



On Jan 26, 2019, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries organized the Beijing Philharmonic Choir to travel to the camp of China's peacekeeping force in Lebanon and held the event "We are Here for Peace".



On Jan 26, 2019, the delegation sang "Ode to Peace" and unveiled the "Ode to Peace" sculpture at the camp of the Chinese peacekeeping force in Lebanon.

>> Contents

New Year's Greetings

- 04** New Year's greetings from CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin

Interview

- 05** Interview with Slovak Republic's Ambassador to China H.E. Dusan Bella
/ Staff Reporter

View

- 07** Chinese folk music touches India / Mu Yu
09 My predestined love for La Voz de la Colonia China / Meng Kexin
11 The Belt and Road Initiative as I understand it / Dr K. Gopi Achari PhD

Cultural Exchanges

- 13** Miyoseki Shimura's enthusiasm for Chinese calligraphy and seal cutting
/ Gao Hui
14 Behind the scenes of the 2018 China International Friendship Cities
Conference / Wang Qi
16 The First Session of China-Britain Culture & Art Festival: Academic
Exchange Exhibition of Famous Chinese Artists held at the British Museum
/ Yu Xiaodong

Between Friendship Cities

- 19** Shaoxing holds Second International Friendship Cities Conference
/ Shaoxing Foreign Affairs Office



- 21** Friendship City platform lends force to Belt and Road construction
/ Shaoxing Foreign Affairs Office
- 23** Exchanges between Shaoxing and Japanese youths / Shaoxing Foreign Affairs Office
- 26** A picture scroll that never stops unfolding / Johannah Cook
- 28** Charming ancient city: A fusion of classics and modernity / Kim Nam Hyun

Warm Reminiscences

- 29** My memory of Chu Tunan / Gu Zixin
- 30** Nicholas Platt / He Yan
- 36** In memory of Sergey Leonidovich Tikhvinsky / Li Yonghui
- 39** K.S. Silin, bridge builder of China-Russia friendship / Cai Yunzhe

Express News

- 41** President Li Xiaolin meets with AmCham chief / Zhang Yang
- 41** Vice-President Xie Yuan meets guests from Utah / Jin Hanghang
- 42** Vice-President Hu Sishe attends opening ceremony of animation exhibition in
Chengdu / Liu Wenwen
- 42** Vice-President Lin Yi meets with ambassador of Senegal to China / Yang Xuehe
- 43** Vice-President Song Jingwu meets with Ambassador Zeynalli of the Republic of
Azerbaijan /Feng Miao
- 43** Secretary-General Li Xikui attends Autoperson Development Foundation's annual
meeting / Shao Shuai
- 44** Chengdu's Spring Festival atmosphere spreads into the cradle of Western civilization
— Athens / Chengdu Friendship Association
- 44** Famous German photographer visits SYPAFFC / Shenyang Friendship Association



Published in Chinese and English

Front Cover: On Dec 6, 2019, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin was awarded the Goodwill Ambassador for Protecting Endangered Animals--Animal Paradise Show.

Sponsored and published by the
Chinese People's Association for
Friendship with Foreign Countries

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ISSN 1000-9582 CN11-1234/D

New Year's greetings from CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin

As the New Year begins, everything starts anew. The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and will be a year full of vigor and hope. On behalf of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, I would like to extend my sincere greetings to all Chinese and foreign friendly organizations and people for your longtime concern and support for the work of our association!

The aims of the CPAFFC are to enhance people's friendship, further international cooperation, safeguard world peace and promote common development. On behalf of the Chinese people, the organization makes friends and deepens friendships in the international community, serves the great cause of China's peaceful development and national reunification and works for the cause of human progress and solidarity.

State relations rely on their people's friendship. Understanding and friendship between peoples is the foundation of relations between countries. Since its establishment in 1954, the CPAFFC has worked hard to implement China's independent policy of peace and to observe the Five Principles of peaceful coexistence. It serves as a bridge with the support and concern of the Chinese government and all circles at home and abroad. It carries out people-to-people friendship work in an all-around,

multilevel and wide-ranging manner that enhances understanding, develops friendship and strengthens cooperation between countries. It works hard to lay a solid foundation of friendship between China and other countries and plays an active role in building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

Last year marked the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up policy. Over the past four decades, China has undergone remarkable changes and developments with more frequent exchanges and close contacts with the rest of the world. Looking back at 2018, our association has achieved fruitful results in people-to-people diplomacy. Sixty-seven more pairs of cities established friendly ties during the year, taking the number of cities that have established friendly relations with foreign countries to 2,599.

Rich and colorful bilateral and multilateral activities have been successfully held at home and abroad, such as the special session of the Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council; the reception celebrating the 40th anniversary of the signing of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship; the 2018 China International Friendship Cities Conference; the photo exhibition on China's reform and opening-up and Vietnam's reform and innovation drive; the Belt and Road eco-agriculture and food safety forum at the

China International Import Expo; the third China-Japan Governors Forum; the fourth China-US Governors Forum; the third US-China Sub-national Legislatures Cooperation Forum; the third Forum on China-Africa Local Government Cooperation; the 2018 EU-China Tourism Year: Chinese Lanterns Light Up the Heart of Europe; the Chinese cultural exhibition series titled *Meet China in celebration of the 200th anniversary of Karl Marx's birth*; the Tang Xianzu Drama Festival & International Drama Exchange Month; and the 2018 Imperial Springs International Forum.

These activities have enhanced the friendship between the Chinese people and those of other countries. Understanding and trust of China was deepened. Fruitful results have not come easily. They embody the painstaking efforts of all CPAFFC staff



and the full support of foreign friendly organizations and people.

Here, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to you all. Thank you for your hard work!

Looking ahead to 2019, which marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the CPAFFC will celebrate its own 65th anniversary. The current international situation is complex, with both opportunities and risks. No matter how the situation changes, it is believed that peace and development are always the shared aspiration of people around the world. We will organize a series of activities with greater enthusiasm and stronger determination, centering on significant historical events such as the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China; the 20th anniversary of Macao's return; the 100th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement; the 70th anniversary of the establishment of China-Russia diplomatic ties; the 55th anniversary of the establishment of China-France diplomatic relations; and the 40th anniversary of the establishment of China-US diplomatic ties.

We will give full play to the leading role of the CPAFFC in people-to-people diplomacy, further advance the cause of friendship between the Chinese people and people of other countries and strive for a new landscape in people-to-people diplomacy. I'd like to send my sincere invitation to all the friends who love peace and care about China to join us and work together for a better future!

I wish you all good health and good luck in 2019! ■

Interview with Slovak Republic's Ambassador to China H.E. Dusan Bella

Staff Reporter

Q: Last year marked the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up, while this year is the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Slovak Republic. Would you like to share with us your views on the development of friendly ties between China and Slovakia?

A: The upcoming 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries serves as a reminder of the depth of our friendship, an opportunity to reflect on our achievements and a chance to look ahead into the coming decade. We are ready to develop our dialogue further — especially in the areas of trade, investment, connectivity and R&D — and to focus on people-to-people contacts, including cultural exchanges and tourism. In particular, we are currently working on bringing more Slovak food and beverages to China and hope that the certification process for Slovak milk, meat and other agricultural products will be concluded



in the near future.

It should also be noted that our relations are multifaceted and go beyond mere bilateral ties — multilaterally, we cooperate within the framework of relations between the European Union and China, as well as the 16+1 format (China and Central and Eastern European countries), within which Slovakia focuses on science and technology.

Q: At the heart of Europe, Slovakia has superior geographical

advantages. It is also one of the earliest European countries to sign a memorandum with China on cooperation under the Belt and Road framework. What is your expectation for pragmatic cooperation between China and Slovakia under this framework?

A: Slovakia sees the potential of its engagement in the Belt and Road Initiative mainly through the utilization of its strategic geographic position. In specific terms, our priority is to increase Slovakia's share of the dynamically growing rail freight transport between China and Europe. In the eastern part of Slovakia is one of Europe's few transfer terminals from the broad gauge used in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia to the standard gauge used in Europe. From a technical perspective, the route through Slovakia is a great choice for China-Europe trains as it offers fast, reliable and secure passage.

In November 2017, the first direct train from China to Slovakia arrived in Bratislava from Dalian. Besides lying in the important East-West corridor, Slovakia is also located on the developing North-South transport corridor. Last but not least, the Danube, Europe's greatest river and a crucial transport waterway, flows through Slovakia. Therefore, in the longer term there is considerable potential for taking advantage of this strategic position and turning the transport and logistics sector into one of the new dynamic parts of the Slovak economy.

Q: In recent years, with more people learning the Chinese language in Slovakia, Chinese fever has been

soaring in the country. Can you share with us your views on further deepening the traditional friendship between the two peoples and boosting cultural exchanges between the two countries?

A: There is a growing interest in the Chinese language in Slovakia, as confirmed by the existence of two Confucius Institutes, which are affiliated with Slovak Technical University and Comenius University in Bratislava. I would like to highlight the unique project of a bilingual Sino-Slovak high school in Banská Bystrica, hometown of famous architect Ladislav Hudec, who is known as the man who changed Shanghai. From September 2016 onward, the Bilingual High School of Mikulas Kovac has been offering studies in Chinese and Slovak in all subjects. It is unique, not only in Slovakia but in all of Central Europe.

It is also important to emphasize that interest in our cultures is mutual. Beijing Foreign Studies University offers a degree in Slovak language and culture, and Beijing International Studies University started teaching Slovak at the beginning of the current academic year. I believe in the long-term success of our cooperation in education in general and these projects in particular, which foster greater understanding between our people.

Q: According to the website of the China International Friendship Cities Association, there are four pairs of friendship province/state and city relations between China and Slovakia, which indicates huge potential can be tapped in this regard. Can you

share with us your expectation on the exchanges between these friendship provinces/states and cities?

A: Actually, the number of provincial and sister city pairings is much higher. As far as provinces are concerned, Bratislava province cooperates with Shanghai, Zilina province with Zhejiang and Trnava with Hainan. The list of intercity relationships is even longer — Kosice with Wuhan, Žilina with Changchun, Martin with Ningbo, Liptovský Mikuláš with Zhangye, Trenčín with Qingdao, Nitra with Dalian, Poprad with Tai'an, Lucenec with Hengshui and Ziar nad Hronom with Linzi.

We are also working on connecting one Slovak UNESCO-listed city with a Chinese UNESCO-listed city. This pairing should lead to exchanges of experiences with tourism promotion and management, as well as heritage preservation within the context of their status as World Heritage sites.

One further example of successful cooperation is the Farm of Sino-Czech-Slovak Friendship in Zhongjie, Hebei province, where we support trade and investment, organize performances by Slovak artists and events in collaboration with the Primary School of Sino-Slovak Friendship.

In general, it is my hope that provincial or twin city relations will be actively developed on both sides by proposing and executing concrete projects and initiatives that will add another layer to the fabric of relations between Slovakia and China. More effort is needed on both sides, and our embassy in Beijing is ready to offer a helping hand. ■

Chinese folk music touches India

Mu Yu

In Connaught Place, New Delhi, the sound of a suona horn, created using the “circular breathing” method, was soaring and the audience was at fever pitch. As I stood beside the mixing console behind the audience, I saw two young boys in the front row cheering and applauding excitedly. Their enthusiasm touched me, and I too became excited. As the suona sound died away, applause and cheers broke out again, filling the night sky with an air of festivity. At the end of the performance, I took a deep breath and said to myself, “incredible India”.

In September 2018, at the invitation of institutions in India, the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries sent the Beauty Melody folk music group, which is under the Sichuan Symphony Orchestra, to attend the Delhi International Art Festival. That started a journey that included three incredible performances in the South Asian country.

No cows on the road in New Delhi?

A greeting in Chinese, “Nihao. Huan ying lai Delhi” (Nice to meet you and welcome to Delhi), gave me the first surprise of the trip. The greeting came from a young man, a college

student majoring in Chinese language and literature, who had come to pick us up at the airport. On hearing my native Chinese, I quickly developed an affinity toward this alien land.

To be honest, I had felt a little fidgety upon learning that I would take the trip. There had been many negative media reports about India — such things as unfriendliness to females, outdated infrastructure, severe air pollution and cows walking randomly on the road. When I got off the plane, the warmhearted flight attendant told me: “Be sure to drink bottled water only, and for brushing your teeth, too.” Hearing that, I asked, “Then, what about taking a shower?”

Leaving the airport, we saw an interesting picture. Running on the asphalt roads as common as anywhere in the world were Tutu, motorcycles, cars, trucks and buses, seemingly free of any worry about traffic fines. And the swirling dust didn’t bother them at all. Suddenly, a question struck me. I asked one of my colleagues who had visited India several years ago, “Why are there no cows on the road in New Delhi?”

She answered, “This is the capital of India. How can you imagine their

capital to be so inferior!”

This was my first impression of the country. I have to admit that bias played a negative role. It’s true that seeing is believing.

Art knows no rules

The first performance was arranged at a film center in New Delhi, where schools, workshops and a film-production center were located. The stage was built in an open square and young people could be seen everywhere, busy preparing for the show. A band from Singapore was rehearsing, and our delegation was guided to a lounge by volunteers to wait for the coming performance.

Want a program beforehand? Not available, even with a request to the working staff. The best result you might get was being told about the number of the performance groups. How about the sequence of performances? Just as it may happen. Rehearsal? No way. Want to audition? Don’t wait to be called for your turn, just run for it. Be prepared for unexpected situations, such as an announcement inviting you onto the stage to give awards or make remarks — there will be no notice beforehand.

Standing beside the mixing

console, I felt anxious. What if something went wrong with the microphone or accompaniment? I had already prepared for the worst. However, the miracle happened. The performance went perfectly. The warm-up music was *Seven Moments*, a piece played with Chinese folk musical instruments, the pipa and zhongruan.

No Way Go Out, a popular pipa solo in China, was well received at the scene. Just as a line from the *Song of the Lute Player* goes — the high notes wail like pelting rain — the performance reached its first climax with a pipa solo. *A Hundred Birds Serenade the Phoenix*, a suona horn piece, wrapped up the performance. The sound was so bright, straight up into the sky, that hundreds of birds flew in our direction. The thunderous applause was prolonged.

The second show was in Connaught Place, which I think is the Indian equivalent of Tian'anmen Square. Since the first performance had gone smoothly, we had become more confident. As expected, the performance went well. In fact, what appeared disordered had its own order. I had but to admire the Indians' resourcefulness.

Once our music began to resonate in Connaught Place, the audience responded warmly — even more warmly than the previous night. When the performance concluded, all the Chinese performers praised the Indian audience for their civility, forgetting all the chaos and anxieties before the show. They talked enthusiastically about the possibility of integrating traditional Indian music with the Chinese folk music. Why not? Art

knows no boundaries.

Indian people's hospitality

When it comes to knowledge of India, many people's first recollection is the country called Tianzhu, or Thindu, in the novel *Journey to the West* or its eponymous TV version. In the masterpiece, Monk Tang (San Zang) and his three disciples trekked through many hardships to Tianzhu, where the Western Heaven was believed to be, to obtain Buddhist scriptures. From this perspective, China and India have a time-honored friendship. As one of the world's oldest civilizations, India has coexisted with its northern neighbor in peace.

I had a question in mind before the visit: What do the Indian people think of the Chinese? Although people-to-people friendship holds the key to state-to-state relations, many examples tell us that the relationship between two countries is not always proportional to the ties between their people. Sometimes official diplomacy faces difficulties while people-to-people diplomacy goes well, and vice versa. Only by visiting India personally can one truly know whether the Indian people are friendly, or accurately described by the media.

My question found a pleasing answer: India is a country as hospitable as China. That was beyond my expectation.

The greeting in Chinese to the delegation when we arrived at the airport was the first friendly signal I received from the Indian people. When I met the Chinese performers who had arrived a day earlier, they told us they had also been received by a college student majoring in Chinese. Their

plane landed late at night and there was something wrong with their room reservation. After two hours of effort, the young man managed to settle the problem by contacting the Indian organizing committee and negotiating with the hotel. Only after seeing that everything was all right did he feel free to leave the hotel with the driver.

In an interchange activity at the Hansraj Model School in New Delhi, we once again felt Indian people's hospitality. Heemal H Bhat, principal of the school, told us that in India all guests are regarded as God. I promise this is true.

On Dec 6, 2018, we went to the school to perform with local students as planned. Early in the morning, school buses and two teachers were already waiting outside the hotel. Spacious and bright, the buses had clear school signs. I assumed that the so-called weakness in infrastructure of India definitely did not include their investment in education.

The principal, wearing sari, and two young girls waited for us in the schoolyard. They hung garlands around our necks, put a red dot between our eyebrows, guided us to the lounge and treated us with traditional Indian refreshment. The protocol finished, the Chinese performers were anxious to go to the stage for the audition. The principal insisted that we wait for one more moment and go together with her later. She assured us that there would be enough time for preparation. We did not understand what she meant until we entered the auditorium to see hundreds of students stand up and turn around to welcome us with warm applause.

Seeing a figure of a person hold-

ing a pipa painted on the stage backdrop, we thought that might represent Indian students' direct impression of Chinese culture. Fortunately, pipa-playing was on the program. When the Chinese performers finished their show, they played a Chinese classic — *Jasmine Flower* — with the student band. Finally, we left the stage like superstars amid students' applause and salutes.

In the discussion session after the performance, the students played traditional Indian instruments and shared their views with the Chinese performers. Inspiration sparkled during the discussion, which lingered on as all were reluctant to leave. When we had to leave, the principal and teachers brought many Indian snacks and forced the food into our bags. Indian people's hospitality was unforgettable.

My first trip to India lasted only three days, but I saw a multifaceted country, different from what I had learned from other people's accounts. It is a colorful country with a rich culture and hospitable people.

On the school bus, one of the Indian teachers asked me what impression India had left on me. But I knew how one-sided and narrow-minded my previous impression had been and how ignorant the two peoples are about each other.

In the internet era of information explosion, we are all net friends. However, it is better to talk face to face than to give a like to each other's online posts. People-to-people friendship will ultimately promote state-to-state relations. I hope the Chinese music played in New Delhi has opened a new chapter in Sino-Indian friendship in the new era. ■

My predestined love for La Voz de la Colonia China

Meng Kexin

I always think of my relationship with La Voz de la Colonia China as predestined love.

When I left my five-month old baby to go to Peru to work at the newspaper in 1995, it was like migrating from one end of the world to the other end. There I found myself a complete stranger who even didn't speak the language. I considered it predestined — a stranger predestined to be in a strange land.

I still remember the day I arrived in Peru. Two leaders from the office and three senior Chinese community leaders, all my predecessors at La Voz, came to pick me up at the airport. I could read their strong expectations for me in their eyes.

It has been more than 20 years since then. Only one of them, Luo Jiansong, is still alive today and in very good health. Although more than 80 years old, Luo reads La Voz de la Colonia China every day.

The newspaper borrowed from the

Chinese Freemasons Society a room in a dilapidated building near Chinatown in Peru for its editorial office. Newspapers were printed by letter press at that time, and La Voz's equipment was outdated. The metal type used in typesetting was not of uniform size and quite a few characters were missing. Some of the characters had to be substituted by other marks. Anyone on the staff who returned to Guangdong to visit family would be given the mission to purchase type blocks in Hong Kong.

Later, conventional typesetting became obsolete and type blocks were no longer available. So we had to manage with a hodgepodge of type of different sizes and styles, making the reading of La Voz a guessing game for the reader. How we wished the equipment and working conditions could be improved!

Finally, in 1995, computer composition replaced the conventional typesetting and the pages of the newspaper were doubled from four to

eight. Along with the upgrade came another problem: how to fill all the pages with quality content, given the poor communication in Peru. After all, even the telephone in the office was secondhand, bought from a Chinese neighbor.

At that time, some of the news from the world and China was provided by Xinhua News Agency's New York branch by fax. Sometimes a dispatch could take hours to be received because of bad wire signals. We also used stories excerpted from *Ta Kung Pao* that were mailed from Hong Kong by sea, which usually took several months to arrive. Even though what we read about had happened months ago, we still regarded the out-of-date news as a precious information resource.

Every day we spent a great amount of time reading those papers to search for articles that could be used in *La Voz*. Voluminous material had to be put into the computer character by character, making typing a daily chore. In addition, I did interviews, photography and page composition. It was common for me to work from 9 in the morning until 10 in the evening.

The painstaking efforts paid off. A new version of *La Voz* featured not only richer content but also a new layout. The improvement greatly boosted the paper's circulation and turned years of losses into gains.

My love for *La Voz de la Colonia China* stemmed from its history. The longest-standing Chinese newspaper in South America started its publication on March 7, 1910, with the purposes of making overseas Chinese voices heard and protecting their interests.

At every critical moment of modern history, *La Voz* took responsibility and played a special role.

In the dying years of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), *La Voz* had been embracing the idea of a republic and firmly supported Dr Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary movement to overthrow the feudalistic government.

During the Chinese people's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45), *La Voz* called for donations from Chinese communities in Peru to support the war effort in China.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, *La Voz* took pains to introduce the new government to the local Chinese community, despite the diverging political stances of overseas Chinese, and correcting their inaccurate understandings. The paper's efforts made a special contribution to the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Peru.

Although it is based in South America, far from the motherland, *La Voz de la Colonia China* received attention and care from Party and State leaders back home.

After the end of the "cultural revolution", the editor-in-chief, He Lianxiang, joined a delegation of overseas Chinese in returning to the motherland for a visit and was warmly received by Deng Xiaoping.

During the meeting, Deng told He to rely on the broad masses of overseas Chinese and give full play to everyone's initiatives to overcome difficulties. He hoped that He and her team would answer to the Chinese community's needs and publish matter-

of-fact reports about the new China so as to "make *La Voz* an even better newspaper".

In an inscription he wrote for *La Voz de la Colonia China* in October 1995, Premier Li Peng encouraged us to make it a good newspaper and help enhance the friendship between China and Peru.

The year 2018 marked the newspaper's 108th anniversary. For more than a century, it had weathered suspensions and recoveries caused by financial and other problems. However, it always maintained its vitality and now has acquired more through the start of cooperation with Beijing-based *Global Times* in 2016.

When *La Voz de la Colonia China* resumed publication in 2016, I was appointed editor-in-chief. It was this predestined love — one that cannot easily be let go — that led me back to the newspaper after more than a decade's absence.

With the advance of technology, readers' preferences have greatly shifted from print to e-media. I do feel the question right in front of me: As a traditional newspaper with a history of 100 years, how can *La Voz* stand the stress and emerge victorious in the face of new challenges?

To keep up with the times and continue playing its role, *La Voz* has started to reach out into the e-media network.

I will try my best to do a good job telling China's stories to the world, live up to the older generation's expectations and keep up with the times. ■

The Belt and Road Initiative as I understand it

Dr K. Gopi Achari PhD

Secretary-General, India-China Friendship Association

I am extremely happy to be invited to share my feelings and thoughts to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative Friendship Forum on Oct 24, 2018, at Colombo.

The very name “Silk Road” recalls the glorious history of the well-known trade route from Europe to Asia and the endless flow of caravans and active presence of businessmen, traders, craftsmen and travelers.

To have a suitable route, brave and industrious people more than 2,000 years ago opened several trade routes connecting major civilizations across Asia, Europe and Africa.

For generations, despite frequent skirmishes and wars in Eurasia, traffic on the Silk Road never stopped completely. Though the transportation facilities and technologies were backward, nothing would keep away the merchants, the wise and the envoys from traveling across mountains and rivers amid untold difficulties with utmost

resilience and courage. The countries along the route reaped the fruits of the thriving commerce.

About 1,600 years ago, Fa Hsien, the Chinese Monk, made his maiden pilgrimage to India seeking Buddhist scriptures and literature.

The route along which he traveled was later called the Silk Road and the route he chose to go back to China via the Indian Ocean became known as the Maritime Silk Road. There is no doubt that the Silk Road embodies the spirit of peace, cooperation, mutual learning and hard work. That is its history.

In the 21st century, the political, economic and social situation of the entire world has drastically changed. Modern science and technology, and rapid advancements in the communication sector have influenced the way of life and people’s outlook. People want economic development and better living conditions. The international community, therefore,

is very keen on making use of every opportunity for economic growth and is committed to overall development that connects the past to the present.

When visiting Central and Southeast Asia in September and October 2013, President Xi Jinping proposed creating the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The Chinese government issued an official document in March 2015, laying out the major principles and priorities for the Belt and Road Initiative. According to the Chinese government, the initiative would help promote economic prosperity and regional cooperation, strengthen exchanges and mutual learning between different civilizations and promote world peace and development. The strategy has since been extensively discussed among scholars and policymakers both inside and outside China.

The motivation behind the

initiative can be viewed from economic, domestic and strategic dimensions. First of all, while some might debate whether it is designed as an economic development strategy or a political strategy, there is no doubt that the initiative has a key economic component. As an extension of China's economic development strategy, it will potentially impact 55 percent of global GNP creation and 70 percent of the world's population.

From an economic perspective, the initiative was designed to deal with the economic boom in China, which has resulted in vast capacity and a need to find new markets abroad. The organizational structure of the Belt and Road Initiative also indicates that it is at least initially an economic development strategy.

While scholars and strategists might continue debating whether it is primarily an economic strategy or a political one, the reality is that political and economic factors are inseparable in its design and implementation. As China's new global action plan, the initiative could be largely viewed as a new geo-economic strategy.

The Belt and Road Initiative is a gigantic, multi-dimensional global development project, which has been described as the most significant and far-reaching plan that China has ever put forward.

It is an ambitious attempt to unify and build a web of connectivity linked to China on a scale that has never been seen before.

China estimates that the initiative will directly involve 65 countries, 4.4

billion people and 29 percent of global GDP (\$21 trillion). It will be backed by the New Silk Road Fund of \$40 billion, the China Development Bank's \$900 billion and the bulk of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank's \$100 billion. Economists estimate that more than \$1 trillion of government money will be involved in building the BRI.

The economic logic of connectivity on a transcontinental scale envisaged by the BRI is strong, particularly at a time when globalization appears to be in retreat in the face of rising protectionism and economic nationalism in the United States and the West. The slow recovery of the global economy from the 2008 crisis and its diminished prospects mean that the world needs new impetus for growth. The BRI could certainly be one.

We in India have pointed out for some time that there is an infrastructure gap in Asia that needs to be filled. The Asian Development Bank estimates that Asia requires an investment of about \$1.7 trillion in infrastructure. The connectivity proposed to be built under the BRI is also clearly of benefit to all those exporting countries in Asia that seek better access to markets and supplies.

The postwar Marshall Plan is often mentioned as a precedent for what is being attempted in the BRI. In fact, the BRI is about development not reconstruction, unlike the Marshall Plan.

The significant difference is that the Marshall Plan had limited geographical scope. It was conceived

and executed in the very specific political context of the US's ideological and geopolitical competition with the Soviet Union in postwar Europe.

China will continue to vigorously pursue the Belt and Road Initiative to create new opportunities for social and economic development in participating countries and for the implementation of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides a comprehensive action plan for the international community.

The Belt and Road Initiative, guided by the principle of seeking shared benefits through extensive consultation and joint contribution, originated in China but belongs to the world. All Asian, African and European countries will forge strong partnerships under this initiative so that its benefits will reach more countries and people while boosting interconnectivity and fostering better cooperation.

Before concluding my speech, I would like to note that there are serious concerns as to how the BRI will affect the existing geopolitical and strategic situation in the Indian Ocean region and the complex relations between neighboring countries, particularly in South Asia.

I am of the firm opinion that the Chinese government is committed to addressing the concerns of the BRI, and above all to the notion that this grand multidimensional global development project should be implemented with mutual trust, understanding, consensus and utmost transparency in the participating countries.

Thank you. ■

Miyoseki Shimura's enthusiasm for Chinese calligraphy and seal cutting

Gao Hui

On Aug 8, 2018, through the joint efforts of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and China-Japan Friendship Association, an exhibition of Miyoseki Shimura's seal cutting and calligraphy was held at the National Museum of Chinese Writing in Anyang, Henan province. It was the first time the museum had undertaken a foreign friend's exhibition since it was opened.

Marking the 40th anniversary of the signing of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, the exhibition was fittingly arranged at the National Museum of Chinese Writing in Anyang, Henan province. Shimura explained: "We chose Anyang because it is the home of oracle bones and the cradle of Chinese characters."

The exhibition, themed "From Chinese characters to Hiragana", showcased the long history of cultural exchanges between China and Japan from the perspective of the transmission and evolution of Chinese characters. The exhibition was full of Chinese characteristics. For example, the display included Chinese surnames in ancient forms, which were inspired by Chinese culture and created by combining seal



cutting with color. It also included such serial works as *The Chinese Dream: 12 Wishes and Luxiudagang* (roll up the sleeves and work hard), which reflect China's core socialist values. Shimura's works are a record of China's development as seen from a Japanese perspective. He uses Chinese cultural elements and shrewd observations of China's social conditions. They also conveyed his friendly feelings toward China.

As a member of the Nitten and honorary member of the Xiling Seal Art Society, Shimura has been dedicated to friendly exchanges, especially cultural communication, between China and Japan over the decades. When it comes to his contact with China, he excitedly

recalls his first visit to the country. In October 1972, against the backdrop of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries, he visited China with a Sino-Japanese friendship organization from Fukuoka prefecture, Japan. At the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Chinese premier Zhou Enlai met and stood for a photo with the delegation, which became Shimura's most important memory from his youth.

Though the Sino-Japanese relationship has experienced ups and downs over the past 40 years, Shimura has been committed to promoting the development of bilateral ties. He visited China 210 times and held 29

exhibitions of his calligraphy and seal cutting works in the country. Together with other calligraphers and seal engravers, including Sha Menghai, former president of the Xiling Seal Art Society, he has compiled several dictionaries and made great achievements in teaching, writing and research. In 2011, he gave a piece of his seal cutting work to the China Japan International Youth Exchange Center — a stela called *The everlasting friendship between the Chinese and Japanese peoples* — which was displayed at the Shanghai Expo. The gift will be stored at the center in Beijing. In 2017, the Japanese foreign minister awarded him a prize for his decades of effort in advancing cultural exchanges between China and Japan.

During the exhibition in Anyang, Henan province, Shimura often interacted with the audience, including students at the museum. He said that without Chinese characters there wouldn't be his beloved calligraphy and seal cutting. It has been his cherished desire to go back to the home of Chinese characters and renew his original aspiration cultivated during his studies in China. He is the same age as the People's Republic of China, and this year he will also celebrate his 70th birthday.

He hopes that through calligraphy and seal cutting exchanges the Sino-Japanese friendship will be passed down from generation to generation to realize “harmony of hearts, harmony of skills and perfect response of feelings” — the words he inscribed on the stela for the Shanghai World Expo. ■

Behind the scenes of the 2018 China International Friendship Cities Conference

Wang Qi

Whenever the biennial China International Friendship Cities Conference is mentioned among colleagues in the Department of Friendship Cities, we call the year in which the conference will be held a “big year” and one without the conference a “small year”. At the beginning of every big year, one would naturally think of preparations for the conference, usually scheduled for year's end, as a tough battle and would voluntarily mark on the calendar the dates when the whole department will be busy both before and afterward.

Begun in 2008, the conference has been held in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Guangzhou and Chongqing, all of which were very much representative of friendship cities. The sixth session, which was held in Wuhan on Nov 15, 2018, was the first time the conference had been held in central China. It was also the first time for Wuhan to host a non governmental diplomatic event on such a large scale.

Preparations for the Wuhan meeting started in 2017, when the China

International Friendship Cities Association (CIFCA) sent an advance team to the city for research and held discussions with the local association branch. Though the conference would take place in November, preparations were made throughout most of the year. To give the Wuhan Friendship Cities Conference strong publicity, we promoted it in all domestic and foreign activities in 2017. Every time we went abroad for visits, we told every friend we met about the Wuhan conference, hoping a delegation from that country would involve people from diverse social circles.

Letters of invitation began to be sent out after Spring Festival, and we began to taste the sweetness of success. The seeds of friendship we had sowed in our daily work began to bear fruit, as positive responses from foreign friends started to pour in. Every letter or call of confirmation generated a feeling of achievement — but also added pressure. We had to race against time to arrange detailed accommodations for



With the delegation of the Association of Communes of Romania

every visiting delegation.

One of the happiest things about working for the CIFCA is the chance to communicate with friends of different backgrounds and different cultures around the world. However, starting from September, we often had to work extra hours late into the night to communicate with the foreign delegations, because there were six to seven hours in time difference between China and their countries. Every detailed step, from visa application, registration and accommodation, to arrangements for speeches and meetings needed close attention and timely handling.

Sometimes we had to deal with unexpected changes or requests. One unforgettable experience was with the delegation of the Turkish Cities League, which hadn't responded to our repeated contact attempts but jumped in virtually at the last minute before

the registration deadline with a lot of questions. Upon learning the deadline, the contact representative, Mugla, immediately made an international phone call to my office and explained their special situation and how they treasured the opportunity to attend the conference. Mugla also invited me to become his WeChat friend for more convenient communication.

After getting approval from the leadership, Mugla and I worked nonstop to finish preparing all relevant materials and finally got a successful registration for the nine-member delegation. Mugla said to me afterward by phone that he thought it was quite a successful cooperation between us. "You are definitely my dear friend. Give me a call whenever you come to Turkey. Don't forget about it!"

The phrase "everything is ready" is undoubtedly wishful thinking. The

work seemed endless, since there was always room for improvement. The closer you get to the opening of a conference, the busier you become.

Just as I felt up to my neck in work, I got timely support and help from colleagues and friends: a cup of refreshing coffee handed to me amid telephone calls and the busy tapping of keyboards in the office; someone offering to go to the airport to meet arriving guests instead of me when I happened to be fully engaged in other business; and someone helping me interpret for a foreign guest when I was attending to another task.

No one knew how many sleepless nights the local team in Wuhan had. Some of them lost weight in just a few days; some became hoarse; and some at the check-in desk waited past midnight for late arrivals in an empty lobby. But whenever and wherever you looked

for help, you would be greeted with a smiling face and you would never be disappointed.

The on-site volunteers accompanying foreign guests were well-trained and had fully prepared themselves to provide information about the city and meeting arrangements. An interpreter, Miss Liu, who accompanied the cabinet minister of the Republic of Montenegro, spoke excellent English and helped with several temporarily added meetings. The two volunteers receiving the Russian delegation soon became close friends with its members. When they parted at the end of the conference, both the Russian guests and the Chinese volunteers shed tears of fond farewell.

Everyone's busy working schedules were focused on one purpose: making sure the conference was a success so that foreign friends would acquire a better and more comprehensive understanding of China and that the cooperation between Chinese and foreign cities would achieve greater results.

From the opening keynote speeches to the Wuhan Initiative issued during the closing ceremony, the three-day conference was a success. It ended with abundant praise from all attendees. Proud of our achievements, I also thought it was a pity that I hadn't had time to thank all the heroes behind the scenes.

I look forward to the next session of the conference in Kunming, Yunnan province, in 2020, which I believe will generate more fascinating stories to tell. ■

The First Session of China-Britain Culture & Art Festival: Academic Exchange Exhibition of Famous Chinese Artists held at the British Museum

Yu Xiaodong

On November 27, 2018, the First Session of China-Britain Culture & Art Festival: Academic Exchange Exhibition of Famous Chinese Artists, co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Confederation of Chinese Business (UK), was inaugurated at the British Museum.

Guests from the culture and art circles, including Mr Hu Sishe, vice-president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Baron Steven von Kohorn zu Kornegg and Baroness Anette von Kohorn zu Kornegg, Mr Stephen A. Goldstein CBE DL, spokesperson for the

Queen in the Central Region, Ms. Mary Kingsburg, Director of Chinese Art at the British Museum, Mr Wei Chaohe, Chairman of Confederation of Chinese Business (UK), Ms Pan Xinru, Director of Prince Charles Foundation, Mr Zhao Xichen, Chairman of the Board of Daisy Institute, Mr Wang Ruobing, Secretary General of ZHIsland International (UK), Ms Su Haili, President of Beijing Guanghe Century Culture Investment Management Co., and Dr Tristram Hunt, Director of Victoria and Albert Museum, as well as Chinese artists participating in the exhibition, such as Li Yi, Wang Huanbo, Wei Hongyan, Wang Gangqing, Niu Chao, Zuo Jian-



hong, Liu Jiadi, Sun Xiaodong, Wang Jiachun, Li Bing, Wan Ding and Xing Qingren attended the inauguration ceremony. Multiple media, including the Times, Financial Times, the Telegraph, CCTV, Guangming Online and Ifeng.com participated in and reported on the event.

Being one of the museums possessing the longest history and the most magnificent building in the world, the British Museum has established a relatively strict admittance mechanism for exhibitions. Therefore, the inauguration of this exhibition not only reflected British Museum's recognition to the artists, but also showed its full confidence in the curation and the hosting organizations.

As the first joint exhibition of Chinese ink and wash paintings held at the British Museum, the exhibition has been given great importance to by both China and Britain. After eight months of rigorous screening, 12 artists who,

to a certain extent, can represent the artistic level of Chinese Contemporary Art, were selected to participate in the First Session of China-Britain Culture & Art Festival: Academic Exchange Exhibition of Famous Chinese Artists.

After the inauguration, the art works with unique features were warmly welcomed and enjoyed by local visitors, and the vastness and profundity of Chinese culture contained in these works won plaudits. During the exhibition, artists illustrated the art of Chinese painting with a profundity and easy-to-understand approach for foreign friends and local overseas Chinese. It is worth mentioning that one of the paintings exhibited, which was created by Wang Jiachun, was collected by the British Museum, making it the first work by a Chinese artist collected by the British Museum after that of Wu Guanzhong.

In his inauguration speech, Mr Hu Sishe, vice president of the Chi-

nese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, stressed: "We have attached great importance to this cooperation with the British Museum. We hope to take this opportunity to carry out more exchanges in the art field, introduce more outstanding Chinese artists to British people and introduce British culture to China, so as to further improve mutual understanding and trust and contribute more to the steady and far-reaching development of bilateral relations. Baron Steven von Kohorn zu Kornegg said that China possesses extensive and profound historical and cultural traditions, as well as rapid artistic progress. Many British people, including himself, are fond of Chinese painting. He hoped that more Chinese artists would come to Britain for such exchanges. Mr. Stephen A. Goldstein CBE DL, spokesperson for the Queen in the Central Region, suggested that the exchanges in culture and art are necessary at this crucial moment

for the development of Sino-British relations. And he believed that this exhibition will further enrich the friendly relations between the two countries.

Mr Wang Huanbo, one of the artists in this exhibition said affectionately that “for hundreds of years, splendid cultures emerged in China and Europe, which are two pieces of land with ancient traditions, and formed two parallel peaks, namely Eastern culture and Western culture. There are big differences between the two, which create certain burdens for the two sides to understand the culture of the other.

“However, there are also some things we share in common, which are love and beauty. When we brought our works to exhibit at the British Museum, we were trying to express our concept about love and beauty and introduce the Chinese view of art to friends in Britain.”

In October 2015, on his state visit to Britain, President Xi Jinping and then British Prime Minister David Cameron decided to jointly build a Global Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century and open a golden era in China-UK relations featuring enduring, inclusive and win-win cooperation. This historic decision means that Sino-British relations have reached a new level. With the development of Sino-British relations, the two countries have carried out active exchanges in various fields in recent years, which further strengthened the mutual understanding between the people of the two countries.



Against this background, the delegation to Britain not only participated in the The First Session of China-Britain Culture & Art Festival: Academic Exchange Exhibition of Famous Chinese Artists in this visit but also made broad contacts with local organizations, including the Confederation of Chinese Business (UK); Sino-British Economic, Trade and Investment Association; Royal College of Art; Architectural Association School of Architecture; Stratford-upon-Avon, where Shakespeare was born; the city of Rugby; and Gagosian Gallery, the top gallery in the world. Through the in-depth exchanges of views, multiple cooperative efforts had been achieved.

Both the Confederation of Chinese Business (UK) and the Sino-British Economic, Trade and Investment Association expressed a strong desire to cooperate with Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign

Countries. They hoped to launch a new platform with the CPAFFC to promote exchanges between the two countries in multiple fields and make contribution to the development of bilateral relations.

The Royal College of Art expressed hope of working with China and jointly cultivating talents and academic exchanges in the field of culture and art. The Architectural Association School of Architecture said it would like to obtain more opportunities to participate in construction in China, provide China with professional services, and get more involved in academic exchanges with China. Stratford-upon-Avon and the City of Rugby welcomed the visit of the delegation. Having experienced the vitality brought by the increasing number of Chinese visitors, both cities hoped this trend would continue and the path of cooperation would be broadened. ■

Shaoxing holds Second International Friendship Cities Conference

Shaoxing Foreign Affairs Office

On Nov 5, 2018, the Second China Shaoxing International Friendship Cities Conference was unveiled. More than 300 people in 37 international friendship delegations and 17 domestic city delegations gathered in Shaoxing, to attend a grand event of friendship and development.

The conference was co-organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Zhejiang Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Shaoxing Municipal People's Government. It unfolded with the theme "Friendly cooperation, innovative development", and aimed to invite friends from all walks of life in the international friendship cities to take part in Shaoxing's construction and development. The conference represents Shaoxing's intent to share resources with foreign friendship cities for common benefits.

The number of participating cities and people doubled from the First International Friendship Cities Conference in 2016. Participants totaled more than 300, including friends from 34 cities in 19 countries, three delegations of



The 2nd Shaoxing International Friendship Cities Conference

consulates-general in Shanghai and 17 domestic friendship city delegations. Among them, Nanto and Nishinomiya, Japan, and Daegu, South Korea, have long established friendship city relations with Shaoxing, while other cities such as Kandy, Sri Lanka, and Bobruisk, Belarus, have been courting Shaoxing in recent years and hope to further expand friendly exchanges. These cities all sent delegations headed by their mayors to attend the event.

At the main conference on Nov 6, Ma Weiguang, secretary of the Shaoxing Municipal Party Committee,

extended a warm welcome to all the foreign guests, and introduced Shaoxing's profound historical heritage and unique characteristics as a water town south of the Yangtze River, as well as the city's economic and social development in recent years.

He noted that 2018 marked the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up policy, and that Shaoxing was fully implementing its strategy of establishing a new economic system that is open to the outside world, striving to build itself into an important hub along the Belt and Road routes; an

international city well-connected with Hangzhou, Ningbo and Shanghai; and a city of unique culture.

Subsequently, mayors of friendship cities introduced their cities in a forum, anticipating future development. Witnessed by foreign friends, Shaoxing signed memorandums of friendly exchanges with six cities and launched 10 educational cooperation projects and economic trade cooperation projects. Shaoxing and its international friendship cities will carry out cooperation and exchanges in economy, culture, education and many other fields on a higher level.

During the three-day conference, guests also participated in such activities as the Friendship Cities Photography Exhibition, the Belt and Road Economic Trade Cooperation Forum, the Tourism Education Cooperation Forum and the Intoxicating Shaoxing Evening Gala. It is noteworthy that this year's International Friendship Cities Conference coincided with the annual Shaoxing Yellow Wine Festival, so that guests attended the wine gala's opening ceremony and visited the Yellow Wine Museum for a taste of the charming traditional culture of Shaoxing.

Friendship cities matchmaking

The 5,000 cherry trees planted more than 20 years ago beside the Dayu Mausoleum at the foot of Kuaiji Mountain are now a luxuriant forest and a symbol of Sino-Japanese friendship. In 1983, Shaoxing officially established friendship city relations with Fukumitsu, Toyama prefecture (now Nanto), in Japan. Shaoxing

was first among all prefecture-level cities in Zhejiang province to launch international friendship city relations.

During the Second China Shaoxing International Friendship Cities Conference, a ceremony was held to mark the 35th anniversary of establishing friendship city relations between Shaoxing and Nanto-Awara, Japan.

International friendship city cooperation is an important channel for opening up to the outside world. Over the past 35 years, Shaoxing has established such relations with 50 cities in 26 countries, ranking first among all Chinese cities of the same administrative level. It has also signed memorandums on developing friendly exchanges with 29 foreign cities and won the International Friendship City Exchange and Cooperation Award in 2014, 2016 and 2018.

It is important to both establish and maintain a friendly relationship. While making continuous efforts to expand the international friend circle, Shaoxing also attaches great importance to maintaining and upgrading friendly exchanges with its friendship city partners and has taken that as a key point in its foreign affairs work.

In the past 35 years, Shaoxing has successfully conducted exchanges and cooperation with friendship cities in economy, trade, science, technology and humanities.

In terms of economic and trade cooperation, Shaoxing fully leverages private resources to develop friendly relations with foreign cities, and uses this relationship as a channel to help private enterprises go global.

For example, it has launched the East Africa Business Logistics Park, Tanzania Commercial Bank, Nadi International Hotel and five other projects by cooperating with Suva and Dar es Salaam, with a total investment of \$136.6 million. The Wolong Group acquired ATB Seville Motor Co of Subotica, Serbia. And Fangyuan Agricultural Technology Co cooperated with Belarusian Bobruix Thermal Energy Network Co on a peat soil project.

In cultural exchanges, Shaoxing uses its advantages as a historically famous cultural city to carefully design vehicles for culture diffusion and give a good account of the stories of its people.

In recent years, the city has organized and participated in a series of activities, such as the Majestic Princess cruise ship's maiden Maritime Silk Road voyage; the Encounter Lu Xun in Marx's Hometown photo exhibition; the Lu Xun and World Literature Giants: Masters' Dialogue; and the People's Premier, Zhou Enlai, During Wartime photo exhibition, among several other activities.

Shaoxing has often organized Yueju Opera and Shaoxing Opera troupes and calligraphers to visit foreign friendly cities to spread Chinese culture with positive results. It continuously deepens exchanges and cooperation with international friendship cities in the field of education and promotes exchanges between teachers and youths so as to prepare reserve forces for sustainable development of friendship city relations. ■

Friendship City platform lends force to Belt and Road construction

Shaoxing Foreign Affairs Office

Shaoxing established its first international friendship city relationship in 1983, much earlier than other Chinese cities. It was the first among all prefecture-level cities in Zhejiang province to do so. After Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, proposed the Belt and Road Initiative, Shaoxing's work in developing friendship city relations was boosted immensely. At present, it has concluded agreements with 50 cities in 26 countries for friendship city relations or conducting friendly exchanges, and has signed memorandums to enter friendly exchange relations with 29 foreign cities. Its friendship cities are distributed across five continents, with the number topping all other prefecture-level cities of Zhejiang province and ranking in the first tier of all cities on its level in China.

Shaoxing has entered into friendship city relations with 48 cities along the Belt and Road routes. The newly added major friendship cities in recent years are Kandy (2018), the second-largest city in Sri Lanka, recognized by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee as the world cultural heritage in 1988; Bobruisk, the seventh-largest city in Belarus (2018); Burgas, the fourth-largest city of Bulgaria (2017), whose

comprehensive economic strength ranks second in the country, as well as being one of the central cities on the Black Sea coast; and North Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh (2016), which is also the third foreign capital to enter a friendship city relationship with Shaoxing.

Because of its outstanding performance in unfolding the friendship city work, Shaoxing won the International Friendship City Exchange and Cooperation Award presented by the CPAFFC and CIFCA three consecutive times — 2014, 2016 and 2018.



In June 2017, the Shaoxing Artistic Team participated in the Majestic Princess cruise ship's maiden Maritime Silk Road voyage.

Foreign liaison interacts with foreign economic ties

Integration of four foreign-related undertakings is a strategy of Shaoxing to combine efforts in foreign affairs, foreign trade, foreign economic links and foreign investment, while banking on the city's advantages in its highly developed foreign-oriented economy. The strategy aims to enhance the quality and quantity of the city's open economy. Through the international friendship city platform, it actively promotes cross-border development of Shaoxing enterprises.

For example, the move has helped

bring about the signing of a letter of intent between Shaoxing Fangyuan Agricultural Technology Co and the Belarusian Bobruix Thermal Energy Network Co for joint exploration of peat soil. It also encouraged several important business moves: Zhejiang Wolong Group acquired ATB Seville Motor Co of Subotica, Serbia; Zhejiang Guannan Knitting & Dyeing Co acquired Vrsac Vineyard in Serbia; and Shaoxing Keqiao District Huatian Investment Co invested and established New Zealand Huatian Investment Co in Taupo, New Zealand, for an overall ecological healthcare resort hotel project beside Taupo Lake.

Another example is the China-Foreign Friendship City Special Product Exhibition, which promoted the construction of the New Zealand product pavilion and enhanced the competitiveness and influence of Shaoxing products in the global market.

Economic and trade cooperation between Shaoxing and countries along the Belt and Road routes has reached a considerable scale. So far, 22 such countries have invested in 447 projects in Shaoxing, with contracted foreign investment standing at \$370 million and actually injected funds of around \$72.5 million.

Cultural exchanges with nations along Belt and Road increased

Meanwhile, we took measures to promote cultural exchanges with countries along the Belt and Road routes and tell them Shaoxing's story through culture and art. In June 2017, the Shaoxing Artistic Team was organized to participate in the Majestic Princess cruise ship's maiden Maritime

Silk Road voyage with the CPAFFC. Artists from Shaoxing presented seven cultural feasts to more than 7,000 guests from more than 40 countries, staging art performances with Shaoxing characteristics — silk, Yueju Opera, calligraphy and pottery works — which inspired foreign guests on the ship to express their appreciation of Chinese culture and desire to visit Shaoxing.

In the same month, to commemorate the 45th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between China and New Zealand, the New Zealand Shaoxing Week series of activities took place in Taupo, New Zealand, including concerts, a photo exhibition and economic trade talks, which illustrated Shaoxing culture's profound, all-inclusive and diverse characteristics. In addition, such activities as the China Shaoxing-Hungarian Pecs Friendly Concert and the China (Shaoxing)-India Second International Yoga Day were held, along with other foreign cultural exchange activities such as the Masters' Dialogue cultural exchange symbolizing dialogues between Lu Xun, Tolstoy and Tagore. Shaoxing Wenli College set up the Lanting Calligraphy Overseas Class at the National University of Togliatti in Russia.

Shaoxing's reputation enhanced in Belt and Road countries

In November 2013, Shaoxing held the 2013 Shaoxing-Central and Eastern Europe Friendship Economic Trade Exchange Conference, which was attended by city representatives from seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe, foreign consuls general to Shanghai, business personnel and leaders of more than 150 foreign

enterprises in Shaoxing. During the conference, more than 60 Chinese and foreign companies talked about agriculture, infrastructure construction, textile machinery, environmental protection and the chemical industry, reaching agreements on the peat soil project and some other cooperative programs.

In May 2016, the first International Friendship Cities Conference was successfully convened in Shaoxing and attended by 20 friendship city delegations from 17 countries, nine embassy delegations and nearly 150 foreign guests. Leaders of the CPAFFC and various provinces and municipalities also attended and spoke highly of the conference.

During the meeting, the Friendship City Special Products Exhibition and forums on economy, trade, culture, education and tourism cooperation were held, along with agreement-signing ceremonies for establishing friendship city relations and projects involving water treatment, tourism and other economic and technical fields. In November 2018, Shaoxing successfully convened the second International Friendship Cities Conference. The number of participating cities and personnel, as well as foreign guests, doubled from the first session of the conference. Meanwhile, the Belt and Road Economic Trade Cooperation Forum and the Belt and Road Tourism Education Forum were held, witnessing the signing of agreements (including memoranda) for establishment of seven pairs of friendship cities, three educational cooperation projects and seven economic and trade cooperation

projects.

**Mutual visits enhance
communication with countries
participating in the Belt and Road**

Since 2013, Shaoxing has received 530 visitors in 66 groups from 18 countries along Belt and Road routes, including Russia, India, Sri Lanka, Bulgaria, Poland and Singapore. Among them were high-profile delegations led by such VIPs as a former Czech prime minister, the vice-chairman of the Czech Governors Association, the vice-chairman of the China-CEEC Provincial Governor Association, the Indian textile industry minister, the Indonesian governor of Sulawesi province, Sri Lanka's Central province governor, the international relations assistant to the Albanian president and the Russian Federation president's culture adviser. The city also attached importance to the role of local high-level leaders in communicating with international friendship city partners by organizing group visits to countries along the Belt and Road routes. Since 2013, 39 groups of 204 personnel led by municipal leaders have visited those countries. The city's top leaders personally led the teams to sign agreements for establishing friendship city relations with their foreign counterparts and hold trade negotiations and an investment briefing. The visits helped set up official contacts with the cities along the Belt and Road and created a positive international environment for exchanges and cooperation. They laid a solid foundation for developing positive relations between China and many countries. ■

Exchanges between Shaoxing and Japanese youths

Shaoxing Foreign Affairs Office



In February 2018, amid the friendly exchanges of a youth envoy delegation from Shaoxing city to Nishinomiya, Japan, Japanese middle school students delivered a drum performance.

As close neighbors separated by a strip of water, China and Japan share interlinked culture and long-term people-to-people communication. High-level leaders have attached great importance to youth exchanges between the two countries, which have become an important part of bilateral efforts to improve the two peoples' mutual friendly feelings and cultivate successors in the cause of friendship.

Thanks to Shaoxing's profound historical and cultural heritage — and the special relationship of some of the city's past prominent citizens with Japan — such as Zhou Enlai and Lu Xun

— Shaoxing undertook exchanges with its neighbor earlier than other Chinese cities. In 1983, it launched the first international friendship city relationship. It was with Fukumitsu (now Nanto), Japan. So far, the city has established friendship city relationships or friendly exchange relationships with seven Japanese cities and signed a memorandum for such exchanges with another city.

For more than 30 years, Shaoxing has maintained active exchanges and frequent visits with Japan in sectors such as the economy, culture, education, health and sports and has achieved good results.



In March 1991, the attached middle school of Shaoxing University established friendly ties with the middle school of Awara city, Japan.

Among the activities, the Sino-Japanese youth exchanges have been especially noteworthy. Since Fukumitsu sent the first group of youth envoys to visit Shaoxing in 1984, both sides have exchanged visits regularly with educational delegations, teen envoys and youth delegations. The visits involved 2,961 people in 226 groups, leading to the establishment of 14 pairs of friendship schools and contributing immensely to fostering the future force of Sino-Japanese friendly exchanges.

High-level leadership

Over the years, the Shaoxing municipal government — along with its lawmaking body and legislative advisory committee, and the governments and lawmakers from Japanese friendship cities — all attached great importance to exchanges between the two nations' youths. Shaoxing's government officials received Japanese youths and briefed them about the city's economic and social development. So far, Shaoxing has received more than 2,000 Japanese

young people.

The education committees across Japan also took steps to cooperate with their Shaoxing counterparts. They designated people to take charge of Sino-Japanese youth exchanges and set up the Japan-China Friendship Education Association to promote school communication, sent educational delegations to visit Shaoxing regularly to plan for exchanges of youths and education workers.

The youth envoys from both places were generally led by leaders from education bureaus and education committees, and the host schools were responsible for detailed implementation. The practices have developed into a regular pattern in which education authorities take the leadership while the foreign affairs department gives support. This has laid a solid foundation for the exchange mechanism between Chinese and Japanese youths to continue into the foreseeable future.

Nongovernmental contact

Encouraged by the friendship city mechanism, 14 Shaoxing primary and secondary schools have established friendly relations with counterparts in Japanese friendship cities. The schools all planted trees symbolizing friendship for generations. From the time Awara city dispatched a Japanese youth envoy group for the first time in 1986, it has insisted on dispatching the group every year, no matter how the relationship between China and Japan might have changed. In all, the city has sent 781 youths to visit Shaoxing. During each visit, the envoys felt the warmth of home. They walked hand-in-hand with Chinese students on the campus, sat side-by-side in the classroom and sang and danced together at parties. They felt especially at home when staying with their Chinese friends' families.

Through the colorful exchange activities, Chinese and Japanese youths have crossed national and language barriers to achieve friendships and indelible lifetime memories.

When Shaoxing's middle school student delegation visited Fukumitsu,

local households hung five-star red flags, and residents along the way waved colorful homemade balls, which they presented to the young peacemakers from China.

In the 1990s, a Japanese girl visited Shaoxing and stayed with a Shaoxing middle school student's family. She became good friends with the daughter of the family. The two girls played together and slept in the same bed like sisters. After the Japanese girl returned home, the friends kept up correspondence. Many years later, the mother of the Shaoxing girl visited Japan and came upon the Japanese girl at a banquet given by the Japanese host. The two hugged and shed warm tears. Another example is the reception of a Japanese friend in 2013 who told us that he had come to Shaoxing more than 20 years earlier when he was a student, and afterward had dedicated himself to developing Japanese-Chinese exchanges. He said he was over 40 years old and had a child in middle school. He promised to bring the child with the youth envoy group for a Shaoxing visit.

There are many other stories of Chinese and Japanese students planting the seeds of friendship from generation to generation by participating in the student exchange program.

Diverse form, rich content

Shaoxing and Japanese youth exchanges cover a wide range of fields, including lectures, calligraphy, boarding with families, "hope project" donations, exchanges of students for training in medicine, cooking, agriculture, language and team participation in the Sino-Japanese youth table tennis competition.

The activities helped develop an effective mechanism for Sino-Japanese youth exchanges. Shaoxing and its Japanese counterparts have participated in the national table tennis competition many times.

A musical band comprising 220 students from Nishinomiya Middle School and a wind instrument orchestra from Nanto Yoshie Middle School, which was acclaimed for having reached the Japanese national level, both came to perform in Shaoxing, expressing the friendly feelings of the younger Japanese generation toward Shaoxing.

This year, the mayor of Oyama, Japan, led an early childhood education group to visit Shaoxing, to promote relationships between kindergartens in both cities and advance cooperation in early childhood education. Shaoxing also sent medical, agricultural and language trainees to study in Japan. It sent young doctors to train at Hyogo College of Medicine and the Medical University of Toyama, covering the fields of brain neurosurgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, pediatrics and clinical pathology. They learned first-class techniques and professional ethics there, while experiencing sincere friendship. These young medical workers trained in the friendship cities returned to Shaoxing to become the backbone of the city's hospitals.

The residents of Japanese friendship cities have so far donated 10 million Japanese yen to support Shaoxing's Hope Project — building primary schools and libraries, improving school computer equipment and setting up a Japanese speech contest fund.

Expanding influence

Shaoxing's long-standing friendship with Japan stems from its fame as an ancient city with a rich cultural heritage. It is the birthplace of many historical figures and a trademark rice wine.

To help the visiting Japanese youths understand Shaoxing and China better, we tailor-made the "See Shaoxing for South China Culture" tour route, which catered particularly to the interests of young people. In the former residence of Lu Xun, the Japanese youngsters learned about the great Chinese writer's relations with Japan. In the Sanwei Study, they were told about Lu's stories as a primary school pupil. And they read poetry at the Lanting Pavilion, beside the brook, and practiced calligraphy beside the Mohua Pavilion. They also went boating on East Lake and strolled in the water town that features small arch bridges and a maze of alleys. Shaoxing's history of more than 2,500 years and the time-honored folk customs of the South China water town left a deep impression on the Japanese teenagers.

Meanwhile, we also organized the Japanese youth delegation to tour Beijing, Shanghai and Hangzhou and experience the splendid 5,000-year culture of China. Awed by the majestic Great Wall and the magnificent Forbidden City, and then losing themselves in the beautiful rippling waters of West Lake, the Japanese youths developed a love for China and Shaoxing. They said they wanted to become inheritors and successors of the Sino-Japanese friendship tradition. ■

A picture scroll that never stops unfolding

Johannah Cook

The other day, I visited a museum in Shaoxing's Dongpu town that displayed a scroll running around all four walls of the room. It represents the people of Shaoxing going about their daily lives. The guide said the 15-meter-long work depicts the most human figures in a painting anywhere in the world and is considered to be the Shaoxing equivalent of the Qingming Scroll from the Song Dynasty (960-1279).

Completed over a period of three years, the Dongpu scroll was the painstaking work of artist Shen Houfu, who fell ill toward the end but refused to put down his brush. He continued to paint, even while dying. The people and activities were painted vividly, and the scenes are full of vitality and life.

I have lived in the ancient city of Shaoxing for almost four years now, and I can observe that same vividness and color of the ordinary citizens of Shaoxing, which continues to bring the city to life and enhance its charm.

I am currently employed as a foreign teacher at Zhejiang Yuexiu Foreign Language University in Shaoxing. I have had the opportunity to teach a



Johannah Cook (New Zealand) , Shaoxing honorary citizen

variety of subjects during my time here, including English, Western culture and etiquette, cross-cultural communication, Chinese language for international students and even literature, with a particular emphasis on poetry. The subjects I have had the opportunity to teach here reflect the broad vision and international flavor of this city, which has an eye towards the future.

The campus where I live and

work is located near Shaoxing North Railway station. High-speed trains take 20 minutes to reach Hangzhou and just under two hours to reach Shanghai.

Although I live far from my home country of New Zealand, there are direct flights to Auckland from Hangzhou and Shanghai, which makes me feel as if I'm never too far away from home. There is also an abundance of foreign restaurants here.

Shaoxing has more than 30 sister cities in foreign countries. It's a welcoming place where people are friendly and hospitable. You can feel the truth of a saying by Confucius about welcoming friends from afar.

My mother and her friend recently visited me in Shaoxing. The friend came down with a health problem, and some citizens of Shaoxing kindly offered to drive her to the hospital. The medical staff was friendly and helpful. She was surprised that she did not have to wait long and received her prescription quickly.

I have already visited many of the tourist sites this city has to offer. I have sailed around the bluestone cliffs of East Lake, admired the Buddhist statue carved in rock in the Keyan Scenic Area and feasted on Shaoxing delicacies in the streets surrounding the birthplace of China's greatest modern writer, Lu Xun.

On a hot summer's day last year, I boarded a boat and enjoyed a ride down one of the many canals with an American friend of mine. Relaxing with the sun on my face, I heard nothing but the sounds of the paddle hitting the water. On alighting from the boat, we found ourselves at Shen Garden, and for a moment I was transported back to the lulling and dulcet sounds of Shaoxing Opera that told the tragic story of the poet Lu You, who caught a glimpse of the woman he loved while visiting the same garden. The traditional opera performances that I have attended reflect the gentleness and grace of the people of this city.

The city of Shaoxing has an abundance of cultural and literary

treasures that are too much for the eye to take in.

I have participated in a variety of events in the city. One such event was the 33rd Wang Xizhi calligraphy commemoration held at Lanting pavilion, which was attended by many calligraphy experts from China and abroad. In this way, Shaoxing is a transmitter of traditional Chinese culture to the world.

It was the surrounding mountains of Shaoxing that inspired Wang Xizhi to produce his preface to the poems written at the Orchid Pavilion in the year 353.

On one occasion, when I visited the pavilion, white geese popped out from the trees and into the pond. I could almost imagine Wang Xizhi seated on the riverbank gazing at his beloved swans. Wandering among sculptures of literary figures from the past who chose to make Shaoxing their home, it is not difficult to imagine that you are living in another age.

Other famous literati from later dynasties, such as Wang Yangming, who were either born in Shaoxing or chose to make it their home, had distinctive personalities and followed their own hearts in their views on life and philosophy.

Shaoxing has modernized while retaining a sense of tranquility. There is an elegance and sophistication in the traditional architecture here that does not need bright lights or audacious colors. Simply wandering along the cobblestone streets of Shaoxing without any particular destination in mind can bring many unexpected delights. I was inspired to write the following poem:

*Sporadic bursts of the aroma and
sizzle of smelly tofu,*

*Cues of hungry patrons line the
cobblestone streets.*

*It's been almost two years now
and still I never tire of*

*the white plastered walls and
sloping black tiled roofs.*

*Turning a corner in these twisting
lanes,*

*Unfolds a view that is so different
from the last.*

*Black-awning boats crowd the
narrow canals,*

*The boatman carefully navigates
the undulating waves.*

*There are pavilion rest stops in
the nooks of hidden corners,*

*to sit back and watch scenes
brimming with life and vigor.*

In the style of the ancient literati of the past who yearned for the mountains of Zhejiang in order to transcend the world and to live a life inspired by art, music, wine and poetry, one can while away the days in Shaoxing by strolling about on the cobblestones or sitting in a canal boat and enjoying the sights. The traditional black awning boats of Shaoxing can be controlled with one's feet so that the hands are left free to sip the famous Shaoxing yellow wine. At nightfall, when the red lanterns are reflected in the shimmering waterways, it does feel as if you are living in a dream! I have thoroughly enjoyed my stay in Shaoxing so far and it has been an extraordinary privilege to be named an honorary citizen of this delightful place. ■

Charming ancient city: A fusion of classics and modernity

Kim Nam Hyun

I am Kim Nam Hyun from South Korea. I have worked at Shaoxing Zhejiang Yuexiu Foreign Language College for more than 10 years. Over the period, I have established profound friendships with the teachers and students of the college. It has been a great pleasure to see batch after batch of students graduate from the school and start their professional careers.

Meanwhile, I've also witnessed tremendous changes in Shaoxing in the past few years, and increasingly realized that Shaoxing is not only an ancient cultural city with a long history but also an emerging modern city.

I remember that when I first came to Shaoxing, Jiefang Road was the most bustling place, featuring white walls, black tile buildings and red lanterns hanging along the roadside. It was simple and beautiful, showing typical Chinese characteristics. Jiefang Road was the main shopping venue. Every day, people went back and forth, bicycles were commonplace and tricycles shuttled over the road. As a foreigner, I felt everything was novel.

At that time, construction of the

city square had just been completed. Every evening, it was the most popular place for people to stroll and for older women to perform square dances. It was there I learned square dance for the first time.

Seemingly unnoticeably, huge changes began to happen in Shaoxing. As the city grew bigger, roads became wider. There are more cars on the street, while bicycles have become people's

fitness tools. New business districts rise one by one. Di Dang New City, Jing Hu New City and Yin Tai Business District have replaced Jiefang Road to become Shaoxing people's preference for leisure and entertainment.

The construction of a high-speed railway, intercity railway, express highway, elevated road and bus rapid transit has made travel more convenient. With the popularity of



Kim Nam Hyun (South Korea), Shaoxing honorary citizen

family cars, Shaoxing, which never knew gridlock in the past, has begun to suffer from traffic jams from time to time during peak hours. This, I think, is probably something inevitable in any city's urban development.

As people's living standards improve rapidly, lifestyles have also changed dramatically. Online shopping has become a trend.

Now, even though I am a foreigner, I have become a full-fledged Taobao addict, seeking cheap but nice stuff online every day. Popular forms of mobile payment allow us to conveniently pay for things anywhere, whether that means at a restaurant, taking a bus or buying an airplane ticket at the airport, so long as we have a mobile phone along.

Now, when I go back to South Korea, I find I'm no longer accustomed to a life with bank card payments. I must applaud China for playing a leading role in the world in that respect.

Shaoxing's growth has accelerated in recent years. The city has also taken on a new look. It boasts clear rivers, flat roads, higher houses and enhanced quality of life for the public. In the new international Shaoxing, many foreigners come for work, study and business. Whenever I bring Korean friends to visit the local scenic spots, sip yellow wine and taste the stinky tofu in the Xianheng restaurants described in Lu Xun's literary works, they say this is like life in Heaven.

I like to live in this city, which has both modern convenience and ancient charm, such as small bridges over streams. I believe Shaoxing has a promising and splendid future. People will lead a happier life here. ■

My memory of Chu Tunan

Gu Zixin

I will always cherish the memory of Chu Tunan, one of the founders and the first president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC).

From 1978 to 1986, Chu served as the CPAFFC's vice-president, assisting the then-president Wang Bingnan. An elderly man of compelling integrity, he commanded universal respect. People addressed him as Venerable Chu.

I have long been an admirer of Venerable Chu. When I was a middle school student, I read his literary translations, including *Gods and Heroes* and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. He was a great man of letters and I felt that I was standing before a prestigious teacher when I first met him in the CPAFFC compound.

At that time, 1983, he doubled as president of another friendship organization. In that year, he visited India in the capacity of China-India Friendship Association president at the invitation of the India-China Society. As secretary-general of the delegation he led, I accompanied Chu throughout the journey, which left a deep impression on me.

Considering that Chu was advanced in age and in an important position, the Indian side carefully asked me for advice on his itinerary. Chu always told me that a guest should suit the convenience of the host, and no specific demands should be made. Every time we were about to attend an activity, he would arrive in the lobby of the

hotel precisely at, or even ahead of, the time scheduled. Every time he met a member of the Indian working staff, he greeted him or her with the same cordiality, regardless of rank. B.N. Pande, who was president of the India-China Society, spent most of his time accompanying us.

Then in his late 70s, he was one of the founding members of the Indian National Congress and a veteran statesman with a high reputation in his country. When Pande was with Chu, the two were courteous and often walked hand in hand. As there was a well-known slogan among Indian people — “Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai” (the Indian and Chinese peoples are brothers) — Chu said to Pande, “We are bhai-bhai.” Pande answered, “Yes. We are brothers, and I am your younger brother.”

Chu stressed in his remarks made in India that the Chinese people should learn from and be grateful to their Indian counterparts for their great support. In his words, Chinese culture originated from Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, and the latter was brought from India to China. Chinese culture has thus drawn strength from Indian culture, he said, adding that in modern history both China and India had suffered under colonialism. He noted that when China was in dire straits after the invasion by Japan, an Indian medical team, including Dwarkanath Kotnis and B.K. Basu, was sent to China to assist the Chinese people in their resistance.

Kotnis dedicated his young life to the liberation of the Chinese people.

India was one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China after its founding in 1949. The recognition played a positive role in breaking the blockade imposed on the new China by the imperialists. Chu said the Chinese people were grateful to the Indian people for all their help. Chu firmly believed that the differences between China and India could be settled in the long run and that friendship between the two peoples would continue. Chu's sincere remarks won wide acclaim in India.

In my memory, Chu was an amiable figure, with smiles always on his face. However, during the visit to India, I saw him fly into a rage for the first time. On that morning, the delegation was informed by the India-China Society that one of Pande's relatives had died the night before and he had to arrange for the funeral. As a result, all the activities would be put back one hour.

Hearing this, Chu asked me to send his condolences to Mr Pande. When Chu was ready to set off one hour later, he saw through the French window two of our colleagues playing on a swing and teasing a peacock in the yard. He burst into anger and said to me, "Call them back! How can they be so childish! Our friend is sad with the loss of a relative, but these two guys glow with joy. Ridiculous!"

I ran to the garden immediately, called them in and asked them to admit their error and apologize before Chu. The scene was etched into my mind. What a venerable gentleman! What a benevolent heart! ■

Nicholas Platt

He Yan

In the fall of 2018, Kansas City — the hometown of Edgar Snow, a noted American journalist known throughout China for his strong relationship with the country — held a grand conference to mark the 80th anniversary of the publication of Snow's classic book *Red Star Over China*. More than 50 experts and scholars from the United States and China gathered on Oct 4 to 6 to remember this old friend of the Chinese people and discuss topics such as US-China relations.

Ambassador Nicholas Platt, an American diplomat who had witnessed the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the US, traveled from New York to attend the conference. At midday on Oct 4, after the opening ceremony of the 18th Edgar Snow Symposium, participants gathered at a barbecue restaurant for lunch and conversation. I sat at a square table with Xie Yuan, vice-president of the CPAFFC; Gao Zhendong, vice-president of the China Society for People's Friendship Studies; and Nicholas Platt.

Platt was in his eighties and has been engaged in Asian diplomacy for 34 years. He had served as US ambassador to Zambia, the Philippines and Pakistan. During his tenure in govern-

ment, he held many important positions, including Asia affairs officer of the US National Security Council, deputy assistant secretary of defense, assistant secretary of state for United Nations affairs and administrative secretary-general of the State Department. He was president of the Asia Society of the US from 1992 to 2004 and is now its honorary president.

In 1972, Platt accompanied Richard Nixon, the US president, to China and witnessed the formal normalization of US-China relations. In 1973, he became one of the first members of the US Liaison Office in Beijing and was appointed director of the office's political department. He called it "the highlight of my career".

At the dinner table, Platt said Nixon's visit to China played a different role from the liaison offices established by the two sides in their respective capitals. Nixon's visit to China was more about seeking a political balance between great powers, while liaison offices promote people-to-people exchanges between two countries.

In 1973, the first groups of American swimmers and divers visited China. At the end of June, the American College Men's Basketball Team and

the Patriotic Women's Basketball Team of the Kennedy School played friendly matches in China. Subsequently, in autumn, the Philadelphia Orchestra toured China. These people-to-people exchanges became milestones in the development of friendly China-US relations.

Meanwhile, Platt actively lobbied David Bruce, director of the US Liaison Office, as well as Chinese officials, to involve their staffs in these activities. Bruce was worried at first but eventually gave his consent. In his diary, Bruce called Platt the "shepherd of the sports delegation".

In August, 1973, Bruce asked Platt to take charge of the Philadelphia Orchestra's show in China. It was a large-scale exchange activity funded by the government and also the first cultural activity with great influence between the two countries. Platt realized the significance of the job and felt great pressure.

He recalled that the two sides sparred over details of the visit, and that negotiating over the show's program was like making a treaty. Despite repeated requests from the Chinese side to play Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, known as the Pastoral Symphony, the orchestra's world-renowned conductor Eugene Ormandy didn't like the piece.

On a flight from Shanghai to Beijing in early September, Platt sat next to Ormandy. He carefully relayed the requests of the Chinese side and found every reason possible to persuade him: "Chinese authorities have a special political preference for the piece." "Chinese people love its theme, which shows the rural life of the peasants." "The Chinese revolution



In 1972, Nicholas Platt joined then US President Nixon during his trip to China and was received by Premier Zhou Enlai.

is a revolution of peasants, and the fourth movement embodies their struggle through the storm." "The final movement, calm and triumphant, reveals the new look of China under the leadership of the Communist Party."

Ormandy sighed and said, "If that's what they want, so be it. When in Rome do as the Romans do. I'll forget my principles." His only condition was that he should have the music score by the next afternoon. Platt was relieved.

The Philadelphia Orchestra brought a huge lineup of more than 130 people, and the impact of its first tour of China was tremendous. As the New York Times commented, if ping-pong diplomacy paved the way for President Nixon's visit to China in 1972 and ushered in a new era of US-China diplomacy, it was the Philadelphia Orchestra's tour to China that really bound the two countries together.

I took the name card Platt gave me and noticed the title: Senior Adviser of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He said, "I suggested that the orchestra should perform not only in one city of China, but also more places. Besides shows, the orchestra should hold training courses, visit libraries and hospitals and perform on a small scale for ordinary audiences."

"The Chinese people believe that soft power works both ways. On one hand, they invite American artists to perform in China; on the other, they hope Americans will offer assistance, such as training musicians, helping Chinese bands reach international level and performing abroad."

The Philadelphia Orchestra has toured China several times since 1973. In 2015, Platt facilitated a joint performance of the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Shenzhen Symphony

Orchestra — a large-scale Confucian cultural choral symphony, *Ode to Humanism* — for the first time. He said, “Music does not need language and is very useful for communication between the two peoples.”

At the end of the meal, I said, “The trade war between China and the US is very fierce right now. What do you think of current China-US relations?”

Platt answered, “There are indeed some people in the US government who want to change the current US-China relations, but people-to-people exchanges, which are up to the individual, should not be affected by the government. For example, the boss who invited you to have barbecue for lunch today wants to sell barbecue to China. He doesn’t care what the government does with China. In my opinion, people-to-people exchanges and local exchanges are more extensive and important than government relations.”

He added: “This is one of the best barbecue restaurants in Kansas City. The food is so delicious that you will lick your fingers.”

I was curious about his ice-breaking trip to China with Nixon and asked for any anecdote he could remember. Platt demurred: “Wait until tomorrow,” he said. “I’ll talk about it in my speech at the dinner.”

Speech at the InterContinental Hotel

On the evening of Oct 5, the Edgar Snow Memorial Foundation hosted a grand dinner at the InterContinental Hotel. Xu Xueyuan, minister of the Chinese embassy in the United States; Liu Jun, acting consul general of China in Chicago; and Jeff Colyer, governor



At the 18th Edgar Snow Symposium, Nicholas Platt signed his name in his memoirs for readers.

of Kansas, delivered speeches respectively. More than 200 guests from the two countries attended the dinner.

Platt delivered the keynote speech, *China-US Relations: Then and Now*. He made an impromptu comment based on films he had made in China. The first frame that came up was President Nixon stepping off the plane on Feb 21, 1972 and holding Premier Zhou Enlai’s hand as long as he could. Under the left engine of Air Force One, Platt found a low angle to capture the historic moment.

As a diplomat traveling with Nixon, Platt was both excited and slightly apprehensive when he first set foot in China.

“My first and last conversation with Richard Nixon was on Feb 28, 1972, the night the Shanghai Communique was signed,” said he in his speech.

“I arrived at the hotel early for the meeting and found the president sitting there in a cutter shirt and trousers, draped in a printed silk pajama with a

thick, long cigar and a large whisky and soda in each hand. He looked a little tired, but seemed quite satisfied with what had been achieved. He looked so special when you took a closer look. With a big head and small body, he walked a little stooped, and his cheeks were swollen. As written in my notes, ‘His bulging cheeks are three times the size of a walnut’. His double chin also sagged slightly and there was an unmistakable stateliness about it.”

“My superior, William P. Rogers, the secretary of state, walked in. H.R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff with a crew cut who kept a stack of yellow standard notebooks and sharpened pencils at hand, was also present. Henry Kissinger was nowhere to be seen. Marshall Green, assistant secretary of state, and John Holdridge, Kissinger’s assistant, arrived a little late. Then the discussion began. The next day, all these top experts on Asian affairs of the US government would travel to Asia to explain what President Nixon accomplished in China last

week.”

“The president spoke extensively throughout the meeting. Based on his own knowledge and personal relationships with regional and national leaders of Asia, he gave his colleagues advice on how to deal with them. He asked the experts to deliver a message to each leader: “Tell Ferdinand Marcos (president of the Philippines) I said that...’. ‘Make sure Park Chung-hee (the president of Korea) and Sato Eisaku, (prime minister of Japan) remember that ...’.

“Nixon expected that Asian leaders in general would respond positively, and only Taiwan would be disappointed. Yet Chiang Kai-shek should have faith in America’s security commitments. Although the 9,000 American troops in Taiwan were insignificant compared with the 450,000 in Vietnam, Chiang had no choice. The president also implied that he was well aware that his visit to China would upset the Soviet Union.

“Nixon did a fantastic job. He lived up to his name as the most successful president of his time and was great with foreign policy. At the end of the meeting, Nixon thanked each of us for our work. Secretary of State Rogers introduced me to Nixon as the new China expert in the State Department. I told Nixon that I had prepared for this trip for a decade and was grateful that he had made it happen.

“He walked me to the door of the suite and kindly put his hand on my shoulder. When we got to the door, he said, ‘So, from now on, you China boys have more to do.’”

Platt was deeply impressed by the premier, Zhou Enlai, who made

significant efforts to ensure the success of Nixon’s visit to China. He personally approved key pages of People’s Daily; he met with Rogers informally in Shanghai to make sure there was no conflict within the US delegation over the wording of the Shanghai Communique.

Platt wrote in his memoir: “I was introduced to Premier Zhou Enlai, who was told that I could speak Chinese. As we stood facing each other, the premier began to speak, quoting Mao Zedong’s poems in a thick Jiangsu accent. ‘He who has never been to the Great Wall is not a true man.’ He asked me if it was appropriate to use it as a toast on the day President Nixon came to the Great Wall. I did not quite understand him, but nodded wisely and blurted out that it was certainly appropriate. I was quite surprised and didn’t expect him to come and talk to me, the youngest person at the party, about the matter.”

The next year, while meeting with David Bruce, first director of the US Liaison Office in China, Zhou said to Platt, who accompanied Bruce at that time, that he remembered talking to him about poetry during Nixon’s visit to China.

Q&As at the 18th Edgar Snow Symposium

The 18th Edgar Snow Symposium was held at the InterContinental Hotel for three days, with nine group lectures. At the Seminar of International Relations on the afternoon of Oct 5, Sheena Greitens, assistant professor of political science at the University of Missouri; Grant Kettering, director of the Governance Institute of Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Nicholas Platt

delivered keynote speeches. John James Kennedy, assistant professor of political science at the University of Kansas, presided over the seminar. There was a lively discussion after the speeches, and Platt took questions from the audience.

Q: Around the world, great powers such as the US, China and Russia are competing for control of information technology. Most countries develop their information technologies based on the US internet architecture, but China and Russia are building their own internet infrastructure. So, could you talk about what the future of internet governance looks like? What significance does it have for relations between the US, China and Russia?

A: It’s a very profound question, and no one knows the answer. The truth is that the US and China have found a way to understand each other. This has been the case in the past and will continue to be the case in the future.

One of the great forces shaping US-China relations is curiosity. We may have a little friendship, but curiosity and self-interest are primary. Every country wants to control the flow of information, but the problem is, if you want development and innovation, if you want to develop technology, you have to have as much free flow of information as possible. A lot of countries want absolute control of the internet and I think they’ve failed.

Q: What do you think of current US-China relations? Already in a very abnormal condition?

A: Competition is part of a normal relationship. Now we emphasize



Group photo at the 18th Edgar Snow Symposium

competition and the government decides to take on China as a rival, which is not a new concept. The US and China compete and cooperate with each other. Hundreds of planes fly between the two countries every day, and even bad relations between the two countries can't stop the two peoples from exchanging with each other. We are all worried about the competition. We must do as Chairman Mao said, and carry out cooperation at all levels between the two countries.

Q: Competition is very important in a market system. It works well in many places, but is less effective in others. The Chinese model is different and has contributed to China's rapid development in the past few years. Please comment on the two different models.

A: I think we can learn from

each other. The failure of the Great Leap Forward has left me with a deep impression, as well as South Korea's economic takeoff. China has combined the planned economy with the market economy and has achieved rapid growth, especially in the private sector. Its great success lies in a single economy in which private and public ownership coexist, which is crucial.

Q: After 2008, the Americas and Europe were in the doldrums. How did China recover from the downturn by rebuilding its infrastructure?

A: China has poured huge amounts of money into the economy and successfully avoided a crisis, with the consequence that its debt has soared. China needs to find ways to diversify its economy. The large-scale tax reform of the US government has stimulated the economy to some extent,

at least for now. So it has also allowed us to take on a lot of debt that will have to be dealt with for many years to come.

Platt emphasized at the seminar that "relationships between people are the core of US-China relations. In the early days our relationship was like a one-wire field handphone, with Dr Kissinger calling on one end and Premier Zhou Enlai answering on the other. Now our relationship is more like a fiber broadband, with thousands of pieces of information flowing in both directions, much of which is outside the government. In an era of heightened tension and disagreement, carrying out cooperation in contentious areas is an attractive strategy that will continue to grow in importance." ■

Editor's note



The 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia.

On Oct 2, 1949, the Soviet Union became the first country in the world to recognize and establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.

Three days later, on Oct 5, the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association was founded in Beijing, and Liu Shaoqi was elected as its president.

On Dec 27, 1991, China and Russia signed the Minutes of Talks in Moscow, confirming that Russia inherited the diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and China.

Over the past seven decades, many memorable stories have taken place between the governments and people of the two great countries.

Voice of Friendship will publish several articles in each issue of 2019 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of China-Russia diplomatic relations. ■

In memory of Sergey Leonidovich Tikhvinsky

Li Yonghui

Tikhvinsky, born in September 1918, died at the age of 100 in February, 2018.

Sergey Leonidovich Tikhvinsky was an outstanding Russian diplomat serving with experience and distinction. He was a historian and leading authority in Russia's Chinese studies who made immeasurable contributions to East Asia studies, especially regarding China. And he was an author with many books to his credit. Actually, I still haven't finished reading through all his works, which I believe demand time to acquire a thorough understanding. Thus I venture to write this article in respectful memory.

Here I'd like to share my impression of Tikhvinsky in the following three aspects: first, what he was like in my eyes; second, what he has done to popularize knowledge about Chinese history and culture; and last but not least, his continuous contribution to friendly relations between China and Russia.

Academician Tikhvinsky in my eyes

The first time I met Tikhvinsky was in 1994 in a corridor on the fourth floor of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Far Eastern Studies. One day I went to the institute, and as I stepped out of the elevator, an old man with silver hair came into view. He stooped forward, supported by a walking stick, while I strode in haste in his direction. He stopped to let me pass. I heard him murmuring in a soft voice: "Still waters run deep." I immediately slowed down and said "good morning" and "thank you". That was our first meeting. His look was calm but penetrating. I didn't know he was the well-known academician Tikhvinsky.

The next time I met him was in 1999, during my three-months of study and research at the institute for my doctoral dissertation. I attended the institute's annual meeting, which was themed "China, Chinese Civilization and the World". Tikhvinsky was sitting on the rostrum all by himself and

speaking in a confident and composed manner about China's reform. It was a time when most of the young researchers were leaving the institute to find new jobs that made big money. I got the chance to interview him.

Tikhvinsky was a scholar with profound knowledge about Eastern countries, as well as a born diplomat who had advanced to the senior level of the Soviet foreign ministry very early. On Oct 2, 1949, Tikhvinsky was the consul general for the Soviet Union in Beijing and participated in the process of establishing diplomatic relations with China on behalf of his government. He also played a critical role in the process of establishing diplomatic ties with another Far-East neighbor, Japan, in the 1950s. From 1956 to 1957, he was the head of the Soviet representative office and served as minister-counselor in Japan.

The topic of my dissertation was Russia-Japan relations. Thus my interview with Tikhvinsky started with one of his monographs — Russia and

Japan: Destined To Be Good Neighbors — in which he gave a comprehensive description of the negotiation process between the Soviet Union and Japan for their joint declaration. Tikhvinsky insisted that it was the United States that attempted to write off the decisions made in the Cairo Declaration and Yalta Agreement regarding the ownership of Taiwan, the Penghus, the Ryukyu Islands, the Bonin Islands, the southern half of Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands. The US tried to leave the status of all above areas undetermined by asking Japan to relinquish sovereignty while not breathing a single word on those territories' ownership in the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which left room for troubles to arise in later times.

I then asked him why the Soviet Union didn't sign the treaty and whether the decision now proved to be a wise one. I raised the question because the Soviet Union's decision not to sign mattered significantly in later territorial disputes with Japan. Its gains and losses on this issue remained a hot topic of discussions and debates in academic circles. In Nikita Khrushchev's Memoirs, which was published in 1991, Tikhvinsky quoted Khrushchev as saying the Soviet Union's refusal to sign the treaty played into the hands of the United States. He believed that the Soviet Union should not always follow the US but open up a representative office or even an embassy in Japan.

Tikhvinsky commented that Khrushchev's words did not conform to the actual situation in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the Cold War had already come into being and the two sides were bitterly standing

off. The San Francisco Peace Treaty was proposed by Britain and the US without taking the Soviets' ideas into account. That's why, in the end, the Soviet Union did not sign. Tikhvinsky went on to talk about the international backgrounds for the reestablishment of diplomatic ties between the Soviet Union and Japan, and the drastic change in Moscow's foreign strategy.

The interview lasted for more than an hour. However, Tikhvinsky seemed always hale, hearty and quick of mind. He was like a mirror faithfully reflecting the history, into which one looked to find everything as clear and vivid as if one were back to the very historical moment. His humor and modesty impressed me greatly. When I praised him for his voluminous works, he said with a straight face, "Indeed. I have wasted quite a lot of paper in the course of my long life." His visage was calm and piercing, even though he was 81 at the time.

Promoter of Chinese history and culture

Tikhvinsky's extraordinary life was closely related to China's history and development process. As a professional diplomat, he worked in China, Britain, and Japan in the 1950s and 1960s, then later in the United Nations General Assembly, and then in the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization as a Soviet delegate. Between 1980 and 1986, he was the dean of the Diplomatic Academy, while in charge of the Soviet Academy of Sciences' Institute of Historical Research. Wherever he worked or whatever post he held, his academic interest

was always about China. His master's thesis was about Dr Sun Yat-sen, and his doctoral dissertation was a study of China's social reform movements in the late 19th century. In China, he was more like a witness and sometimes a participant in a series of critical events that changed China's destiny and affected the world.

Tikhvinsky devoted his life to studies of Chinese history and culture. He was one of the best-known experts in Russia on China's contemporary history. He dedicated his last 30 years exclusively to academic studies. He wrote over 10 treatises and more than 500 theses, among which Kang Youwei and *China's Reform Movement at the End of 19th Century* (1959) and Sun Yat-sen's *Foreign Policies and Practices* (1964) were regarded as the most valuable works on the Chinese Revolution of 1911, winning broad attention and praise from Sinology circles in both Russia and China. The two books, together with *China's Path of Independence and Unity from 1898 to 1949: Based on the Biography of Zhou Enlai*, which was published in 1996, constituted the basis of his studies of the three different stages of China's modern history.

His research methods, the rich and accurate historical data he used and his viewpoints greatly influenced Sinology studies in Russia. *Modern History of China* (1972), compiled by Tikhvinsky, has been translated into Chinese, English, French, Polish and many other languages. Its influence is still felt in China study circles.

A series of books — *China's Reform and Revolution* — compiled by Tikhvinsky won the Russian Federation

National Award in 2000. President Vladimir Putin presented the prize personally.

Tikhvinsky has maintained close cooperation with the Institute of Modern History and the Institute of World History under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He was often invited as the honored guest at various conferences on historical studies held in China.

The Russian edition of *General History of China* — from Ancient Times to Early 21st Century was his most important academic work. The series covered almost all historical periods from the Paleolithic Period to the beginning of the 21st century. Academician Tikhvinsky was the editor-in-chief of the book series.

A launching ceremony for the publication of the tenth and last volume of *General History of China* was held in Moscow in November 2017, marking the completion of the five-year compilation by the whole Russian Sinology circle.

After finishing the most important thing in his life, Tikhvinsky left this world in peace. Heaven got another Russian Sinologist.

Strong supporter of friendly China-Russia relations

While reading through the historical documents about Tikhvinsky, I happened to notice that in October 1949 he participated significantly in the process of the Soviet Union recognizing the new regime of China in the capacity of general consul to Peking and interim charge d'affaires of the Soviet Union. He was also invited by Chairman Mao to the founding ceremony on Oct 1.

On Oct 5 he attended the meeting for establishing the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association held in Huarentang Hall in Zhongnanhai, the seat of the new government. Liu Shaoqi became the inaugural president of the newly established nongovernmental organization. Vice-presidents included Soon Ching-ling, Wu Yuzhang, Shen Junru, Li Jishen, Guo Moruo, Zhang Lan, Huang Yanpei. According to its by laws, the association was founded to develop and strengthen Sino-Soviet friendly relations; enhance bilateral contacts and cooperation in cultural, scientific, and economic fields; and promote solidarity between China and the Soviet Union in the joint fight for lasting peace in the world. The association was the first national association founded in China's people-to-people diplomatic system.

Tikhvinsky became tightly bound to China, especially to the association. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, he became a defender and advocate of friendly China-Russia relations. The cultural and spiritual resonance he found in China became a bond. Tikhvinsky once said: "My life was mostly linked with China. It was the commonality of history that linked Russia with China." This was the reason why, with strong determination and sense of responsibility, he adhered to friendly relations between China and Russia after the termination of the Soviet Union. He took the post of president of the Soviet-China Friendship Association in 1981 and then became the honorary president of the Russia-China Friendship Association in 2003.

As is known to all, the political

struggles inside Russia were heightened as the old Soviet order collapsed, especially confrontations between various political parties regarding the amendment of the Constitution, economic reform and a cabinet reshuffle, and as the government decided to adopt a pro-West diplomatic policy. Many of the foreign friendship associations founded during Soviet Union period had to shut down due to lack of governmental funding. Only the Russia-China Friendship Association survived with the support of Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, disregarding ideological controversies.

In the 1990s, the institute also suffered from a serious outflow of researchers and reduced finances because of a national economic crisis at the time. However, its appreciation and support for China's reform and opening-up and the persistence of Sino-Russian friendship encouraged it to maintain the operation of the Russia-China Friendship Association. The association has remained the strongest promoter of people-to-people diplomacy between the two countries, playing a unique role in improving bilateral relations. As Russian writer and philosopher Nikolai Chernyshevsky once said: "The path of history is never like the sidewalk of Neva Avenue. It is more like marching across the fields, through dust, mud, marshes, brambles and jungles." However, few have the insight to pierce through the mist of time.

Upon the death of Tikhvinsky, Putin said that the academician had "contributed immensely" to establishing and consolidating friendly

relations between Russia and China.

Academician Tikhvinsky devoted his century-long life to friendly relations between Russia and China and people-to-people contacts between the two peoples. With his profound knowledge and understanding of Chinese history and culture, he built a bridge spanning the two nations to help the Russian people better understand China. He made an outstanding contribution to the development of the China-Russia comprehensive partnership for strategic coordination in the new era. His name will be remembered by history forever.

We should cherish the friendship of Sinologists who have, as Tikhvinsky did, a good understanding of China. We should give full play to the function of friendship associations in making friends with foreign scholars who know China well. Their careful thinking can create a common language between peoples from different historical, cultural and religious backgrounds, promote mutual trust and understanding, enhance friendly feelings, strengthen friendly relations between nations and push practical cooperation between China and Russia to higher level. We should offer foreign Sinologists and China-friendly people more practical help so they can play a greater role in solidifying the social and public foundation for lasting friendship. That is the best way to remember Sergey Leonidovich Tikhvinsky. ■

The author is a researcher at the Institute of Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

K.S. Silin, bridge builder of China-Russia friendship

Cai Yunzhe

The Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge was one of the 156 projects China built with support from the Soviet Union during the 1950s. In June 1956, Chairman Mao Zedong wrote a poem of praise: “A bridge will fly to span the north and south, turning a deep chasm into a thoroughfare”. It was a true portrayal of the important role of the bridge in communication between northern and southern China. A major achievement of the first Five-Year Plan of the People’s Republic of China, the bridge’s design was included in the third set of RMB currency issued in April 1962, becoming an important symbol of the national construction of the New China.

On a monument at the bridgehead, characters cast in bronze recorded the names of 28 Soviet experts who helped China with the construction. At the top of the list was Konstantin Sergeevich Silin, chief engineer of the project and head of the Soviet experts group.

On Feb 5, 1996, before he could receive the certificate of Friendship

Ambassador granted by the CPAFFC, Silin died. He was buried in the old Kalitnikovskoe Cemetery in Moscow. On the front side of his black marble tombstone is a picture of a serenely smiling Silin. On the back is a picture of the magnificent Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge.

In 1948, the PLA’s Northeast China Field Army encountered difficulties in its movements in the region, such as damaged bridges and blocked materials transportation. Silin came to China with a Soviet emergency team and helped repair railways and the Songhua River Bridge in Northeast China, so the army could move unhindered to other battlefields for the liberation of China.

In 1949, Silin came to China again as an adviser to the Chinese Ministry of Railways and participated in the construction of bridges on the Chengdu-Chongqing Railway, the Tianshui-Lanzhou Railway and the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway, leaving his footprints all over China.

In 1950, the newly founded

People's Republic of China decided to build a bridge over the Yangtze in Wuhan. In July 1954, the Soviet government sent a 28-member experts group, led by Silin, to help.

At that stage of the bridge's technical design, the builders had encountered serious difficulties. The initial design called for use of the pneumatic caisson method to build the bridge pier foundation. This required workers to work in underwater and withstand the enormous discomfort of air and water pressure. Working on the river's floor, which was nearly 40 meters deep, each man could work only two hours a day. It was difficult to breathe and nitrogen anesthesia occurred easily. It was called "caisson disease".

The 41-year-old Silin was a man who dared to think and act. He boldly put forward an alternative to test — the "large tubular column drilling method" — which had been in his mind for a long time. He believed the pneumatic caisson method was outmoded, and the large tubular column drilling method was a newborn baby. It had not been described in detail in any book. Since there was no river comparable to the Yangtze in the Soviet Union, it had been difficult to test the concept. Now it would be tested in this deep, mighty river.

After careful study by experts of the two countries, the Chinese government adopted Silin's method, which moved him deeply and made him feel the pressure of responsibility. He said, "I've taken root in the Chinese soil."

By the end of 1955, piers No1 and 2, built with the new method, had risen above the river's surface. The success of the new technology greatly

boosted the confidence of all the bridge builders. However, the Soviet government had doubts about it. At the end of 1955, a Soviet delegation headed by E.F. Kozhevnikov, minister of transport and engineering, was sent to China to inspect the construction. With the delegation were a large number of top engineers, including the bridge expert Kolokolov.

Silin felt very nervous about it. He forced a smile and said to his old friend, Peng Min, director of the engineering bureau for the bridge, "I'm ready for the trial." Teng Daiyuan, the minister of railways, learned about the development and immediately sent a message to Silin, telling him: "The method was approved by the Chinese government. You needn't worry." The minister asked the engineering team to continue using Silin's new technology.

The inspection, which lasted more than 10 days, was actually a review of the new method put forward by Silin. The group studied documents and drawings, went to the construction site to survey the terrain and inspect the work and listened to Silin's reasoning. After a rigorous review, Silin's method was finally endorsed by his fellow countrymen.

On October 15, 1957, the Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge was officially opened to traffic. Construction was originally planned to be completed in four years and one month, with a total investment budget of 172 million yuan, but it only took two years and one month, with an actual cost of 138.4 million yuan because of Silin's large tubular column drilling method.

This magnificent bridge, symbolizing the friendship between the Chi-

nese and Russian people, will go down in history forever. Railway minister Teng said as he presented a certificate of appreciation to the experts group led by Silin: "The experts sent by the Soviet government have made outstanding contributions to the completion of the bridge. With their participation and help, we have successfully adopted the large tubular column drilling method, obtained excellent results in the foundation engineering of a deep-water bridge, trained a group of technical cadres and workers and improved the engineering technology for building bridges."

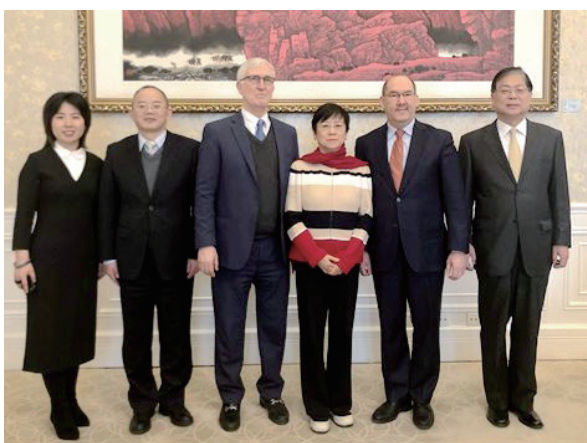
It's true our success could not have happened without the help and support of the Soviet experts, which we must never forget.

Decades later, the CPAFFC invited Silin to visit China several times. When asked what he wanted to do in China, he always answered without hesitation, "I'm going to Wuhan to visit my iron son." In 1983, when Silin visited Wuhan, experts of the Bridge Bureau and old bridge workers hugged him in tears, telling the Russian how they missed him.

Silin died in 1996. The work he was most proud of in his life — the Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge — is deeply rooted in the hearts of the Chinese and Russian people as a monument to friendship. As Vice-President Kulikova of the Russia-China Friendship Association said, "Konstantin Sergeevich Silin, a great witness of the friendship between the Chinese and Russian people who smiled kindly and modestly, will live in our memory forever." ■

President Li Xiaolin meets with AmCham chief

Zhang Yang



President Li Xiaolin met with Timothy P. Stratford, the newly elected chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China on Jan 7.

Li congratulated Stratford on his new position. She noted that the CPAFFC and AmCham China have maintained a long-term working relationship. Last year, the two parties signed a memorandum of understanding for future cooperation. She expressed hope that the two organizations would deepen cooperation in economy, trade and people-to-people exchanges to make a positive contribution to the sound and stable development of relations.

Stratford viewed US-China relations as of vital importance to the two countries, as well as to the world.

Vice-President Xie Yuan meets guests from Utah

Jin Hanghang



Vice-President Xie Yuan met with Dan Stephenson, executive director of Overseas Partnerships for Golden Spike 150th Anniversary — known as Spike 150 — and the executive director of Economic Bridge International on Jan 17.

Stephenson told his host that Spike 150, which was initiated by Utah Governor Gary Herbert and Xie spoke highly of Utah's government and legislature in commemorating the efforts and contribution of Chinese people. The CPAFFC would like to provide full support to Spike 150 and help promote the event to Chinese local governments and companies. He said he hoped Utah would use Spike 150 as a platform to enhance pragmatic cooperation at the subnational level between China and the US to facilitate the sound development of the bilateral relationship.

Vice-President Hu Sishe attends opening ceremony of animation exhibition in Chengdu

Liu Wenwen



Co-organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and Kouzan Fine-Arts Co, and hosted by the China Friendship Institute for International Art Exchange, the first touring exhibition of the world-class animation, *One Piece*, on the Chinese mainland came to an end on Jan 15 in Shenzhen. Attracting around 100,000 visitors, the exhibition was a success. The opening ceremony of the exhibition in Chengdu was held at the Sichuan Museum on Jan 29.

Hu Sishe, vice-president of the CPAFFC; Ono Sinnya, former vice-minister of Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; Wang Yi, vice-president of the Sichuan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and other leaders and guests, attended the opening ceremony.

Vice-President Lin Yi meets with ambassador of Senegal to China

Yang Xuehe



On Jan 2, 2019, Lin Yi, vice-president of the CPAFFC, met in Beijing with H. E. Mamadou Ndiaye, Senegal's ambassador to China.

Lin welcomed Ndiaye and thanked him for his visit at the beginning of the year. She said that Senegal is an important partner of China in Africa. Over the past year, the mutual political trust between the two countries has been continuously enhanced, and the mutually beneficial cooperation has yielded fruitful results, Lin said. The CPAFFC is willing to maintain contact and further coordinate with the embassy of Senegal to promote people-to-people and the cultural exchanges.

Ndiaye spoke highly of the CPAFFC's work with Senegal. The embassy of Senegal in China will continue to work closely with the CPAFFC to deepen mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples, he said.

Vice-President Song Jingwu meets with Ambassador Zeynalli of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Feng Miao



Song Jingwu, vice-president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with Akram Zeynalli, Azerbaijan's ambassador to China, on Jan 17.

Song extended a warm welcome to Zeynalli and conveyed New Year's greetings to him from CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin. Song spoke highly of the high-level cooperation with the Azerbaijan embassy in China last year and said the CPAFFC would like to further strengthen cooperation and promote cultural exchanges and mutual understanding between the people of the two countries.

Zeynalli thanked Song for providing a lot support in the work of the Azerbaijan embassy in China.

Secretary-General Li Xikui attends Autoperson Development Foundation's annual meeting

Shao Shuai



The China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development's Autoperson Development Foundation held its annual meeting in Beijing on Jan 8, 2019. Around 50 experts and scholars in the automobile industry attended, including Li Xikui, secretary-general of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and director of the China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development; Shen Jinjun, president of the China Automobile Dealers Association; Wang Jing, secretary-general of the China Road Traffic Safety Association; Chi Changsheng, executive director of the China Leading Talents Special Committee; and Zhang Xu'an, chief executive officer and executive director and chairman of the board of YIXIN Group.

Chengdu's Spring Festival atmosphere spreads into the cradle of Western civilization – Athens

Chengdu Friendship Association



On January 22nd, local time in Athens, the 2019 Spring Festival Chengdu Cultural and Tourism Roadshow, hosted by Chengdu Municipal Government was held in Athens, Greece. This is Chengdu's first city marketing event in Greece. Wonderful performances with Chengdu characteristics were held at the event site, showing Chengdu's rich and diverse cultural characteristics and deepening the understanding of the resources of Chengdu among political, business and tourism circles of Greece through the introduction of tourist routes and display of creative products. During the period, Chengdu and Athens signed an agreement to establish friendly cooperation relationship.

Famous German photographer visits SYPAFFC

Shenyang Friendship Association



On Jan 28, 2019, Mr Arne C. Gerson, famous German photographer, international business consultant and famous scenarist, paid his visit to SYPAFFC. Mr Wang Zijiang, Vice-Secretary-General of SYPAFFC held a meeting with him and introduced the development of folk and humanistic exchanges between Shenyang and Germany in the recent years. Negotiations were held on the organization of the event of series photography exhibition in titled with "The 47th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between China and Germany – Shenyang in German eyes". We have reached a consensus on cooperation in carrying out the above-mentioned Sino-German cultural exchange projects, expanding Shenyang's popularity in Germany and other European countries, and promoting the exchange and cooperation between Shenyang and other European countries in various fields.