President of the XPAFFC, described the Festival as a grand cultural gathering for the children of China and other countries. It would surely play a positive role in enhancing understanding and friendship among the children of the world and promoting the Autonomous Region's friendly and cooperative relations with its neighboring countries and its exchanges and cooperation with the outside world. He expressed the hope that the children of all countries would unite to write a song of peace and friendship with their youth and warmth, passing on the spirit of "peace, friendship and cooperation" for generation after generation and create a better future together with their wisdom and talent.

In the week-long festival, the children gave four performances, took part

in cultural exchange activities including painting, calligraphy and paper-cut exhibitions, national costume shows and handicraft-making demonstrations, visited the Hongshan Park, Xinjiang Science and Technology Museum, the International Bazar and the Silk Road International Resort, participated in a bonfire evening party, disco dance party, fan-sports meet and other activities.

At the festival, many old friends met and newcomers got acquainted. The Organizing Committee held birthday parties for five children from other countries. On July 26, the day of departure, the students of different countries exchanged gifts and contact information. Unwilling to part with each other, they said goodbye with tears rolling down their cheeks.

On the afternoon of July 23, the cultural performance and the closing

The Chinese and foreign children's art troupes participating in the festival



ceremony were held in the Xinjiang Hall of the People. In her speech, Jin Nuo, Vice Chairperson of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, said the event was a stage on which children from various countries could show their wisdom and talent and the charm of art, where they could meet friends through dancing and convey feelings through singing, and with intense emotion and excellent performing skills, could express their love for their country and their national culture and art, their aspirations for peace, friendship and cooperation. By learning from each other and swapping experiences, they could gain increased understanding and make many friends. This, indeed, was the great charm and significance of the festival.

The Organizing Committee presented performance certificates to the leaders of the 17 art troupes and souvenirs to the student representatives at the closing ceremony. ■

ROK Young Friendship Envoys in China

Xu Yiyi

Invited by the CPAFFC, the third delegation of ROK young friendship envoys with 120 members led by former ROK Ambassador to China Shin Jung-seung paid a goodwill visit to Beijing, Chengde and Henan from July 9 to 17. This gave them a fine opportunity to experience some features of Chinese history and traditional culture and also engage in-depth exchanges with their Chinese peers.

To implement the consensus on further expanding the scale of youth exchanges reached between the two heads of state during President Hu Jintao's visit to the ROK in 2008, the CPAFFC and the Korean Foundation have, since 2009, been co-sponsoring youth exchange projects. Up to July 2012, the

CPAFFC sent a total of 1,150 Chinese youth in seven delegations to visit the ROK and received three delegations in return containing 320 members.

The latest delegation organized by the Korean Foundation comprised 84 students from 42 universities, 16 senior middle school students, journalists from the mainstream media and working staff of the ROK-China Culture and Youth Association.

Meeting the delegation, Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Zhijun said that, while cooperation was developing vigorously in various fields, the growing momentum of youth exchanges was particularly encouraging. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations be-

Korean youth learning *wushu* (martial art) at the martial art training base of the Shaolin Temple





Try their hands at carving

tween the two countries and had been designated as the Year of China-ROK Friendly Exchange, so the delegation's visit was of timely significance. Youth, as the hope and future of a country, had important tasks of national construction and promoting the cause of China-ROK friendship and the baton should be passed on from generation to generation. Zhang encouraged delegation members to visit more places, see more and hear more, and seek to learn more about China, while making friends with Chinese youth to enhance mutual understanding.

In his meeting with the delega-

A friendship basketball match between the Chinese and Korean youth



tion, CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zuoku stressed that friendship between peoples provided a foundation for good bilateral relations. Everlasting China-ROK friendship should be carried forward by the younger generation who created hope for a bright future for the overall

relationship. He hoped the hospitality of the Chinese people would make the Korean friends feel as if they were returning home, becoming a beautiful memory for life. He hoped that Korean youth would take home what they had seen and heard and share it with family and friends to let more Korean people know about China and love China.

Deepen Friendly Sentiments Through Experiencing Chinese History and Culture

Through visits to cultural sites in China's ancient capital, watching cul-

tural performances, traditional martial art, and learning traditional Chinese tea ceremony, paper cutting and martial arts, delegation members experienced the past and present, tradition and development of China.

When touring the Forbidden City, the Chengde Mountain Resort and Little Potala Palace (nickname of Putuo Zongcheng Temple in Chengde), the Korean visitors were amazed at the exquisite ancient Chinese architecture. They were very excited when trying on court costumes, and got some general knowledge about the history and culture of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) after hearing many interesting stories related to it. When climbing the Great Wall at Juyong Pass, everyone strove to be the first and become a "true man" or "true woman", fully apprehending the meaning of the famous saying: "He who has never been to the Great Wall is not a true man". When watching the play *Kung Fu Panda* in Beijing with vivid and lifelike scenes, they seemed to experience the perfect integration of tradition and modernity of this international metropolis. The traditional martial art performance at the Songshan Shaolin Temple electrified them as a treasure of traditional Chinese culture; each one tried to learn the "five-step shadow boxing" earnestly. They appreciated the superb collection of cultural relics in the Henan Museum representing the brilliant history and culture of Henan along the Yellow River Valley, one of the sites of origin of Chinese civilization. Buddhist culture and sculptures displayed in the Longmen Grottoes left a deep impression. They feasted on all kinds of food such as Peking roast duck, chestnuts in Chengde,

stewed noodles in Henan and vegetarian meals at the Shaolin Temple, experiencing the culture behind the delicious cuisine.

Flowers of Friendship Blossom

During the delegation's stay, nine Chinese volunteers accompanied the delegation throughout the visit. Their sincerity and thoughtfulness made the Koreans feel the friendliness of the Chinese people and the warmth of a big family. Besides giving the Koreans help and service, these volunteers shared their knowledge about their motherland and their experience in study and life, enabling the Korean youth to understand the true China. During the nine days, the youth of the two countries forged deep friendship and did their bit in enhancing mutual understanding and trust.

On July 16, the Korean youth had a whole day of friendly exchanges

with about 100 students at the Zhengzhou Tourism College. Interaction in pairs shortened the distance between the youth of the two countries. The Chinese students taught their Korean peers about the Chinese tea ceremony, traditional paper cutting, flower folding with napkins and fruit carving. Though they could only communicate in not so fluent English mixed with some Chinese and Korean words, true friendship never needs words and is borderless. In the evening, an interesting basketball friendship match brought rounds of applause and cheers to the campus. What was showing at the playground was not only the close friendship between the two peoples, but the bright future of good relationship between the two countries.

At the farewell evening reception, the delegation, volunteers and students of the Zhengzhou Tourism College together gave a wonderful performance.

The performance of *taijiquan* (shadow boxing), nunchakus (martial arts weapons), Peking Opera, Korean drama, songs and dances showed young people's vigor and vitality and varied talents, and provided perfect integration of Chinese and Korean cultures. On the stage, the young people of the two countries displayed the beauty of youth. The song *Seoul Welcomes You* adapted and sung by the Koreans in Chinese promised well for the next Chinese visit to the ROK in the near future. Nine days passed quickly. When the sweet music floated over the farewell party, and the wonderful memories reappeared on a big screen, the Chinese and Korean youth hugged each other in tears, their hearts closely linked together. On bidding farewell, they presented gifts to each other, and wished each other good health, promised to keep contact and looked forward to meeting again. ■

The delegation at the Longmen Grottoes



Seventeen-Year Friendship

Zhang Anhua

Time flies; this year of 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Republic of Korea (ROK). At this moment, I, an ordinary Chinese old man, feel very excited. Seventeen years ago, I got acquainted by chance with a young Korean man named Kim Nam-soo. At that time I was 54 years old, and he 26. Through our contacts in the past 17 years, we have become good friends despite the age difference.

Getting Acquainted with Kim Nam-soo

During the Spring Festival in 1996, I took a friend of mine from Hong Kong and his family to Tiananmen Square. We got on the subway train at Jishuitan Station. After the train started, a tall young man walked up to the daughter of my Hong Kong friend and spoke to her. It turned out that the young man wanted to know where she had bought the fur hat she was wearing. I told him that we had bought it at a shop at the Badaling Great Wall. Upon hearing it, he shook his head saying, "There's not enough time for me to go there to buy it. I am leaving Beijing tomorrow." He spoke Chinese with obvious lack of ease just as a Cantonese and Fujianese might speak *Putonghua* (Standard Chinese).

I said to him, "No worry. You leave your address and I will buy one for you and send it to you by post." He seemed very surprised to hear that and asked, "Really?" I took out a small notebook from my pocket and asked him to write down his

name and mailing address. He then wrote down his name Kim Nam-soo in Chinese and his mailing address in English. I asked him: "Where are you from?" "The ROK," he answered while getting ready to get off at the next station, Guloudajie. It took the train only about five minutes to travel between the two stations, so there was no time for me to ask him more questions.

After seeing my Hong Kong friend and his family off, I found some ROK businessmen who came to China to participate in an exhibition and knew English, and asked them about the mailing address that the young Korean man had left me. They all said that it was a Korean university, but they



Mr. and Mrs. Zhang Anhua with Kim Nam-soo

did not know how to translate it into Chinese. I felt worried, "What shall I do? This is my first time to have any dealings with a foreigner. How could I break my promise?"

In the autumn of 1996, I wrote a letter to Kim, telling him the phone number of my home. On the envelope I wrote in English the address he had left me. One night I suddenly received a call from him in the ROK. Over the phone I asked him to write his address in Chinese clearly when writing back.

I got his letter, so now there was some hope for me to send him the fur hat by post. I specially went to the shop selling fur hats at the Badaling Great Wall and bought one for him.

I sent the hat by post from Xidan

Post Office, the only one at that time from which one could send parcels from Beijing to other countries, but very unsure if it would ever arrive. Days passed by. At last I got his second letter enclosed with a photo of him wearing the hat. I felt very happy when I saw the photo.

Guests in My House

One evening in August 1997, I received a call from him again. He said that he would come to Beijing again and wanted to see me. This time he came to Beijing with his girlfriend, Lee Eun-ah, for social investigation, as after graduating from Hongik University (a private university in Seoul), he was admitted as a postgraduate student specializing in international politics. He asked whether he could come to my house to visit me. I lived in a hard-to-reach suburb in northwestern Beijing. So, my wife and I took a taxi to collect him and his girlfriend.

We especially made *jiaozi* (stuffed dumplings) to entertain them. We taught them how to make dumpling filling for the first time, and when the steaming *jiaozi* were served to them, he said "Thank you!" in not so fluent Chinese.

Study Chinese in Beijing

After finishing his postgraduate study, he was employed by the Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd. in May 2001. In March 2007, he was sent by the company to study Chinese in the Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU).

It happened that in July 2000 my family had moved to a house near Qinghe on the North 5th Ring Road,

and not far from BLCU where Kim was studying. During his one-year study in Beijing, I took good care of him like my own family members. Once I went to see him and found that one of his eyes was red and swollen suffering from hordeolum. He didn't go to see doctor and was still busy with his study. My wife was a medical worker. We took him to a drugstore to buy eye ointment. Several days later I was relieved to learn he was cured.

In May 2007, his wife Lee together with their two daughters came to Beijing to see him. When I learned the news, I invited his family to have a lunch with my family in a restaurant. The two families with nine members got together joyously. As his wife could not speak Chinese, Kim acted as an interpreter. His eldest daughter Eun-joo and my grandson Linxuan were aged seven. Eun-joo was very clever. We taught her to say "How are you?" "Beijing" and "Thank You" in Chinese, and she soon could speak well. The Chinese and Korean children had a very good time together, and the seed of China-ROK friendship was planted in their hearts. Kim's second daughter Ji-won was very cute. When I held her in my arms, her small face pressed against mine. This beautiful moment was permanently captured through the camera lens.

During Kim's study in the BLCU, I specially took him and his classmates to tour the famous Ming Tombs with a history of 600 years. Ordinary tourists only toured the Ding and Chang Mausoleums. I rented a car and took them to all the other seven mausoleums that were open. After that, we toured the Duijiuyu Natural Scenic Area and

specially went to a folk culture village to have a meal cooked by farmers. Kim was deeply impressed, saying: "The meal in the folk culture village has its distinctive flavor. If not for you, we could never find such a beautiful place and have such a delicious meal even if we had a lot of money!"

After a year's hard study, Kim graduated with a diploma issued by the BLCU.

Interviewed by CRI

One day in early spring in March 2008, Kim and I were invited to China Radio International (CRI) for an interview.

Since I got acquainted with Kim in February 1996, I sometimes listened to the Chinese broadcast by KBS World Radio, which aroused my interest. Since then, every night I kept listening to it and then came up with an idea of writing an article about my acquaintance with Kim. In early 1998 I contributed an article entitled *A Fur Hat Conveys Friendship* to the Chinese Language Section of KBS World Radio. A few months later, I was happy to hear my article broadcast.

The year 2007 marked the 15th anniversary of the establishment of China-ROK diplomatic relations. I wrote another article *My Korean Friend Kim Nam-soo* and submitted it to CRI. The Korean Language Section of CRI accepted my article and hoped to interview Kim.

It happened that in early spring of 2008, Kim would come to Beijing on business. I immediately contacted Jin Taigen, a CRI reporter. Though it was Sunday he had an interview with Kim. Both Kim and I had never been to the recording studio of a radio station

before. Jin Taigen asked Kim many questions in Korean. As I could not understand what they were saying, I had to act as a “cameraman”, trying to record their conversation on video. When Kim watched the videotape after the interview, he said excitedly, “This is the most precious and rare material of my life experience, and the most valuable material that truly records the friendship between the Chinese and Korean people. I will keep it forever.”

I asked Kim what questions that the reporter had asked him. He said he had been asked for his impressions of China, how many Chinese cities he had seen, his views on the establishment of China-ROK diplomatic relations, whether the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games could be successfully held, etc. The interview spurred him to work harder.

My Dream of Visiting ROK Realized

On March 16, 2009, I, at last, stepped on the land of the ROK at the age of 68, to realize my dream. Spring was in the air in early March. After disembarking from the cruise ship at Incheon Port, we went by tour bus to the Seorak Waterpia at the foot of Seoraksan Mountain. On the way we saw beautiful farm houses, ginseng plantations under plastic, etc., enjoying the enchanting scenery of the Korean countryside.

In the ROK, I toured the famous Seorak National Park and Seoul where I visited the Gyeongbokgung Palace with a history of 600 years, the National Museum of Korea displaying Korean traditional culture, the National Folk Museum of Korea, the Namsan Hanok Village etc., and watched wonderful

performances by Korean artists. What left deepest impression on me was our visit to an elderly welfare center in Jungnang-gu, Seoul where we were warmly welcomed by Korean elderly people and leaders of the welfare center. The Chinese and Korean old people chatted merrily in a warm and friendly atmosphere, reflecting that the friendship between the Chinese and Korean people had taken root deeply in the hearts of the two peoples.

The night before leaving the ROK, in the hotel where I stayed, I met Kim who had taken time out of his busy schedule to come to see me. We felt especially drawn to each other as old friends met again.

Deep Affection and Profound Friendship

In many letters Kim wrote me, he called me “Chinese father”. In the past 17 years, we have cared for and trusted each other and felt deep affection for each other and forged profound friendship.

In 2008, my birthday fell on a day shortly before the Spring Festival. Kim who was on a business trip to Yunnan flew back to Beijing to celebrate my birthday as soon as he finished his business there. He specially bought Pu’er tea from Yunnan as a birthday gift.

I knew that Kim liked his Chinese fur hat very much. During our second meeting in 1997, I gave him another fur hat as a gift. In recent years, before winter came I sent fur hats by post to him a few times for his elder and younger brothers.

On January 26, 2011, before the Spring Festival, Kim came to my

house to see me again. According to the Chinese folk custom, during the Spring Festival, the senior members of a family would give their children *hongbao* (a red envelope containing money as a gift). My wife specially prepared three *hongbao* for Kim’s three daughters so as to let the Korean children feel as happy as Chinese children when receiving such a gift.

Kim likes Chinese culture very much. I asked a seal-engraving expert to engrave seals in Chinese characters for him and his wife. Kim gave me mobile phones, Parker pens, etc. in return. When I traveled in the ROK, he came to the hotel to see me and gave me very expensive Korean ginseng powder as a gift. When he learnt that I was suffering from high blood pressure, he specially bought for me medicine from the ROK. All this shows the deep affection and profound friendship between us. I often said to Kim, “Friendship is more precious than money!”

Kim loves China. Except Jiangxi and Gansu Provinces, he has traveled all over China. He is particularly familiar with Beijing and has been to many places of historical interest and scenic beauty and streets and alleys in Beijing. He has great interest in learning Chinese and writes Chinese characters beautifully. I encouraged him to learn Chinese and many times went to bookstores to buy for him reference books on learning Chinese. I also gave him many books including *Chinese Idioms and Phrases*, *Two-Part Allegorical Sayings*, *Chinese Proverbs*, *Three Hundred Tang Poems*, *Chinese Allusions*. Now, he can speak Chinese fluently and uses it in his work.

No Lack of Successors to China-ROK Friendship

Twenty years have passed since China and the ROK established diplomatic relations. Seventeen years have passed since I befriended Kim Nam-soo. The seed of China-ROK friendship has taken root in the hearts of our two families. My son Junmeng and Kim Nam-soo are about the same age and have the same growth experience. They will hand on the torch of China-ROK friendship. My grandson Linxuan loves Uncle Kim who loves Linxuan more. Every time Kim came to my house, Linxuan would welcome him warmly. On May 22, 2011, we invited Kim to have lunch in a restaurant. On the way to the restaurant, Linxuan held Kim's hand and talked to him while walking. It was such a touching scene! Linxuan and Kim's eldest daughter Eun-joo wrote to each other in English, exchanging their experience in learning the language. I feel gratified when seeing the flower of China-ROK friendship budding in their young hearts.

In the past 17 years since I got acquainted with Kim, China-ROK friendship has often been in my mind. Kim and I have made a promise: Let the flower of China-ROK friendship bloom more beautifully! Let the song of China-ROK friendship be sung more loudly! Let the friendship between the Chinese and Korean people pass on from generation to generation! ■

Pioneer of Sino-Japanese People to People Friendly Exchanges

—Commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the Passing of Sun Pinghua

Dong Shimei

On August 15, 1997, Sun Pinghua, an expert in Japanese affairs, witness of China-Japan friendly relations and pioneer of Sino-Japanese people-to-people friendly exchanges, passed away. It was a great loss to the cause of China-Japan friendship. The well-known expert in Japan affairs died after Wang Zhen and Liao Chengzhi, two other great pioneers.

Personages of various circles in Japan expressed their deep grief over his death. Representatives of various social organizations and friendly personages from Japan came to Beijing to mourn his death.

Sun Pinghua, born in Yingkou, Liaoning Province, went to study in Japan in 1939 at the age of 21, and returned to China in 1943. Since then he formed an indissoluble bond with Japan and devoted all his life to the cause of China-Japan friendship. After liberation, he worked in a department under the CPC Central Committee. In 1952 he joined a delegation to visit Japan for the first time.

In his work dealing with Japanese affairs, he got careful instructions from Wang Zhen and Liao Chengzhi. In 1964, he was appointed chief representative of the Tokyo Liaison Of-

fice of the Liao Chengzhi Office and was Liao's competent assistant. In 1972 he was transferred to work in the CPAFFC and successively served as Secretary General, Vice President and President of the China-Japan Friendship Association (CJFA), and Permanent Council Member and Vice President of the CPAFFC.

He was bold, enthusiastic, assertive and initiative in his decades-long work dealing with Japanese affairs, and did an outstanding job in the normalization of China-Japan diplomatic relations and development of Sino-Japanese friendly ties. In 1972, he led the Shanghai Dance Drama Troupe to visit Japan for a performance. Following Premier Zhou Enlai's instructions, he met with the then Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka and Foreign Minister Masayoshi Ohira and did a lot of work for realizing the normalization of China-Japan diplomatic relations.

In the wake of Sun's visit to Japan, Tanaka and Ohira successively visited China, and the two countries were able to normalize their diplomatic relations — an event of historic significance. Premier Zhou praised Sun for his outstanding work.

The 1970s and the 1980s saw great development of China-Japan relations. In that period, three friendly events attracted attention at home and abroad. In 1973, Tianjin of China and Kobe of Japan formed the first pair of friendship cities between China and other countries. In 1978, the China-Japan Friendship Commune was established in the suburbs of Beijing. In 1979, Liao Chengzhi led a 600-member delegation to visit Japan by taking the “Friendship Ship”. These important events effectively showed that nongovernmental diplomacy played an important role in developing friendly relations with Japan.

In one of his articles, Sun wrote that Premier Zhou Enlai attached great importance to nongovernmental diplomacy. He once said: “After the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan, nongovernmental diplomacy has been strengthened rather than weakened. The role of nongovernmental diplomacy should continue to be given full play.”

Sun Pinghua witnessed all the stages of the development of China-Japan relations. Liao Chengzhi was his mentor and bosom friend. In June 1983, Liao Chengzhi passed away of illness. Sun was very sad for many valuable materials had been lost, as Liao hadn’t left any written works. Thus, in 1986, having overcome many difficulties, he wrote the book *Notes on China-Japan Friendship*. In 1998, Sun’s daughter Sun Xiaoyan edited and published the book *My Resume* (written by Sun Pinghua). These two books record important data of Sun’s life.

During the time when he was in charge of CJFA’s work, he was often invited to visit Japan and frequently received Japanese friends visiting China. All the Japanese friends who came to China wished to visit the CJFA and meet with

Sun Pinghua, and regarded this as the most important part of their trip. In 1992, he was awarded the Grand Cordon of the Order of Sacred Treasure by the Japanese Government at the Japanese Embassy in China. After reading Sun’s book *Notes on China-Japan Friendship*, the famous painter Huang Yongyu wrote: “He is the best person to make contacts with Japanese friends for decades. He has a kind of ‘rustic style’ and an air of a Japanese, which makes me think that he is like a Japanese worker who has been building the bridge of China-Japan friendship for decades.”

This is a very pertinent appraisal of Sun.

When he was in charge of the work of the CJFA, he paid great attention to raising the ability of his staff in dealing with Japanese affairs. In the CJFA, there is abundance of outstanding personnel and a galaxy of capable young staffers. Tang Jiakuan, former Chinese Foreign Minister and State Councilor, once worked for the CPAFFC and the CJFA, and retains high respect for the memory of Liao Chengzhi and Sun Pinghua.

Tang now serves as President of the CJFA. He often meets with Japanese friends and is greatly appreciated by them. CJFA Vice President Wang Xiaoxian was Sun’s colleague and an expert in Japanese affairs. She worked as interpreter for Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai for several decades and was in charge of the work of Sino-Japanese friendly exchanges for a long time and made important contributions to the cause of China-Japan friendship. Now, the CJFA has a contingent of capable staff members who continue to work hard for the development of the cause of China-Japan friendship. ■

Norodom Sihanouk, the former king of Cambodia, passed away in Beijing on October 15, 2012 — an event that caused particular grief to the people of Changyang Township. It was in Changyang that the China-Cambodia Friendship People’s Commune was established 41 years ago and much historical evidence of the profound friendship between the Chinese and Cambodian people remains.

In 1971, the Cambodian people led by Prince Sihanouk were waging struggle against the rule by Lon Nol and Siso-wath Sirik Matak who had staged a coup with US support. To express its firm support and to further consolidate the profound friendship between the Chinese and Cambodian people, the State Council decided to name the then Changyang People’s Commune of Fangshan County, Beijing as “Changyang China-Cambodia Friendship People’s Commune.”

On November 7, 1971, Prince Sihanouk and his wife, and Prime Minister Penn Nouth of the Government of the National Union of Cambodia came to Changyang accompanied by Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Li Xiannian to attend the naming ceremony and planted five evergreen trees, forming an indissoluble bond between the people of Changyang and Cambodia.

Carry Forward China-Cambodia Friendship and Console Our Great Friend with Development

Qi Wendong

The people of Changyang showed great concern for the Cambodian people in their struggle for freedom and development. The construction of the commune also received attention from the Cambodian royal family and the Cambodian Government. Embassy staff in Beijing and members of the royal family often visited the commune and even took part in manual labor.

On November 7, 2011, the Fangshan District Committee of the Communist Party of China and the District Government held activities in commemoration of the commune's 40th anniversary. Princess Buppha Devi, President of the Cambodia-China Friendship Association and daughter of Prince Sihanouk, and Li Xiaolin, President of the CPAFFC and daughter of Comrade Li Xiannian, participated. Together, they tied red ribbons on and watered the five evergreen trees, and cut the ribbon at the unveiling ceremony of a plaque of China-Cambodia Friendly Exchange Base.

Princess Buppha Devi said, the Friendship Commune symbolized the friendship between the two peoples that could be traced to ancient times and the indestructible solidarity between them. The China-Cambodia Friendly Exchange Base would serve as a platform to carry forward the profound friendship.

Since the setting up of the Friend-

ship Commune, the people of Changyang, keeping in mind Premier Zhou Enlai's words and the deep friendship of the Cambodian people, have plunged into the modernization drive, traversed an extraordinary course of development, and achieved economic take-off and prosperity.

As Beijing strives to become a world city with Chinese characteristics, Changyang has courageously taken the lead in making innovations and achieved eye-catching achievements in building a new type urban area. Now it is a new urbanization model in Fangshan District and has become the most dynamic and rapid growing area in Southwestern Beijing with great development potential.

A habitable, civilized and harmonious Changyang with economic strength has appeared in the capital's southwest.

The five cypress trees planted by Prince Sihanouk and the older generation of Chinese leaders 41 years ago have grown tall and luxuriant today, but the king has left us forever. Looking at the trees, memories of him overwhelm us. We will always remember his friendship, and console him, the great friend of the Chinese people, with the achievements in developing a new Changyang.

The author is the Secretary of the Changyang Township CPC Committee of Beijing's Fangshan District.

Premier Zhou Enlai and Prince Norodom Sihanouk attending the naming ceremony of the Changyang China-Cambodia Friendship People's Commune on November 7, 1971



Representing the New Zealand China Maori Friendship Trust and Tuwharetoa Paramount Chief, Sir Tumu te Heuheu, our group was made up of Cedric Nepia, Robyn Tauroa, and Thomas Hawtin. From the time we were met at Beijing Airport till our departure at Pudong Airport, Shanghai, we were accompanied by one or more interpreter guides associated with a National or Provincial office of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC). It was the extent of their hospitality and the many wonderful sights they showed, as well as our friendly exchanges of messages, and discussions about things important to us, that attributed to the success of our trip.

Our time in Beijing was enriched by our friends, Leslie and Joy, who met us at the airport and offered their sincerity in taking care of us. Our first real experience of China was going to the Silk St. Market in Beijing and negotiating with hordes of bargaining sales people. At that stage we didn't have our heads around the exchange rate, let alone the zeal and ambience of determined hagglers. Our bargaining skills did improve but this was definitely not our most successful attempt. By our last day in Shanghai, though, when we shopped at the markets of the famous Yuyuan Gardens, our skill and confidence had much improved.

Overall our itinerary in Beijing was sightseeing and banquet meals and our first two days were nothing short of amazing. We visited the Great Wall of China, the Forbidden City, and the National Museum, engaged in mutual conversation with friends and noticed

Sojourn in A Strange Land

Thomas Hawtin (New Zealand)

many things different from home. We found that traffic behaviour, for instance, that alarmed us was really nothing to worry about in the hands of our trusted friends — although we did have a few anxious “I wonder what happens next” moments. In the evening we were met by our friends from last year, when they visited us in Aotearoa New Zealand. We enjoyed each others' company again, over a sumptuous banquet and many toasts to mutual friendship. Heqiang and the other members, gave accounts of the personally meaningful trip they had had in our country. Two of the outcomes are the creation of the “Kia Ora Club” where the members meet to sing *waiata* (songs), and a beautifully presented book of images and impressions from the visit. As well, a couple of the ladies are now expecting babies, and the prospects of growing families gave us all an extra sense of friendship and community.

In Beijing, Gongqingcheng, and Shanghai the hotels and the way we were received and treated was exemplary. Traders Upper East Hotel, Beijing; Grand Skylight Hotel, Gongqingcheng; Donghu Hotel, Shanghai were all top class with services second to none. We especially appreciated this, feeling rejuvenated and safe among friends each morning, as we embarked on new and altogether interesting exploits. The hotel in Gongqingcheng City, for in-

stance, had just been officially opened the day before we arrived for the Lakes Conference giving the impression of a burgeoning tourism industry in China.

The diversity in regional cultures, blending ancient philosophy and modern science — which both pursue the laws of nature — the architecture and city layouts reflected well thought out plans, harmonious with both traditional values and futurism. Everywhere, we saw cranes and concrete construction of high rise buildings, evidence of a strong economy, and a great capacity to adapt to change. This was also reflected in the competency and pride with which our hosts spoke about their country, its culture and its people.

Jesse came with us to Nanchang, and on to the Lakes Conference in Gongqingcheng, beside Lake Poyang. This was fortunate as she proved very helpful when we had problems getting everything through customs and security. We were met and welcomed at the hotel venue by our friendly and astute interpreter and guide Zoe, and after being encouraged to eat, we were ushered into the leaders meeting where the lake representatives were introduced. The main presentations followed the opening ceremony the next morning. Cedric presented for Tuwharetoa, and Lake Taupo, and also from Aotearoa, Rotorua kaumatua Noble (Toby) Curtis presented Lake Rotorua for Te Arawa.

Another notable presentation was one from Lake Constance in Bavaria. Declared dead and unfit to swim in, after only 10 years of dedicated restoration work and collaborative regional land use changes, over a million people now drink from the lake. From this project has also emerged the Living Lakes Network, which generates knowledge and solutions, and the Global Nature Fund, which finds collaborative funding for worthy projects which bring about long term social change in terms of lake and waterways care and quality.

We all travelled by bus and police escort to view some of the eco city innovations developed in Gongqingcheng City, one of China's newest rural cities. Built from a wasteland in the last 20 years it has a population of 5 million. This area is an industry leader in both textile and electronic products, and we toured a modern cotton textile factory, a goose down product manufacturer, and a Samsung mobile phone factory before arriving at the developing Lake Poyang Research Centre. This was where the Lakes Waters Convergence ceremony was held, a further acknowledgement of agreed collaboration and exchange of knowledge and resources between the participating world lakes. This sombre and moving ceremony culminated back at the hotel venue, after dinner, where we all grouped at the lakeside for a spectacular hour-long fireworks display. Much networking also occurred during this time, and the "romantic evening" theme was honoured by everyone with a spontaneous conclusion of songs from different nations and cultures.

Our second day of sightseeing was in Jiujiang where we visited Stone Bell Hill. Situated on a rocky promontory,

a Taoist temple was built to honour a famous poet and overlooks the confluence of Lake Poyang and the Yangtze River. In the afternoon we went by boat out on West Lushan Sea, a huge fresh water lake built by 100,000 farmers over seven years during the 1970's, eventually building a massive hydro electric earth dam which also irrigates the land below. The dam was built in a mountain area so the lake formed behind it, has left the mountain tops as beautiful islands, now utilised by a flourishing tourism industry. It would seem that nothing is left to chance or waste here.

The next day all the other conference representatives departed for home, but for us, we had one of our most memorable experiences. With the assistance of our friends Wu Xiaochuan and Yu Hong, we were taken on a grand tour of four of the areas' top schools – Gongqing No. 1 Middle School, Hu Yaobang Red Army Primary School, Jiujiang ShuangFeng Primary School,

and Jiujiang No. 1 Middle School. At the first school of 2,000 plus students, we were greeted with banners, marching parades, garlands of flowers, and red carpet. Accepting the honour on behalf of all those we were there to represent, we were shown around the school, before being taken to neighbouring Hu Yaobang Red Army Primary School. After being shown the grounds, and a classroom awaiting fifty students to return from summer holidays, we were ushered into a board room to discuss prospects of intercultural education exchanges. This became the pattern of the day, except for the merry banquet lunch and dinner, as we went from school to school being delightfully hosted. At Shuang Feng Primary School, we were particularly impressed by the conduct of the students, who had come at late notice during their holiday to welcome us, pointing out the important tenets of their school with pride and confidence. The intrigue and allure of traditional poetic culture combined with the re-

Zoe, Cedric, Thomas and Robyn at Stone Bell Hill



quirements of modern science characterise the road to learning in these schools. At Jiujiang No.1 Middle School, we spoke to excited and confident teenagers and staff, sharing many ideas and stories. We were given lasting impressions by all the officials, teachers, and students we met and interacted with, and we arrived back at our hotel exhausted, but brimming with excitement and hope that we may pave the way for many more to share in educational exchanges.

Arriving in Shanghai the next day with our friend and guide Zoe, we were met by Mr Wu Fei (Scott) and Mr Dai from the Shanghai branch of the CPAFFC. An international trade and commerce centre, Shanghai has been subject to both Chinese as well as French, English, and American influences, and with a population of 23 million, has contended with diversity with innovation and partnership. Over the next couple of days we were taken to see some of the amazing things Shanghai has to offer. Like a huge forest of skyscrapers, the architecture in Shanghai City reflects its diverse history as well as its sense of futurism. Driving through the city we could almost hear the sound of the Jetsons family car from the futuristic animated program created in the 70s. Our minds were stretched by our visit to the Shanghai Urban Exhibition Hall in terms of vision and accomplishment, and left us with a changed perception and hope for the future.

One of our memorable exchanges was our meeting with Mr Wang, Vice President of the Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. Over dinner we discussed matters important to both our peoples

and especially the implications for education. Mutual respect and sharing were central to all our exchanges in China, and again on this occasion, we engaged in meaningful conversation with the aspiration of what working together would enable, particularly in regards to education.

On the second night in Shanghai we dined in the revolving restaurant in the Oriental Pearl Tower, 267 metres up a 468 metre high building. One of the features of the tower is that although the design looks futuristic, nevertheless it is actually inspired from an ancient poem which describes the exquisite imagery of music made in this epic love ballad. As Maori is also a poetic and metaphorical language, we were able to appreciate the value of bringing ancient concepts to the modern world in order to find creative solutions to modern day problems.

These are some of the messages that we have returned home with after our trip to China, which we will share with many for a long time. Our sojourn in a strange land put us in touch with friends and a culture which warmed our hearts and gave us a sense of bright hope. Appreciating our diversity means keeping what is important to us while sharing the richness of our differences to benefit all. We realise again how important it is to honour our respective backgrounds and traditions without prejudice towards others while searching for answers for the future. Looking back on this enriching experience our only regret is not being able to better represent our friends and families back home, and next time we would endeavour to sing and share more from our culture in the knowledge that in sharing we are opening new pathways for the future. ■

Set up in 1958, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Ningxia for short, is one of China's five ethnic minority autonomous regions and the only provincial-level autonomous region of the Hui ethnic. Located on the upper reaches of the Yellow River, it covers an area of 66,400 square kilometers and has a population of 6.39 million, 35.4% of them being of Hui origin. Under its jurisdiction are five prefecture-level cities, namely Yinchuan, Shizuishan, Wuzhong, Guyuan and Zhongwei, and 22 counties and county-level cities (districts). Yinchuan is the region's capital.

Ningxia, bounded on the east by Shaanxi Province, on the west and north by the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and on the south by Gansu Province, is a major transport and communications hub in Northwest China; historically, its position athwart the Silk Road, made it an important East-West trade channel. Today, it is a major junction on the new Eurasian Land Bridge.

In 2011, the region's GDP was 206 billion yuan and the per capita GDP 32,380 yuan. Its highway mileage reached 25,000 kilometers, of which 1,300 kilometers are expressway. The per capita disposable income of urban residents was 17,490 yuan

A Brief Introduction to Ningxia

and the net income of farmers 5,380 yuan. The region has achieved compulsory primary education and put in place a relative complete medical insurance system.

Ningxia's Advantages for Development

Resources. There are more than 50 kinds of verified mineral deposits. The region has large reserves of various types of coal of good quality easily exploitable. It has confirmed reserves of 31 billion tons and prospective reserves of 201.9 billion tons, ranking the sixth and the fifth in China respectively. It occupies the third place in per capita coal production and the first place in per capita electricity generation in the country. In the many mineral resources, the reserves of limestone, gypsum, dolomite for Mg metal smelting, etc. also rank high. Ningxia is also rich in solar and wind energy resources. Its annual sunshine duration is about 2,250 to 3,100 hours and its wind energy reserves amount to 12.14 million Kw.

Agriculture. The region has abundant land resources. It has over 1.10 million hectares of arable land, ranking it third in the country in terms of per capita land occupation. With the Yellow River providing irrigation and with sufficient sunshine, Ningxia is one of China's four major gravity irriga-

tion areas, one of the seven commodity grain bases and one of the 10 fine pasture areas. It has 670,000 hectares of reclaimable land and 2.27 million hectares of exploitable grassland. It is known as the home of Chinese wolfberry, potato, licorice root, Chinese dates and *Tan* sheep for the quality and quantity of their production, and is an important base for growing Chinese medicinal herbs. It is also the biggest cashmere collection and distribution center in China, with an annual trade volume of more than 30 million tons. The total volume of its raw cashmere purchase takes up 60% of the world total. The region grows quality wine grapes which are rated as good as those grown in Bordeaux of France. Eighty percent of its produce is green and organic.

Tourism. Like a miniature of the entire country, Ningxia has both the exquisite sceneries of South China and magnificent landscapes of North China, both vast deserts and imposing rivers, both high mountains and flat plains. Its profound culture and unique natural sceneries are best represented by Mount Helan, Mount Liupan, the Yellow River, the Sand Lake scenic area, the Shapotou tourist resort, the Xixia Mausoleum, the ancient Great Wall, the Xixia culture and the Islamic culture of the Hui people. The ancient Yellow River civilization, the mysterious Xixia culture, the lifestyle and customs of the Hui people and the grand desert scenes are its unique and colorful tourism resources, which make the region one of the most attractive destinations in western China. ■



Glimpses of the Hui Ethnic Group

He Yujiang

China has 56 separate ethnic groups, and the Hui is the second only in size to the majority Han. With a population of 9.82 million (2000 census figure), Hui people are widely scattered and can be found in most counties and cities throughout China. However, most of them live in northwestern autonomous regions and provinces such as Ningxia, Xinjiang, Qinghai and Gansu. There are also many Hui communities in Shanxi, Hebei, Tianjin, Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Yunnan, Henan, Shandong, etc.

Although they speak standard Chinese, the Hui also use some Arabic and Persian words in daily life and religious activities. They are Muslims and there is a mosque in every Hui community.

The origins of the Hui can be found among various groups of Islamic descent. In the mid-7th century CE, a large number of Persian and Arabian traders came to China via the land and maritime Silk Road and eventually settled in inland cities such as Chang'an and Kaifeng and coastal areas like Guangzhou and Quanzhou. In the 13th century, Genghis Khan's Western Expedition led to massive migrations of Central Asians. Through marriages with local people, a new ethnic group, the Hui, came into being.

Why the name? It is said that in the Tang and the Song dynasties, those from Persia and Central Asia would go

back home before the weather got cold and return when it turned warm again. As they traveled to and fro so frequently, the local Han people called them "Hui-hui", which means "go back" in Chinese.

In the process of development, the Hui have formed their own lifestyle and customs including:

Food. They strictly follow the Islamic diet. They like to eat beef, mutton as well as meat of herbivores. They do not eat the meat of non-ruminant animals such as mule, donkey, nor dead or animals not freshly slaughtered in the Islamic way. Their staple food is wheat based. Pork and alcohol are forbidden. The Hui people in different parts of China have developed special local snacks.

Festivals. Three main festivals are the Festival of Fast-breaking, the Corban Festival, and the *Shengji* Festival (Mawlid an-Nabi). Their celebrations of these festivals are virtually identical with Muslims in other parts of the world.

Fast-breaking Festival: Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar is for fasting, during which all Hui (above 12 years for boys and nine for girls) must not eat from dawn to sunset. On the day following the end of the fast month, the Hui meet for congregational prayers at mosques.

Corban Festival, the festival of sacrifice, is held on the 10th day of the

twelfth month, 70 days after the Fast-breaking Festival. Hui go on a pilgrimage to Mecca during the period.

Shengji Festival or Mawlid an-Nabi in Arabic commemorates the birthday as well as the anniversary of the death of the prophet Mohammed. As both the birthday and the anniversary of the death of Mohammed are on the twelfth day of the third month of the Islamic calendar, the Hui people celebrate them together. On this day, old and young, bathe before going to mosque, where they read the Koran, listen to imam's sermon and narrate Mohammed's good deeds and have a meal together.

Clothing. The Hui costumes have been developed from the Han clothing in combination with those of the Arabian and Persian people. A typical man's wear consists of a white Muslim hat, a white shirt, a black waistcoat and a pair of dark trousers, etc., which look very tidy and elegant. The Hui men also like to wear *zhongbai* (Arabic word meaning "topcoat"), which is the favored outfit of the imam, mullah as well as seniors.

Women's clothes are simple and beautiful. They wear *gaitou* (veil, or *purdah*), but in some places, they tend to use caps as substitutes. The Hui women like to inlay threads, embed colors, and embroider flowers on their clothes to make themselves look beautiful and showcase their skills. ■

Random Notes on A Visit to Ningxia

Wang Hong

Talking about Ningxia, one of the first things that come to mind is boxes of red dry Chinese wolfberries on the supermarkets shelves. Geography books tell us: Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region has its capital in Yinchuan. As one of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions in the Yellow River Basin, it has fertile plains, abundant water and developed animal husbandry. It was a major thoroughfare on the ancient Silk Road and is an important habitat for the Hui ethnic group (Muslim). This was really the extent of my previous knowledge about Ningxia.

The region covers 66,400 square kilometers, a very small part of the 9.6 million square kilometer land area of China. Unlike the famed aesthetic landscape of the provinces south of the

Yangtze River and the grand majestic snow-capped mountains on the plateau, the beauty of Ningxia is hardly known. It had not previously been on my “must see” list of places to visit.

However, in June 2012, I visited the region as a member of the CPAFFC delegation. The desolate ancient Silk Road, the lonely Xixia Mausoleum, the vast deserts, the setting sun over the Yellow River and the Great Wall built in the Qin Dynasty (221~206 BCE) showed the rich culture and unique natural scenery of a region worth savoring.

Lonely Xixia Mausoleum

The Xixia Mausoleum of the Xixia (Western Xia) Kingdom, lies about 30 kilometers to the west of Yinchuan City. The tombs of nine Xixia emperors are scattered over a 53-kilometer

stretch of land at the eastern foot of Helan Mountain, with 253 attendant tombs. It is one of the biggest extant imperial mausoleums with most complete ground remains in China.

The Xixia Kingdom was a local authority established by the Dangxiang ethnic group in the early 11th century. Since Li Yuanhao proclaimed himself emperor in Xingqing Prefecture (now Yinchuan City) in 1038; until the kingdom was extirpated by the Mongols in 1227, it was ruled by 10 emperors over its 189 years. During its most thriving period, the kingdom covered an area of 830,000 square kilometers, which included the present day Ningxia, most of Gansu, Western Inner Mongolia, Northern Shaanxi, Eastern Qinghai, Eastern Xinjiang and the southern part of the Republic of Mongolia.

Like the Mayan people in Central America, it is a mystery that the Dangxiang people disappeared from history abruptly after the invasion by the Mongols. What little we know now about the Xixia Kingdom are the results of years of study conducted on unearthed articles from the tombs, stone inscriptions and the indecipherable Xixia characters.

The Xixia Mausoleum is also known as the “pyramid of the East” for its panoramic view created by the nine imperial tombs being built in the pattern of the Big Dipper and the attendant tombs placed accordingly as in the constellation, and the miracle that after erosion by wind and rain for almost a thousand years, these earthen mounts still remain standing.

Everything was exquisitely designed and built. Every imperial mausoleum consists of two gate towers, an

One of the imperial tombs in the Xixia Mausoleum



imperial way with one tablet pavilion on each side, four corner towers, an outer city, an inner city, a sacrificial temple, and a tomb tower. What's special about the latter is that they had not been constructed on top of the coffin chamber. The seven-, five- or nine-storey pagodas with eight-faces had been built with loess inside and supported by timber construction from outside. The pagoda style indicated that Buddhism was very popular in Xixia. The wooden structure of the pagodas was destroyed by the Mongols; the giant earthen mounts we see now are what have been left of the tomb towers.

The Great Wall

The Great Wall is well-known both at home and abroad. As an architectural wonder of the world and for the famous saying "He who has not reached the Great Wall is not a true man", it attracts numerous tourists from all parts of the world.

The Great Wall we see now has been constructed mostly during the

Ming Dynasty (1368~1644 CE). It was built mainly to protect China from northern invaders. In Guyuan City, Ningxia, one can visit the site of the Great Wall built in the Qin Dynasty (221~206 BCE).

The first sections were built in the Seventh Century BCE when China was still divided into many small states. Qinshihuang, the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty, ordered his general Meng Tian to build a wall as a defense against intrusions by the northern tribes after he unified China. The 300,000-strong army and nearly a million civilians led by General Meng constructed new sections while linking walls previously built by independent states and finally a structure stretching from Lintao (present Minxian County in Gansu) in the west to Liaodong in the east with a total length of 7,000 kilometers was completed, which is known as the Great Wall of the Qin Dynasty. The materials used ranged from pounded earth to stones, or mixture of both, which made the wall sturdy and durable. The cost

in human lives and resources was unimaginable.

Many sections of the Qin Dynasty Wall are dilapidated and broken today. But in Guyuan, one is able to see parts of the 2,000-year-old wall built with pounded earth standing firm on the ground.

The Great Wall was built for defensive purposes. The Chinese nation, upholding peace, constructed the wall with wisdom and courage and regarded it as the symbol of the indestructible national spirit. Gazing at the winding wall, I seemed to see the expression on the faces of generals and soldiers of those days showing firm resolve to guard the country against invaders, the wishes of the people for peace and the dream of building a strong nation that had started 2,000 years ago.

Mount Xumi Grottoes

Apart from the Great Wall of the Qin Dynasty, there are many things to see in Guyuan, such as the Mount Xumi Grottoes, 55 kilometers to the northwest of the city proper.

This is one of the ten famous grottoes in China. The place has been a hub of communications and a strategic point since ancient times and was the shortest route from the national capital of Chang'an (Xian) to the western region on the Silk Road. The more than 150 caves have been excavated and Buddhist statues carved since the Northern Wei Dynasty (386~534 CE). What's special about these caves is that they have been dug mostly in the southeastern cliffs of eight peaks separated by chasms. One can imagine the tremendous amount of work involved. In ancient times, it was the first and

Great Wall built in the Ming Dynasty





One of the seven 6-meter-high Buddhist statues in Cave 51

biggest Buddhist cave temple west of Chang'an, drawing travelers from all directions. Among the caves, the No. 5, the No. 33, and the No. 51 are most representative.

One of the most attractive statues was a Buddha carved out of one piece of giant rock. It is 20.6 meters in height and seated in a horseshoe-shaped terrace dug into a cliff with a dome roof. The craftsmen gave the stone Buddha vivid expression and skin-like texture. The excavation started in the Tang Dynasty (618~907 CE), some say during the reign of Empress Wu Zetian. The No. 5 Cave is called the Giant Buddha Pavilion; a three-storey wooden pavilion had been constructed to protect the statue and provide a place for worship. The pavilion was destroyed in an 8.5 magnitude earthquake that hit Haiyuan in 1920.

The caves excavated in the Northern Wei period are mostly square-shaped, some with a square pillar-tower carved in the center, on the four sides

of which are tiers of niches, a form developed from India's Chaitya. The No. 33 Cave, a representative of this period, most closely resembles Chaitya.

Cave 51, excavated in the Northern Zhou period (557~581 CE), is a large cave consisting of a front, a main and two side chambers. It is the largest pillar-tower cave in Mount Xumi, and the most well-preserved of the many Northern Zhou period caves in China. The seven 6-meter-high sitting Buddha statues, exquisitely carved, are masterpieces of the Mount Xumi Grottoes.

The excavation of grottoes was closely associated with the spread of Buddhism to the East. The grotto temple attracted many worshipers from ancient times. Historically speaking, these grottoes represent the blending of Chinese and Western cultures. As for people today, it is a perfect place to retrace the ancient Silk Road, understand grotto art and learn the history and culture of Guyuan; and a place for sight-seeing.

Strange Encounter

Words such as "desolate", "vast",

"lifeless" are often used to describe deserts. For travelers, they could represent a lonely and even dangerous journey. When talking about rivers and lakes, people always think of the picturesque scenes like sailing at dusk. It is said that deserts are formed due to the lack of water, but in Ningxia, one can see desert and water side by side, namely, Shahu (Sand Lake) in Pingluo County and Shapotou in Zhongwei City.

Arriving at the Sand Lake, I saw a vast stretch of blue water dotted with patches of green reeds, and in the distance beyond the water were sand dunes. The scenic area covers 80.1 square kilometers, of which the lake occupies 45 square kilometers with an average depth of two meters. The unique ecological environment of the lake provides an ideal natural habitat for rare birds and fish.

The desert, covering 22.5 square kilometers, borders on the lake in the south. Climbing up the sand dunes, one could appreciate the natural scenery and enjoy the fun of sliding down the slopes, riding camels and other breath-

The Sand Lake





Sheepskin rafts

taking sports.

There is a beautiful legend about the Sand Lake. It is said that there was a pretty Mongolian girl named Helan who was learned and good at horse riding and archery. She set out one day on a journey to look for the famous primitive cliff-paintings on Tianshan she had heard about. On her way she met Mohan, a tall and handsome young man of the Dangxiang ethnic group adept with both the pen and the sword and forthright by nature. The two fell in love at first sight. They exchanged solemn vows and pledges and entered into betrothal. A year later, they both got the news that Genghis Khan would take Helan as his concubine and the

Mount Helan



Emperor of the Xixia Kingdom would marry his daughter to Mohan. The pair decided they would rather die than obey and chose to run away. On a full-moon night, Helan rode off on a sturdy steed to meet Mohan at the place of their first meeting. After taking elixir, Helan turned into a lake and Mohan into a desert, and lay side by side forever. The maidservants of Helan also turned into reeds, hence this unique landscape.

Shapotou in Zhongwei City is another tourist resort for desert sports. It is located on the southeastern end of the Tengger Desert hemmed by the Yellow River. Standing atop a sand dune, one gets a panoramic view — desert, the winding Yellow River, oasis, and mountains in the distance.

Shapotou was first known both at home and abroad for its success in curbing shifting sands. In the mid-1950s during the construction of the Baotou-Lanzhou Railway, a key artery of communications in China's Northwest, 45 kilometers of track was laid in the Tengger Desert, one of the four major deserts in China. To prevent the railway from being buried by shifting sands and ensure its smooth

operation, new methods were invented and used to keep shifting sands under control.

In the early 1980s, its inimitable landscape became an attraction. Today, it is a tourist resort for sightseeing, desert experiences and extreme sports. It has the largest natural sliding field, a ziptrek across the Yellow River and sheepskin rafts, an old means of transport on the Yellow River. One can ride a camel in the Tengger Desert and surf in an SUV tossing on the sand waves. The rare experiences of traveling in desolate desert, of sliding down the steep slope of a sand dune, of drifting down the Yellow River on a sheepskin raft all add up to the breathtaking view of boundless desert and sunset over the Yellow River.

Ningxia is known in the Chinese tourist circles as the “last virgin land for travel in China”. It has not only ancient sites of Chinese civilization, but also modern desert tourism. It is where Buddhist and Islamic cultures meet and what's more it is an important point in the course of Chinese revolution. One has to come to Ningxia to smell the fragrance of history and see the wonders of nature. ■

Sliding field at Shapotou



Good Policy of Enriching People Transforms Poor Mountain Areas

Jia Ling

From June 11 to 16, 2012, together with other members of the CPAFFC fact-finding mission, I went to a mountainous area in southern Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. During the six days we traveled over 1,800 kilometers and visited one city and twelve prefectures and counties. The highlight of our mission was to make on-the-spot investigation in the Xihaigu area, known for its poverty and considered by the United Nations as one of the least inhabitable areas for human beings in southern part of Ningxia (Xihaigu, a general term for the poorest areas in Ningxia, mainly comprises three counties: Xiji, Haiyuan and Guyuan) and visited farmer households in the eco-resettlement area and teachers and pupils in local primary schools.

I was born and grew up in Ningxia. I have heard of Xihaigu since childhood, but had never been there.

When I was a child, my mother often told me that I had been entrusted to the care of another family when I was only six month old. My mother, a Communist Party member, volunteered to carry on the Socialist Education Movement and the Socialist Transformation Movement in the remote Xihaigu area in the early 1960s and ate, lived and worked together with the peasants. She stayed there for several years.



CPAFFC fact-finding mission donating school supplies to 3 local primary schools

The local natural conditions were very harsh with drought prevailing almost every year. The rugged land seamed with numerous gullies was unsuitable for growing crops. So the best food the local people could obtain was potatoes. They had to climb over two mountain ridges to the foot of the mountain to get drinking water with earthen jars carried on the head. In some families, a dozen of family members only had one adobe *kang* (heatable adobe bed) for sleeping and shared a single worn-out quilt.

The whole family had only one decent outfit, and only the person who went on a long journey would wear it. In some families, all the children were dressed in rags. The small holes on the top of a kitchen range were their bowls from which they ate.

When I was at the primary and middle schools, I often saw my father take rice, flour, clothes and quilts from home to his work unit, and then together with some other people carried all these things to the unit's paired poverty-relief villages in Xihaigu. In the high

mountains and deep gullies, there was only one narrow unpaved road linking Yinchuan City and Xihaigu. Therefore, every time my father sent relief to the villages there, he would not return home until half a month later.

I remember that he once told me the locals depended on relief material for living and yearned to escape from poverty; but they were still suffering despite years of poverty alleviation efforts. Sometimes they even ate up the grain seeds the government had sent them for planting.

From childhood onwards, in my mind “Xihaigu” has been synonymous with poverty and backwardness. I have learned that in the recent decades with the implementation of the Western Development Strategy and the Party’s policy to enrich the people, great changes have taken place in Xihaigu, but my childhood impressions remain strong.

On our way, I could not find the Xihaigu of my memory, however. A high-grade expressway ran through from north to south. It took only three hours to finish a journey that used to take one or even two days. Along the way there were lush green trees and crops. The winding mountain highway around Liupan Mountain was wide and flat. It was no longer a meandering narrow footpath when the Red Army led by Comrade Mao Zedong arrived there during the Long March in 1935.

Climbing to the highest peak in the mountain range, I saw range upon range of mountains in the distance, and green trees and wild flowers in proximity. The panoramic view was very pleasing. In the distance a stretch of houses with red tiles and white walls among shade trees were particularly eye-catching. That was the eco-resettle-

ment area we were to visit.

Because of lack of natural resources and fragile ecological environment, natural disasters occur frequently in Xihaigu. Its annual precipitation is less than 300 mm, much lower than the evaporation volume of 1,336~1,550 mm. Per capita water resources is only 95 cubic meters. Before the reform and opening up, the situation that the people there were still dependent on what nature would yield for food had not yet been fundamentally changed.

Since the implementation of the Western development strategy, in order to help people in mountainous poor areas to shake off poverty, the Central and the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region’s governments have formulated new policies and adopted measures such as whole village relocation, resettlement along the Yellow River pumping irrigation area, labor and education migration. Through these measures, the poor people of various ethnic groups, especially Hui, have moved gradually to places along the Yellow River and the new irrigation areas created by constructing pumping stations lifting Yellow River water to higher land.

Up to now, over 800,000 people from the mountainous area have been resettled. In the Twelfth Five-Year Plan, according to the eco-resettlement program, 350,000 people, 60 percent of them Hui people, will move out of the impoverished mountainous area.

The policy of alleviating poverty through resettlement has greatly improved the quality of life and raised farmers’ income, an increase of 90 times during the last 30 years. It has relieved population pressure, raised the natural resources rate per capita and

further improved the ecological environment in the poor areas. By alleviating poverty through education, the local people’s cultural and educational level has been much upgraded and medical and health conditions have also been significantly improved.

When we entered Qingquan Village in Shatang Town, Longde County, we saw rows of “town houses”. Every household has a courtyard of 200 square meters and rooms of 60 square meters with running water and electricity. In the courtyard is a solar energy stove. On the roof of the house is a solar energy water heater. We visited several farmer households where we saw modern household electric appliances and fashionable furniture; calligraphic works and paintings hung on the walls.

The hosts told us they could now lead a happy life just like people in the city. Simple as these words were, I could sense their heartfelt gratitude to the Party and the State.

In the morning, I was woken by music. I looked out from the window of the county guesthouse and saw on the open space in front of the guesthouse crowds of people, men and women, old and young. Some were practicing *taijiquan*, some were performing *yangge* or modern dance and some were doing setting-up exercises to music. Taking a closer look, I even found that they were doing the Ninth Set of Broadcast Exercises that we in Beijing had not yet learned.

Seeing the happy smiles on their faces, myriad of thoughts welled up in my mind. I truly experienced the earth-shaking changes on this land. All this is an inspiration to us to continue the work under CPC leadership. ■