



On April 24, the End Malaria Council Beijing Meeting was held in Beijing.



On April 14, representatives of college students from China and Japan presented calligraphy works symbolizing friendship from generation to generation at the opening ceremony of the "Year of China-Japan Youth Exchange".

Voice of Friendship stems from
Shi Jing (Book of Songs).



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Front Cover: On May 18, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin attended a concert of the American Philadelphia orchestra at the National Grand Theatre to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States.

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Interview with Miguel Angel Ramírez Ramos, Cuba's ambassador to China

Staff Reporter

China and Cuba established diplomatic relations on Sept 28, 1960, making Cuba the first country in Latin America and the Western Hemisphere to forge diplomatic ties with China. Since then, the two countries have maintained friendly exchanges. Mr Ambassador, what do you think is the best way for China and Cuba to carry out practical cooperation in various fields under the new situation where China has put forward the initiative of jointly building One Belt and One Road?

As you mentioned, Cuba and China have had a sincere, long-standing relationship since 1960, after the revolutionary government and the Cuban people recognized the People's Republic of China. Those ties can be described using President Xi Jinping's words: "Both socialist countries are good friends, good comrades and good brothers. Our bilateral ties have withstood the test of time and changes in the international situation."

In this sense, both Communist parties and governments have the mutual interest of keeping strategic relations and strengthening political and economic cooperation in a new era of bilateral affairs.

At the same time it is relevant to let readers know that Cuba has been part of the Maritime Silk Road for

more than 300 years. From the 16th century onward, Chinese ships traveled with merchandise from Fujian to the Philippines and then to Mexico. After traveling through Mexico on mules, the goods were reloaded on ships in Yucatan and sent to Cuba, and finally to Spain. That was the first route of the Maritime Silk Road in Latin America and the Caribbean region.

At present, one of the new scenarios that we identify for developing our bilateral ties is the Belt and Road Initiative, because of the principles and values promoted through this strategy. In this regard, last Nov 8, during the visit to China of Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermudez, we all witnessed the signing of the memorandum of understanding to jointly build One Belt and One Road. It means that Cuba recognizes and supports the initiative. Nowadays, we are exploring the most practical ways to implement the projects under this initiative, how to participate specifically in building the Belt and Road, how Cuban and Chinese enterprises can cooperate, as well as how to improve our economic relations by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the initiative.

I believe both sides can realize mutual benefits with the development of cooperation in trade and investment in sectors such as biopharmaceuticals,



tourism, renewable energies, infrastructure and agriculture. In particular, Cuba established the Mariel Special Economic Zone with many advantages to attract foreign investment. Chinese companies can play an important role within this special zone.

I think it is possible to find viable projects of cooperation not only bilaterally but also under the framework of China-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States Forum and the China-Caribbean Forum. For example, both sides can discuss and promote intraregional connection projects, such as large infrastructure construction, ports, airports and information communication systems that contribute not only to the

integration of Latin American and Caribbean countries but also of our region and China.

Mr Ambassador, as far as we know, you became Cuba's ambassador to China in 2016. Could you tell us your original impression of China? After working in China for a couple of years, especially as an ambassador who has just witnessed the important year of 2018, marking the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up policy, in what ways has your impression of China been changed?

My impression about China has always been very encouraging, because it is a great country that has chosen the path of socialism in order to build a prosperous and sustainable society. Under the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy since 1978, China has been able to build a solid economic base, to reinforce its national capabilities and to improve the standard of living of the population. The Communist Party of China has played a central role in this development strategy.

The results in this period have confirmed the validity of the Party's strategy in the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The alleviation of poverty and creation of a sustainable food supply and a modern and sustainable agricultural system have been a priority. More than 700 million people are no longer in conditions of extreme poverty, which is a remarkable achievement.

Over the past 40 years, changes regarding the fight against corruption, environmental policy, innovation and technological development have been

significant.

In the last five years the progress of reform has encompassed an expansive array of fields. China has initiated supply-side structural reform and drawn a clear line between the government and the market. Also, innovation, science and technology have been set as a priority. Also, the Communist Party of China with General Secretary Xi Jinping at its core, led the anti-corruption fight to form a crushing tide and has won a sweeping victory in all sectors, which is an example for the whole world.

Speaking about foreign affairs, the new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation and following the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration while engaging in global governance is remarkable. At the same time, President Xi's proposition of building a community with a shared future for humanity benefits the entire international community.

In this context, Cuba and China are mutual references in the construction of socialism. We have developed a fruitful exchange of experiences and knowledge, which constitutes an important area of practical bilateral cooperation.

People-to-people and cultural exchanges serve as a bond that enhances friendship. Cuba, as a country with diversified cultures, is unique in dance, music, sports and other aspects, and has many excellent resources. Mr Ambassador, how do you think Cuba and China should further strengthen exchanges in people-to-people and cultural fields under the historic new conditions?

Throughout these 58 years of relations between China and Cuba, culture has played a crucial role in the rapprochement of the Chinese and Cuban peoples, as well as in the development achieved in the rest of the areas of cooperation.

Despite the geographical distance between Cuba and China, we share common features in our cultures and traditions, mainly due to the Chinese migration to Cuba that started more than 170 years ago. Over the course of several decades more than 150,000 Chinese came to Cuba either as coolies from Guangdong or laborers coming from the United States, thus forging a Chinese community in Cuba that has been an indispensable component of the Cuban national identity. Today, after so many years since the arrival of the first Chinese to the island, Cuba considers as its own lots of components of Chinese culture and tradition.

In recent years, the mutual visits of cultural officials, the presentation of artistic groups from one country to another and exchanges and cooperation in the areas of press and book publishing have gradually increased.

Just to mention some relevant examples, last year the 27th edition of the Havana International Book Fair was dedicated to China, an example of the great bilateral cultural links and the increasing interest of both peoples in learning from each other. The Cuban Contemporary Art exhibition that took place in Beijing in April 2018 was also a special event that showed one of the best collections of Cuban art to be shown in China. At the end of the year the prestigious Cuban National Ballet, which has visited China several times,

made a tour through some provinces of China and received great applause from audiences. As we can observe, we have boosted our cultural relations in diverse fields over the years.

One of the essential elements in strengthening cultural exchanges between countries is language learning. Since the arrival in Cuba of the first Chinese students to learn Spanish in the 1960s, the cultural contacts have followed a spiral path for the benefit of the two nations. In November 2009 in Havana, a Confucius Institute was opened — an entity dedicated to the promotion of teaching, diffusion and knowledge of the Chinese language and culture in Cuba through teaching activities, scientific research and cultural and artistic promotion at the local, national and even international levels that encourage friendly links between both peoples.

Certainly, as we have been doing all these years, we will continue to work together to promote the Cuban culture in China, and at the same time to show Cuban people the immense and rich culture of this country. To continue deepening the knowledge between both peoples and strengthening the bonds of friendship, we intend to create more initiatives in diverse fields that bring the cultures of both countries closer together.

Cuba, as an archipelago country in the northern Caribbean, is endowed with rich tourism resources. It is known as the “Pearl of the Caribbean”. Although Cuba is famous for its cigars, many Chinese tourists do not know much about the country because of its geographical distance from China. Mr Ambassador, could you give us a general introduction

about the characteristics of Cuba’s tourism resources?

With nearly 5 million tourists in 2018, Cuba is one of the most unique and fascinating tourist destinations in the Caribbean region, with several islands and keys, beautiful landscapes and a variety of culture, nature, history, magic and tradition. It is one of the safest countries in the world.

The island is connected to 70 cities around the world through 68 airlines, one of them being Air China, which has a direct flight from Beijing to Havana. It has 10 international airports and 15 national airports distributed throughout the archipelago, four cruise terminals and 15 international marinas, all of which represent the logistical infrastructure that eases tourism in Cuba.

Cuba is a small, peaceful country with friendly people and many tourist attractions to visit. Trips to Cuba will be characterized by its people because Cubans are imaginative, joyful, unprejudiced and friends of joking and celebrating. Also the country has many historical sites that tell the stories of its legendary history. The island has nine World Heritage sites declared by UNESCO, 14 national parks and 257 national monuments.

Havana is Cuba’s largest city and its capital, located on the western side of the island. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1982, and travelers will find numerous places of architectural and cultural interest. Havana was declared one of the New 7 Wonders Cities in June 2016, and in November this year will be celebrating its 500th anniversary with many cultural activities.

In addition to Havana, there are other important tourist destinations in the country like Varadero, Trinidad, Pinar del Rio, Santiago de Cuba, Jardines del Rey and Baracoa, with a variety of attractions for nature tourism, cultural tourism, sun and beach tourism and health tourism.

For example, Varadero, a town in Matanzas province, has the most beautiful of Cuban beaches and is one of the most important destinations in the Caribbean. It has facilities for nautical activity, golf events and an attractive nightlife, all accompanied by a tourist infrastructure to guarantee the customer’s satisfaction.

Trinidad de Cuba or La Santísima Trinidad, because of its geographical location, is one of the most complete destinations in Cuba and a city that was forged with the sweat of black slaves. The architecture of this city combines characteristics of the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. Because of its excellent state of conservation it has been named the City Suspended in Time.

Pinar del Rio province, the westernmost Cuban province, with its tobacco-infused soil and the paradigmatic landscapes of Vinales Valley, is a spectacular sight declared a Cultural Landscape of Humanity in 1999 by UNESCO. In Vinales Valley it’s possible to feel the immediacy of the karst mogotes, almost unique in the world.

Ciego de Avila province has one of the most important tourist centers on the island, Jardines del Rey. The excellent tropical climate allows the enjoyment of its calm Caribbean beaches almost all year round. These are the favorites of tourist families who

appreciate the isolation and security of its shallow waters. Jardines del Rey offers enormous potential for ecotourism, with its beautiful seabed, peculiar bird species and unique natural formations.

Santiago de Cuba is a place that has its own rhythm, history, music and festivities. This is a city of warm and hospitable people that today, more than ever, welcomes visitors from all over the world. Located in the eastern region of Cuba, Santiago de Cuba is distinguished as the most mountainous of the Cuban provinces and the most Caribbean as well. It was declared the Hero City of the Republic of Cuba. Santiago de Cuba has a passion for music and is the birthplace of the bolero. Among carnivals, trova music and Cuban rum, trips to Santiago de Cuba will be an amazing experience. The carnival of Santiago de Cuba is the most traditional on the island.

Other popular attractions in Cuba, and beautiful places set aside for nature trekking, include the paradise of Baracoa. It was the first town in Cuba established in the early 16th century. In its territory there are three recognized World Heritage sites: Alejandro de Humboldt National Park, the center of the Biosphere Reserve Ridges of Toa (Cuchillas del Toa) and the archaeological landscapes of the first coffee plantations in southeastern Cuba. So Cuba has more than sugar, tobacco and rum to offer. When you visit Cuba, you will have the chance to feel its culture, its beauty, the warmth of its people, its gastronomy, its carnivals, etc., and visitors can combine this with a good coffee, Mojito or Cuba Libre cocktail.

The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the 60th anniversary of the victory of the Cuban Revolution and the 500th anniversary of the founding of Havana. Old Havana has buildings of different styles in different periods and was listed as a Human Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 1982. As an ancient Oriental civilization, China also has many ancient cities, such as Xi'an and Nanjing. In the past two years, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries has successfully held a series of brand activities called Dialogue between Chinese and Foreign Historical and Cultural Cities, which aims to build favorable platforms and promote exchanges and cooperation between Chinese and foreign cities aimed at the maintenance of old cities and protection of cultural heritage. Mr Ambassador, what kind of cooperation do you think Cuba and China could carry out in this regard?

Cuba has nine UNESCO World Heritage sites. Among them, Old Havana is undoubtedly one of the historical wonders of the Western Hemisphere, where the most authentic elements and the most varied colonial styles are preserved. In 1592 it was declared a city and in 1607 became the capital of Cuba. As it was founded in 1519, this year we are celebrating its 500th anniversary. That's why during this year we will be developing an extensive cultural program that includes cultural activities all around the city. Arrangements are being made everywhere.

Old Havana is the oldest part of

the city of Havana and a fundamental enclave of colonial architecture. Narrow, shady streets with wide portals and large columns, and some singular squares, make up a plot with some irregularity that provides encouragement to be traveled and admired. Havana is unique because of its unparalleled rhythmic arcades, built largely by Spanish immigrants.

It is one of the most relevant expressions of the so-called Latin American Baroque. Many interior courtyards remain similar to the designs of Sevilla, Cadiz and Granada. The Neo-Classic style shows in all the buildings built in Havana in the 18th and 19th centuries and today can be seen all over the city.

At the turn of the 20th century, large buildings were erected reflecting the international influences of Art Nouveau, Art Deco and eclectic styles. Modernism can also be seen in high-quality individual buildings instead of large key buildings. In May 2015, Havana was officially recognized as one of the New Seven Wonder Cities.

As you expressed, China also has many ancient cities, including Xi'an and Nanjing. In this regard, we could promote relations between Old Havana and Chinese cities through regular high official contacts and the exchange of visits in both directions. Maybe we could exchange experiences in the fields of restoration and heritage conservation. Doing this, we could start forging deep links between our cities, not only with Old Havana Santiago de Cuba, Pinar del Rio, Cienfuegos and Camaguey, which are also graced with famous heritage sites. ■

Editor's note

The China and Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) summit meeting mechanism was established in April 2012. So far, the cooperation platform has developed into a 1+17 summit model. Practical exchanges and cooperation between China and the CEEC in various fields have been developing steadily, and all parties have harvested abundantly from the cooperation.

CEEC countries enjoy unique geographical advantages and have close exchanges with China traditionally. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of China's diplomatic relations with Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. Voice of Friendship will publish a series of articles to tell the touching stories of China's friendship with these countries over the past seven decades.

Combining the success of Poland, China

Bronisław Maria Komorowski

The 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Poland and China provides ample food for reflection and contemplation: What have we achieved? Where are we? Where are we going?

Seven decades is a long period. As life has it, this period has seen ups and downs. We have had times of excellent cooperation as well as times when, for various reasons, sometimes related to the internal situation of one partner, and sometimes to that of another, our relations were on the rocks, things deteriorated between us, there was a slowdown. Geopolitical factors

were not without influence, either.

Nevertheless, we remember the outstanding beginnings of our relations, the first pioneering full-time student exchange programs in the 1950s, the launch of economic cooperation and Chipolbrok, the Chinese-Polish Joint Stock Shipping Company, which is the symbol of our mutual relations. This was really our first opportunity to get to know each other in person, leaving aside the historically interesting case of the Polish diaspora in Harbin, Manchuria (Dongbei) — people who ended up in China as a result of the complicated vicissitudes of Polish relations with Russia.

Since then — that is since the mid-20th century — we have had reasons to be proud of the personal and cultural exchanges that have been steadily growing, though on and off, and of the many outstanding diplomats who have safeguarded it. It's worth recalling the long-standing ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Poland (1955-64) Wang Bingnan, afterward an important figure in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and among the top political brass, during whose term Americans held only informal talks with the Chinese at the Myslewski Palace in Warsaw's Royal Baths Park, as recorded by Henry Kissinger

in his memoirs.

Meanwhile, on the Polish side, it's worth mentioning Witold Rodzinski, the ambassador who, later on, upon completing his mission, wrote the monumental *History of China*, which is still important today. It is noteworthy that from then on, ambassadors of both countries were recruited from among those who had earlier studied in their future partner's land, so they knew their host country and its language inside-out.

Strategic relations

It's no secret that China and Poland have followed different paths of transformation. In our country, as in the whole region, the breakthrough came in 1989, bringing a systemic change. In China, reforms were initiated in December 1978, and the visionary behind them, Deng Xiaoping, extended them in his political testament during his travels to the south (*nansun*) in early 1992, leading the immense Chinese state and market to embrace globalization and open up to foreign capital.

The process of China opening up to the world was sped up by the loyal executor of Deng's will, the excellent administrator Zhu Rongji, who, as deputy prime minister and then as prime minister between 1991 and 2003 first turned China into the world's assembly line. In December 2001 he steered it into World Trade Organization, which gave the Middle Kingdom an additional impulse for growth, perfectly leveraged in the first decade of this century.

To China, this was, to put it colloquially, as much of a kick forward

as the accession to the European Union was to Poland in May 2004. That helped us finally overcome the unfortunate Iron Curtain, which had divided our continent for half a century. And while we were at it, we found for ourselves a great anchor for modernization, which helped us enter — the way China did through globalization and WTO membership, and, above all, through its own efforts — the path of fast growth and increasing welfare. There is a reason China and Poland are cited as great economic success stories in recent years on their respective continents. China has become the growth and development leader in Asia. Poland can boast a high, at times the highest, growth within the EU, as well as characteristically being the only country of the grouping not to fall into recession as a result of the great crisis after 2008.

So when I was going on an official visit to China in December 2011, I had no doubt that the fast-growing role of China in global markets fully warranted taking our relations to the next strategic level. During my talks with all the major Chinese leaders — President Hu Jintao, Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, Chairman of the National People's Congress Wu Bangguo and the future premier, Li Keqiang, who co-chaired back then the important bilateral Economic Forum — it was becoming clear that new vistas of cooperation between us were opening up.

In performance of the agreements reached during my visit, direct flight connections between our countries' capitals were inaugurated in June 2012, operated by both parties'

airlines, PLL LOT and Air China. This is of enormous importance in all respects, as it helps intensify personal exchanges and contacts, thus removing the principal obstacle to our mutual relations, which remains insufficient knowledge of each other.

The Chinese usually know at least three Polish names, as these are taught at school: Chopin, Copernicus and Marie Skłodowska-Curie. In Poland, I guess only Confucius is generally known, maybe also Laozi and Sun Tzu, and a few Chinese leaders of recent decades. In both cases it's definitely too little. That is why cooperation between higher education institutions and academics is of such great importance. It is fostered by signing the agreement on mutual recognition of diplomas and professional titles in higher education.

Joint efforts at the local government level are of particular consequence for cooperation. The first Poland-China Regional Forum, held in Gdansk in 2013 under my patronage and with substantial participation by Chinese partners, has become a fixture for our countries' local government representatives. The third forum, held in 2018 in Lodz, suggests the need for practical talks and contacts between local authorities, who work so closely with the public and are directly accountable to it for the results of their decisions.

The more contacts the better. And from the Polish perspective, another significant aspect of the direct flight connections is that the great majority of Polish exports to China involve the output of small and medium-sized enterprises (of course not in terms of volume), as here Polish copper and the KGHM conglomerate are beyond

compare. For such companies a direct flight is a great incentive.

Poland as part of China's vision

I can only be glad that the high expectations set during my visit were quite quickly corroborated by later developments. As early as April 2012, then-Prime Minister Wen Jiabao came to Warsaw and announced a new formula for cooperation with Poland and Central and Eastern European countries, known as 16+1. Meanwhile, during the visit of President Xi Jinping to Warsaw in June 2016, our mutual relations were promoted to the highest possible level: a comprehensive strategic partnership. Thus Poland became one of China's closest partners worldwide.

The 16+1 formula was deepened and extended through another visionary program announced by President Xi in the autumn of 2013 called the Belt and Road Initiative. It's hard not to notice that Poland can play a major role in this geostrategic project, as it lies on the route of the new overland Silk Road, leading from the center of China through Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus toward our continent.

We have become not only an important stop on that route, but also have the potential to turn it into a communication hub from which roads run in many directions in Europe. The experience of the Chengdu-Lodz and Kutno rail connection is encouraging. It secures an inflow of enormous quantities of goods from China to Poland and Western Europe.

It needs to be admitted, in all honesty, that in both cases things are not going as smoothly as originally

planned. Distinct business mentalities have manifested themselves, and so have differences in the rules governing our respective markets (which, in Poland, also stem from European Union membership). The visible mismatch between the rules and formulas in effect in both countries suggests that we need a process for getting to know each other better and for mutual adaptation. Also we need to counter the impression that the profitable projects of 16+1, and, especially, those that are part of the BRI, show a preference toward Chinese companies, which is a common allegation.

The potential of China is generally acknowledged. After all, we are talking about the world's second-largest economy. China is, moreover, a country that has lately engaged in mass-scale exports of capital and high technology, in addition to a variety of merchandise. Since the potential of Poland, the sixth-largest market in Europe, has been continuously increasing, too, the prospects for further development of our cooperation seem promising — especially because of Poland's geographical location on the route of the BRI overland corridor.

This does not mean that success will come automatically. On both ends, we need to continue our endeavors to ensure that bilateral relations develop quickly and harmoniously. The potential is there, but what is also needed is a will and a vision. Even if the recent period has not been entirely favorable, as, in a wider context, there has emerged some turbulence, or even a real menace, of trade wars. It's all the more reason to redouble our efforts during tougher times. We must not

allow our accomplishments so far to go to waste. We must strive to ensure that further cooperation will have solid grounds and rationale.

Over the last four decades of its transformation, China has changed its face beyond recognition, as I have been able to witness during my visits there. In some people, it has inspired admiration for its unprecedented success; in others, jealousy or even dislike. Some opt for cooperation with China while others for rivalry and competition. We will probably not change this state of affairs. However, we may or even should use our best efforts to ensure that both parties can benefit from and take full advantage of the new opportunities that have presented themselves.

China is a country of unparalleled success, and Poland's economy is flourishing, too. We need to draw the right conclusions from that. Citing a popular Polish expression, we need to clearly say: We must not bury our heads in the sand and pretend nothing has changed, because nearly everything has. That is, such conduct — as another Polish saying has it — would be nothing but tilting at windmills, a futile effort, wasting existing potential and opportunities.

That is why all that's left to do is keep learning and getting to know each other even more than before, because, as Confucius used to say, "Learning without thinking is useless. Thinking without learning is dangerous." ■

The author is former president of Poland.

The friendship between President Bronisław Komorowski and me

Xu Jian

Amity between people holds the key to good relations between states. Mutual understanding enhances friendship. Making friends in the international arena is the duty of diplomats, whose purpose is to promote understanding, build trust, strengthen friendship and consolidate the basis of public opinion on bilateral and multilateral relations. I worked in Poland for five and a half years, during which time I made a lot of local friends, including senators, officials, businessmen, academics, technologists and people from other circles of society. Among them, the one of highest rank was former Polish President Bronisław Komorowski, who was in office from August 2010 to August 2015. He had previously been minister of defense and speaker of the lower house of Parliament. As president, he actively promoted Poland-China relations and worked for a long-term development.

After leaving office, he remained concerned with bilateral relations. He praised the Belt and Road Initiative as the most ambitious and farsighted vision ever put forward by China. He came to China several times to attend

international conferences and forums, continuing making contributions to the development of friendly relations and practical cooperation between the two countries.

I was appointed Chinese ambassador to Poland in August 2012 and was scheduled by the Polish Foreign Affairs Ministry to present my official credentials to the Polish president on Oct 10. On that day after reviewing the ceremonial honor guard on the square, I entered the presidential palace and waited in the grand hall on the second floor. In a little while a tall, well-built man entered the hall through a door and strode toward me. Only when he was standing still, right in front of me, did I realize he was President Komorowski. He received my credentials, warmly shook hands with me, congratulated me on my assumption of office and invited me to the meeting room for further talks. He pleasantly recalled his state visit to China in the previous December, said that Poland-China relations have enjoyed good development as bilateral exchanges in various fields became closer, emphasized that Poland highly valued its relationship with China and

said that he himself would continue to support the development of bilateral relations. I conveyed greetings from Chinese leaders, along with an assessment and expectations about bilateral relations. The first impression of Komorowski was that he was rational, amiable and friendly. We have met on many occasions since then, and he always made himself available to talk with me and express his friendship and respect for China.

While he was in office, I tried several times to invite him to events held at Chinese embassy. However, subject to Polish regulations, he never managed to come. After he left office in August 2015, our communications became more convenient. I once more thought of inviting him and his family to my residence. This time he gladly accepted. One March evening in 2016, Mr and Mrs Komorowski came to my residence. Seeing me, he recalled his first invitation to the Chinese embassy in Poland when he was young. He regarded it as the first time he had set foot on China. He was happy that decades later his feet were again on “the land of China” when he was in the residence of the Chinese ambassador.

He also said that when he was serving as Poland's president, he could not attend foreign activities held by foreign diplomats in their embassies. Now, relieved of official duties, he was no longer constrained. We talked over the dishes that had been prepared by the chef and enjoyed an intimate atmosphere. In 2017, he was present by invitation for the Chinese National Day reception at the embassy.

My wife came to Poland earlier 2017 and soon became friends with Mrs Komorowski. On March 7 that year, she organized a China show at the embassy in celebration of International Women's Day and invited Mrs Komorowski to attend as the guest of honor. My wife and I accompanied Mrs Komorowski and nearly 100 other guests in watching two videos — China, A Unified Multi-National Country and Chinese Tea — specially made by our embassy, as well as the national costumes show and *qipao* show presented by the embassy staff, the Chinese music show and the Peking Opera costume show. We also enjoyed the tea ceremony and the Chinese cuisine. Mrs Komorowski was profuse in her praise of the event's rich variety, saying the show was like a multifaceted introduction to China's time-honored history and profound culture, which not only enhanced her knowledge about Chinese culture but also aroused her interest in the country.

With more contacts, our friendship blossomed. In the summer of 2017, Mr and Mrs Komorowski invited my wife and me to the Lake District in northern Poland for exploration and relaxation. We joined them, their children and friends on a cruise that

had been prepared exclusively for the former president for sightseeing and lunch. We shared light talk, like a family, with topics covering the politics, economics, history, culture and customs of China and Poland. When mentioning the "being with each other though far apart" relationship between the Polish and Chinese people, we both agreed that the older generation had contributed greatly. Nowadays, people-to-people exchanges have been growing, and more people want to learn about the other's language and culture. For instance, a Chinese TV program has introduced a young Polish girl with a Chinese name — Cuihua — to domestic audiences. Another young Polish man, Hordak, even became an online celebrity for his self-made video "China that I like". The Komorowskis were deeply moved by the stories demonstrating the friendly relations between China and Poland and were relieved that we had gotten so many qualified successors in the younger generation.

Mr and Mrs Komorowski's friendly attitude has positively influenced their children — especially their eldest son, who has developed a growing interest and warm feelings toward China. He accompanied his parents to meet us and stayed with us alone several times. We became friends and shared opinions on furthering practical cooperation between China and Poland. We visited wineries and bee farms. He once invited us to go hunting.

Before my term ended, the Komorowskis rescheduled for us and drove from their old house back to the capital to treat us to a meal at the oldest

and most distinguished restaurant in Warsaw before we departed. During the meal, we expressed our unwillingness to part and the hope that the temporary separation would never weaken the forever friendship.

Indeed the separation was temporary. We met with Komorowski again after returning to China. It was in October 2018 that Komorowski, accompanied by his eldest son, came to China for the 124th China Import and Export Fair (more commonly known as the Canton Fair) in Guangzhou, and an international conference in Beijing. Before traveling, he contacted me to express his willingness to meet me and my wife. "It is so lovely to meet with my old friends in China!" is the first thing he said upon seeing me and my wife in Guangzhou. We accompanied him and his son attending the activities there. The trip enhanced their understanding of China and deepened their feelings.

Our friendship with the Komorowskis is a microcosm of the friendly relations between China and Poland. In June 2016, I had the honor to witness President Xi Jinping and President Andrzej Duda of Poland signing a joint statement establishing a comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Poland, pushing relations to a new level. I believe that as communication expands and understanding is furthered, the emotional bonds between the two peoples will be strengthened. As we become more engaged in developing friendly relations between China and Poland, the tree of friendship between the two countries will continue to bear more fruit. ■

Lasting friendship between China and Romania

Luo Dongquan

On Oct 1, 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded. Four days later, Romania recognized the new government, becoming the third in the world, after the Soviet Union and Bulgaria, to establish diplomatic relations with China. After seven decades, friendly cooperative relations between China and Romania and their two peoples are like an old vintage wine with a strong and pleasant fragrance.

Time-honored relations

Though far apart, the two peoples' communication dates to 300 years ago, when the Romanian litterateur Nicolae Miclesu Spatarul visited China. Dispatched by the Russian czar, Miclesu traveled across China from May 1675 to January 1676. He amassed three volumes of notes — *Travel Notes* and *Description of China*, along with *Travels*, faithfully recording what he saw and heard in China and introducing China's society, economy and culture. He was the first Romanian to be recorded as

having visited China. He initiated direct exchanges and traditional friendship between the two peoples and laid a solid foundation for the current cooperative relations between the two countries.

The 20th century witnessed the two countries supporting each other in their struggles for national independence and emancipation and in the fight against foreign aggression. In the 1930s and 1940s, Romanian physicians Bucur Clejan, his wife, Gisela, and David Iancu joined the international medical team that came to China to support the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. In 1943, Gisela unfortunately became infected when treating injured soldiers. She died at the age of 39. Later, Clejan met and fell in love with Chinese nurse Zhao Jingpu. Their marriage in 1946 became the first transnational marriage of a Chinese and Romanian. Their remains after death were buried in Song Chingling Cemetery in Shanghai.

The three Romanians made indelible contributions to China's defensive war against Japan, as well as to World War II generally. They left a glorious page in the history of China-Romania relations.

Friendship deeply rooted

During the 40 years from the establishment of diplomatic relations until 1989, China and Romania had trusted each other politically and were mutually complementary in economics and trade, with cultural, sports and educational exchanges going on at a healthy clip. Despite differences on certain issues, friendship between the two peoples continued to progress and became deeply rooted in people's hearts. They sought common ground while shelving differences.

The leaders of the two countries maintained close contact. Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, Hua Guofeng, Hu Yaobang, Li Xiannian, Zhao Ziyang and other Chinese leaders visited Romania successively. Romanian

leaders Petru Groza, Gheorghe Apostol, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Chivu Stoica, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Emil Bodnara, Nicolae Ceaușescu and Ilie Verdet have also paid several visits to China. Such high-level visits laid a solid foundation for the traditional friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries.

Shortly after the establishment of diplomatic ties, Premier Zhou Enlai wrote to Romanian leaders in June 1950 to suggest that both countries exchange students as a means of enhancing bilateral relations. In the fall and winter of that year the exchange materialized, with five Chinese students and five Romanian students swapping schools. Since then, the two countries have continued uninterrupted education cooperation.

In the 1950s and 1960s, when China was blockaded by the West, Romania helped cultivate the professionals needed in China's economic construction by sending experts to China and enrolling Chinese students and visiting scholars in Romania. The petroleum drilling equipment China used in the Karamay and Daqing oilfields was made in Romania. In the early period of China's reform and opening-up, China's State Development Planning Commission and several other central authorities and institutions of higher learning imported Felix and Independence C computers from Romania and received training from Romanian specialists.

During the time of China-Soviet arguments on Marxist and socialist theories, Romania stuck to its independent foreign policy and opposed other Eastern European countries'

attacks on China. It maintained friendly exchanges with China as usual.

In 1970, severe floods hit Romania, and the Chinese government offered financial aid. It helped construct 65 projects, ranging from the mechanical industry to electronics, chemicals, metallurgy, light industry and building materials, including a number of military projects. In the process of implementation, both countries' engineers and technicians worked side by side, learning from each other and helping each other develop a deep, friendly feeling. The volume of bilateral trade hit a record \$1 billion at the end of 1970s, far ahead of other Eastern European countries.

In August 1968, the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact group invaded what was then Czechoslovakia and laid a heavy siege on Romania. Zhou Enlai attended the National Day reception hosted by the Romanian ambassador in Beijing and delivered a speech strongly condemning the aggression and firmly supporting Romania's struggle against external interference to safeguard its state sovereignty, national independence and territorial integrity.

China's struggles to restore its legitimate seats in the United Nations in 1971 and on the International Olympic Committee in 1979 also received strong support from Romania. The people of China and Romania have gone together through thick and thin and set a model of state-to-state relations.

At the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s, the world experienced dramatic changes. The Berlin Wall fell; the Soviet Union collapsed. At the end of 1989, political upheavals took place in Romania. It later joined

the European Union and NATO. How to further develop bilateral traditional friendship and cooperation under the new conditions became a new task facing both China and Romania. China declared that it respected the Romanian people's choice of social system and a development path based on their national conditions. China said it was willing to maintain and develop bilateral friendly cooperative relations on the basis of its Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Romanian political parties, despite their differences in governing philosophies, all expressed willingness to further strengthen friendly relations with China.

Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Prime Minister Li Peng, President Hu Jintao, then-vice-president Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Keqiang while in office have paid visits to Romania successively. Romanian presidents Ion Iliescu, Emil Constantinescu, Traian Basescu and prime ministers Nicolae Vacaroiu, Adrian Nastase, Emil Boc and Victor Ponta visited China successively, injecting new vitality into the development of bilateral relations. In 2004, the two countries decided to enter a comprehensive friendly cooperative partnership.

Friendly organizations including the Romania-China Friendship Association and the Romanian-Chinese House were successively founded, which was a boost to the friendship between the two countries. In 1995, former ambassador to China Dumitrescu formed the Romania-PRC Friendship Association and edited and published the four-volume series *300-Year Deep Relations Between Romania and China* — which included 234 articles written by 191

authors from China and Romania — in commemoration of the traditional friendship.

Though bilateral relations have made some progress in the three decades after 1989, with continued exchanges in culture, art and education, the progress and achievements still fell short of the wishes of the two peoples for stronger cooperative relations, especially in economics and trade. Cooperation on some big projects encountered difficulties. Romania's cooperation with China lags far behind that of its neighbors Serbia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Having stood the test of history, the friendship between China and Romania is the shared wealth of the two peoples. To constantly enhance mutual understanding and friendly cooperation is the historical choice and consensus of both. History needs to be remembered and friendship should be cherished.

Under the current complex and volatile international situation, China-Romania relations are facing a severe test. The two countries should take the opportunity of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties and the 15th anniversary of the comprehensive friendly cooperative partnership to make full use of the Belt and Road Initiative and the cooperative platform of the Summit of Central and Eastern European Countries & China to further develop win-win cooperation, and let the traditional friendship endure like the Himalayas and the Carpathian Mountains standing through wind and snow, like the ever-running Yangtze and Danube rivers. ■

Dolphins moving from Beijing to Constanta

Wang Tieshan



The title of Honorary Citizen of Constanta is conferred on Mr Wang Tieshan.

I have been working on people-to-people friendship between China and Romania for 46 years, ever since my government-sponsored overseas study in 1973. I have studied and worked in Romania for more than 20 years. My work in China has also been closely related to relations with Romania.

For decades, I've witnessed and

participated in many significant events. On this occasion, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Romania, I recall countless stories of the past, not knowing where to start telling them. Having thought it over, I decided to share this interesting story of "dolphin diplomacy" to demonstrate how bilateral relations developed.

On the international stage, precious and rare animals are often used to convey friendship between nations. The most famous animal diplomat of China is definitely the panda. Other rare animals, such as Siberian tigers, have also acted as envoys of friendship from the Chinese people.

According to records in the open archive of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Premier Zhou Enlai attended the funeral for Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the state leader of Romania and general secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, in Bucharest, in March 1965. During his stay, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, president of the Presidium of Romanian Great National Assembly, praised the beauty of Siberian tigers. Premier Zhou offered at once to give Romania one of the tigers as a token of the Chinese people's friendship. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs subsequently applied to the State Council's Foreign Affairs Office for approval to present two of the animals to the Romanian administration in the name of Chinese government. The number of the tigers was increased to two to facilitate future reproduction in Romania. The task was then assigned to the Commission for Cultural Exchanges with Foreign Countries, the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Parks and Gardening and the Beijing Zoo. Later, on Nov 4, 1965, accompanied by two zookeepers, the two tigers set out by train to Bucharest via Moscow. They were warmly received by the local people.

Forty-three years later, when I was Chinese consul general in Constanta, animal diplomacy was again carried

out to enhance the China-Romania friendship — this time with three dolphins transported from Beijing. There was one thing different: The dolphins were not given free but were purchased by the Romanians with the help of the Chinese consulate general.

At the end of 2008, the last dolphin housed by the Museum of Natural History in coastal Constanta died of disease. Just one year earlier, in 2007, people around the world had been engaged in a campaign to save dolphins from extinction. The United Nations had designated it the International Year of the Dolphin in hope of raising people's awareness of the rare species.

Dolphins are our friends, the elves of the sea and one of the most popular creatures in the world. In aquariums, with amazing intelligence, dolphins follow their trainers' instructions to perform beautiful jumps and other behaviors. As long as we humans treat them in a friendly way, dolphins are willing to get close to us and even become our intimate friends. However, in recent years, dolphins are increasingly in danger of extinction as their living environment deteriorates. According to UNEP, the 40 species of them left on Earth are now all in danger. The threats include noise, toxic chemicals and massive amounts of garbage dumped into the oceans, which may lead to their ultimate demise. Under such circumstances, as well as under prohibitions of law — such as the Convention on Migratory Species: Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area; and the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of

the Baltic and North Seas — Romania was not supposed to supplement the remaining dolphin in the museum by catching another one. The museum's requests to buy one were all denied by other dolphin-owning countries.

Constanta is Romania's largest coastal city on the Black Sea and attracts tourists from both home and abroad every year. The dolphin show has always been popular. However, the dolphinarium would be in name only if it lost the last dolphin. The local administration and the head of the museum were all very worried. At the time, I was the Chinese consul general there, and they came to me to ask if they could import two or three dolphins from China.

I was aware that it would be the first case of EU members importing dolphins from China, which, if realized, would be of groundbreaking significance. Besides considerable direct economic benefits, it would open a new field of cooperation between China and Romania. Why not take the opportunity and make dolphin diplomacy come true again? I then contacted the fisheries bureau of the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture, which recommended the Beijing Aquarium as the Chinese partner. The Constanta Museum of Natural History made contact with my help.

By that time, the Beijing Aquarium had successfully bred dolphins in captivity. In March 2009, three young dolphins made their debut at the aquarium, filling a blank in scientific research on the breeding of marine animals in captivity in an inland Chinese city. The successfully bred dolphins were a male and two females.

The 23-month-old brother was smart and active and had certain leadership traits; the 13-month-old sister was typical a gentle lady; while the youngest, 11 months old, was cheerful, naughty and curious.

As it was going to celebrate the 10th anniversary of its founding in September 2009, the Beijing Aquarium invited the Constantza Museum of Natural History to join in the celebration and to negotiate the export of dolphins and future cooperation in marine biotechnology. I forwarded the invitation to the provincial governor Constantinescu, who decided to dispatch a delegation of experts, along with the museum's curator and a vice-governor, to China. The delegation was warmly received in Beijing. An agreement on exporting three dolphins (one male and two females) to Constantza for performances and carrying out biotechnology cooperation was signed.

To comply with international conventions, I had suggested the Romanian side purchase captive-bred dolphins from the Beijing Aquarium. Though the importation was to be a commercial move, it should be included in the cooperation of marine biotechnology studies between China and Romania.

At the end of 2009, the purchase contract had been signed, but the eurozone debt crisis had begun to influence Romania. Yet the administration of Constantza managed to appropriate 360,000 euros from local funds for the purchase and spent another 200,000 euros renting a charter plane for the long-distance transport of the live animals. In March 2010,

Romania sent five trainers and a veterinarian to the Beijing aquarium for training. The two sides also agreed that the Chinese trainers who accompanied the dolphins to Constantza should stay for three months to teach the Romanians the necessary skills and techniques.

During the whole process, the consulate general maintained close communication with both the Beijing Aquarium and the Constantza Museum of Natural History, and worked collaboratively with the Constantza administration and the museum to help deal with problems and overcome difficulties.

On the afternoon of May 29, 2010, the dolphins were flown to the Bucharest airport, where they underwent inspection and quarantine before continuing their journey to Mihail Kogalniceanu International Airport. The whole 14-hour flight and nearly 10-hours of ground transportation was accomplished with two trainers from the Beijing Aquarium, two Japanese veterinarians hired by the Chinese and the Romanian team earlier sent to Beijing for training.

Local officials, including Governor Constantinescu, Vice-Governor Dalia and Senator Moga of the Senate of the Romanian National Assembly, went to the airport to welcome the dolphins from Beijing. I led the group from the Chinese consulate, who had come to escort the dolphins to the newly renovated dolphinarium. Several Romanian media outlets sent reporters to broadcast the event live, from the plane landing to the dolphins being put into three vehicles. The reporters also conducted interviews

at the airport and in the dolphinarium.

The three dolphins — Nini, Chenchen, and Pipi (later changed to Peipei) — were given ambassador-class treatment. The three tailored vehicles were escorted by the police and military personnel, with cheering citizens along the whole route from the airport to the museum. Many children, accompanied by their parents, went to the entrance of the museum to welcome the dolphins. On the front of the dolphinarium hung a big welcome banner with the national flags of China and Romania, the badge of the province and the logos of the Constantza Museum and Beijing Aquarium.

After 24 hours of travel, the dolphins appeared exhausted and may have suffered some slight injuries. In a strange environment with the living and diet conditions far inferior to their home back in Beijing, the dolphins actually took longer to become accustomed to their new home than expected. The two skilled Chinese trainers also encountered language barriers. The consulate immediately found a volunteer interpreter among the overseas Chinese who was fluent in both Chinese and Romanian, which solved the urgent problem.

Twice, I invited the executives of the museum, the veterinarians and the Chinese trainers to the consulate and helped them solve the problems case by case, including low water temperature, low concentration of sea water, incomplete food varieties, inflammation of a dolphin's eye and other problems caused by their being outdoors. In the course of solving such problems, the Romanian attendants learned more about training techniques

and the dos and don'ts. After discussion with the Romanians about the names, two of the three dolphins kept their originals — Nini and Chenchen — while the other changed from Pipi (a homophone of a Romanian word that might be indelicate) to Pepei.

The three dolphins adapted to their new circumstances, looking healthy and cheerful, and they quickly became local stars. The museum was located at the entrance to a swimming beach. The consulate provided the museum with photos of the dolphins, the Chinese national flag and the Beijing Aquarium's logo, all printed out on big banners hanging over the front door of the dolphinarium. They attracted the attention of thousands of tourists.

Three days after the dolphins' arrival, the Romanian side held a press conference. I was invited to answer reporters' questions. I distributed finely printed and well-illustrated brochures explaining China's law on the protection of wildlife and aquatic wildlife, an introduction to whale and dolphin protection in the Beijing aquarium and an overview of the Chinese dolphins' journey from Beijing to Constanta across Europe and Asia. The Romanian veterinarians and Chinese trainers who accompanied the dolphins all the way provided additional information. The curator of the museum told the reporters, with emotion, that the museum's attempts to purchase new dolphins from elsewhere had failed again and again until China offered its helping hand.

"As it is often said, a friend in need is a friend indeed," the curator said.

Since it was the first time China had exported captive-bred dolphins to an EU country, there was heavy media coverage, which aroused great public attention. Children were especially eager to have a look of the dolphins from China. To meet the public's expectations, the museum decided to open the dolphinarium just 20 days after the dolphins' arrival. Visitors were only allowed to watch them feeding and swimming.

To ensure the success of their first show, I closely followed the physical conditions of the dolphins and negotiated with the museum several times to finalize the date of the opening 10 days before the Chinese trainers' departure, which was near the start of peak tourist season. The two sides decided that the performance would be operated mainly by Romanian trainers, with Chinese trainers as assistants.

On the evening of July 16, 2010, the first show was put on as scheduled. Before the performance, the master of ceremonies expressed sincere thanks to the Chinese government and its people on behalf of Constanta and the Romanian people. The audience applauded and cheered in tribute to the Chinese consulate. The three dolphins that evening performed 16 stunts including jumping out of the water, heading a ball in the air, upright jumping through hoops, dancing, spinning and carrying the trainer on their back. Children were invited to touch the dolphins. The show was full of exciting moments in a warm atmosphere. For quite a while, the dolphins from China became the city's favorite stars, hitting the headlines of the local newspapers and occupying

prime time on local television stations.

Constanta is the second-largest city of Romania, the biggest port on the Black Sea and one of the country's most famous tourism destinations. The settlement of Beijing dolphins has had a lasting positive influence. It helped the Romanians learn about China's achievements in protecting endangered species, raised China's profile in the Black Sea region, promoted understanding of China by a new generation of Romanians and enhanced people-to-people friendship.

Not long after the dolphin diplomacy, I left my post and returned to China. Before my departure, the provincial assembly of Constanta conferred honorary citizenship. I believed it must have had something to do with the dolphins. Though I have left Constanta, I am always thinking of those three lovely dolphins on the Black Sea coast. In 2013, I sadly heard the news of Pepei's sudden death due to illness. I hope Chenchen and Nini will go on living in peace and happiness and continue to act as goodwill messengers of the Chinese people in Romania. ■

The author was once political counselor of the Chinese embassy in Romania and Chinese consul general in Constanta. He is now executive vice-president of the China-Romania Friendship Association, having retired from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A story of Premier Zhou Enlai's first visit to Albania

Fan Chengzuo

In the course of 70 years of friendly exchanges since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Albania — two socialist states, one big and one small — have experienced a great number of anthem-worthy occasions. Among those, the two countries' prime ministers paid frequent mutual visits in the 1960s to strengthen relations, especially the historical visit from the end of 1963 to early 1964 when Premier Zhou Enlai traveled to 14 countries through Asia, Africa and Europe, and came to Albania for the first time. He stayed over the New Year holiday, and the stories of his visit have been much told over the decades.

I was the interpreter in Albania for Zhou at that time and later served as the 10th Chinese ambassador to Albania. The experience of accompanying Zhou half a century ago has always been in my memory. I wrote about it many times in a number of reminiscences published by the media. This time I would like to tell a back-story known by few.

The year 1964 began with the first ray of dawn cast on my window curtain. I looked at my watch. It was just 6 o'clock local time. Then I found



During his first visit to Albania, Premier Zhou talks with an Albania anti-fascist. The author was the interpreter (middle).

the lights downstairs and upstairs were all on. I got dressed and put on a tie as soon as I could, and strode toward the stairs just in time to see Premier Zhou coming down from upstairs on the white marble steps. (The steps were known as the “jade stairs” and were built exclusively for the former King of Albania.) Zhou was well-dressed in fine fettle, hale and hearty, walking with an easy grace.

The hall on the first floor, where

the all-night dancing party had been held just a few hours before, had been cleaned up. At this moment, the back doors of the hall opened and a number of people in various uniforms entered. The dancing hall, which had been packed with well-dressed elites the previous night, was now a totally different scene: employees' blue garments, white coats, chef caps and high rubber boots.

More people came in. The hall

was soon filled with about 70 to 80 people, most of whom were Albanian working staff who had stayed over in the embassy to provide service for us Chinese visitors instead of going home for the New Year's Day holiday with their families. They entered the hall from behind on the first day of the New Year, hoping to meet Premier Zhou personally and feel the charisma they had heard so much about.

The Chinese premier's personality was much talked about by people who had known him for a long time, as well as those who had met him just a few times. Their words were reported by media worldwide. In Albania, Zhou was a figure of legendary stature.

Zhou, in their words, was a man of noble bearing, elegant temperament, extraordinary wisdom, profound knowledge, pleasing talk, meticulous thought, broad mind, modest attitude, striking willpower and accurate judgment — not to mention his great affection toward the working people, who attracted his attention continually.

The working staff at the state guest house in Tirana were surprised to find that Zhou went downstairs early on the first day of the New Year just to extend greetings to them. Their long wish for meeting with him up close was easily fulfilled.

The all-smiles premier walked toward the Albanian staff and shook hands with them one by one, including those who stood in the corners and those who were dressed casually. His presence enhanced the festival atmosphere in the grand hall of the guest house.

As this moment, I realized what Zhou meant when he told me

three hours earlier that “there are things to be done in the morning”. The “things” were none other than giving his seasonal greetings to all the working staff, including the cook, the receptionists, the cleaners, the laundry attendants, the hairdressers, the drivers, the telephone operators and the warehouse keepers, commonly known in China as “laboring personnel from the eight professions”. There was a popular song in China in the mid-20th century lauding such workers.

So, on the first morning of the year, the Albanian “eight professionals” stood around the Chinese premier with happy smiles, and all expressed their sense of satisfaction: What a rare and precious occasion it was when their dream finally came true.

Deep in Zhou's heart, there was always the working people, including those in the countries he visited. It was his unexpected appearance that early morning that provided the Albanian staff with a chance to come out of their behind-the-scenes workplaces into the resplendent hall to meet and celebrate with the handsome and genial leader from China on the first day of the New Year.

The special event personally arranged by Premier Zhou — an unexpected gathering between a senior Chinese leader and the general public in a foreign land — was like a prelude to the year, ahead of thousands of the events to be held in the coming months. Though it was never put into the official record, it was indeed a unique, shining moment in the history of people-to-people diplomacy.

In the grand hall of the state guest-house, the Chinese staff consisted only

of interpreters and the head of security. No videos or photos or reports captured the precious moment, since no media, Chinese or Albanian, was aware of the impromptu arrangement. Just think what an interesting headline this would be: “Premier Zhou Enlai greeting Albanian laborers on New Year's Day”!

To make up for the lack of a record, and as a witness on the occasion, I wrote a narrative poem later which has helped recalled memories whenever I read it. Please allow me to share it here:

On the frosted New Year's Eve far
away from home,

When the outside was quiet, the
indoors brightly lit,

Premier Zhou worked till dawn
through the night.

Coming downstairs after shaving
to the dancing hall,

Reaching out hands with heartfelt
wishes for all,

One by one he there greeted the
labor personnel.

Plants thrived in gorgeous
morning sunshine,

While hearts were warmed by
loving care,

Having much to tell, but too
excited to say more.

They wish to see him again, and
his smiling face,

For what a distinctive guest
Premier Zhou was,

And what a pleasant figure they
received!

Like flowing water the time
passes speechlessly,

The story of the day being much
told and shared,

Among the Albanian people and
the Chinese. ■

A community with a shared future for humanity

R. Jinith de Silva

Xi Jinping became the president of China in 2012. He has been able to bring China to a new path, Today he has become the most powerful leader of China. He introduced a new philosophy to his country and Constitution called Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

According to Xi's thoughts, a global society should emerge where all resources are equally shared. It is called a community with a shared future for mankind. What he meant by this was that the resources of the world should be equally shared by all. Because of this I see him as a epitome of a selfless altruistic.

The humanitarian and unselfish aspects of his thinking is truly visible here and it will contribute in a big way to world peace.

President Xi Jinping's concept has been commended by many world lead-

ers. For example, building a community with a shared future for mankind was incorporated into a UN Security Council resolution in March 2017. At the 2018 Davos summit it received the praise of world leaders. He fully understands his key role among them.

Amid growing concerns over isolationism and protectionism, China has maintained a steady commitment to the Paris agreement on climate change, promoted multilateral trade and supported the goals of the United Nations.

"China is a central pillar of multilateralism," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said when he addressed the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing in 2018. Contrary to the emerging protectionism in the United States and elsewhere, China has further opened and reformed its economy so that all nations can reap the benefits of

the country's prosperity. This will help China's success trickle down to other developing nations.

China has impressed the world with its remarkable economic performance. In 2018 its GDP increased by 6.6 percent to \$13.6 trillion, contributing about 30 percent of global growth. China is already the world's second-largest economy and the world's biggest trading nation. It also supplies the world's largest group of outbound tourists. The country's foreign trade also registered an annual growth of 14.5 percent. It has become a major trading partner with over 130 countries.

China has been able to lift 700 million people from absolute poverty since 1978. President Xi is pressing to eradicate dire poverty from China by 2020. Under his leadership, poverty relief was accelerated. There were 99

million poor in 2012. This figure was reduced to 16.6 million in 2018. The country will become a moderately prosperous society in all respects in 2020 under Xi's leadership.

The Belt and Road Initiative, put forward by President Xi in 2013, is aimed at building a trade, investment and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along and beyond the ancient Silk Road. Direct Chinese investment and aid started to flow to Asian and African countries under this concept.

The China-Pakistan economic corridor and infrastructure, ports, power plants and highways in Sri Lanka are some of the projects started with Chinese aid. Such BRI projects have contributed in a big way to economic development and have created a large number of jobs in participating countries. A port city being built under the BRI is solid testimony to the altruism practiced under the thought of President Xi. In this project, Sri Lanka will get 269 hectares of reclaimed land and job opportunities for more than 100,000 people.

The BRI will bring Scotch whisky, a symbol of national pride of Scotland, to the vast Chinese market in double-quick time because of a new Europe-China railway. European products such as milk powder, cheese and butter enter Chinese markets and generate much-desired income for European farmers.

Now, the China Railway Express, gradually growing into an iconic brand in Europe and connecting 59 Chinese cities with 49 European cities in 15 countries, made 6,363 trips in 2018, surging 73 percent from 2017,

according to China Railway Corp.

Freight train service between China and Europe is a powerful example of how Belt and Road cooperation can drive the common development and prosperity of China and Europe through enhanced connectivity.

The recently commenced construction of the Thailand-Laos-China high-speed rail line provides positive testimony to the Chinese effort of sharing world resources among all nations.

In May last year, President Xi hosted the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing, attracting more than 1,600 representatives from more than 140 countries and 80-plus international organizations. This ushered in a new stage of promoting worldwide cooperation for the BRI. The Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation shaped a brighter shared future and is expected to boost high-quality development. It marks the beginning of a new round of common development by China and other countries.

The Silk Road Fund and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) created under the BRI has contributed in a big way to developing countries. The membership of the AIIB increased to 93 as of the end of 2018. The bank has funded several projects in developing countries that have benefited tens of millions of people over the past two years. The AIIB embodies China's development philosophy and showcases China's spirit of the time, said AIIB President

Jin Lique. Under President Xi's leadership, China has worked closely with the members of BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) to implement programs to bridge the gap between developed and developing countries and reduce conflicts and poverty to build a safe and prosperous world. These ideas are reflected in China's external policies and its cooperation with other countries.

As the ancient Chinese saying goes, when you reap fruit you should remember the tree, and when you drink water you should remember its source.

As President Xi said in a speech at the UN Office in Geneva last year, China will continue to share its development opportunities with other countries and welcome them aboard the fast train of China's development.

Under Xi's diplomacy, China will continue to participate in reform and the development of world governance, as well as contribute more "Chinese wisdom, Chinese solutions and Chinese strength" to promote lasting peace and stability in the world. It has joined more than 100 intergovernmental organizations and signed more than 300 international treaties. Its positive and constructive role is indispensable in today's global landscape, from anti-terrorism to the battle against global warming.

Finally, I would like to say that his idea of building a community with a shared future for all mankind expresses the desire to build a safe and prosperous world. ■

Strive to upgrade China-India literary exchange

Yu Longyu

On Sept 17, 2014, President Xi Jinping was invited to visit the hometown of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He agreed with Modi that China and India are “two bodies with one spirit” and used those words in his speech — *Jointly Pursue the National Rejuvenation* — delivered at the Indian Council of World Affairs on the second day of the visit. He said that Modi’s words revealed the kindly and peace-loving nature of the two great civilizations and the intrinsic connection between them. The concept of “two bodies with one spirit” has provided a broad space for spiritual and cultural exchanges between China and India.

Spiritual culture has many fields, with literature, the most powerful component, at its core. Therefore, communication between different cultures always takes literature as the pioneer and the main force. Literary exchanges between China and India in the past two or three thousand years have naturally become an important part of the history of cultural exchanges between the two



China Institute in Calcutta

countries.

“The guidance, relevance and permeability of literary exchange have led to its supreme status in cultural exchange. To study the history of cultural exchange, we must first study the history of literary exchange. Literary exchange is the soul, and cultural exchange in various fields is the body” (*History of Literary Exchange Between China and Foreign*

Countries).

Lu Xun once provided a brief but profound summary of the ancient cultural exchanges between China and India. He said: “The two countries have maintained a brotherly and mutually beneficial relationship since ancient times and conducted exchanges in ideology, beliefs, morality, art and literature.

“In modern times, Indian

literature, especially Tagore, still has a surprisingly great influence on modern Chinese literature, from content to form, from theme to technique of expression, from subject matter to genre, with no exception. Some writers are explicit and direct in revealing their admiration of Tagore; some are vague and tortuous and deliberately cover their tracks; others use it the other way around.”

It is known to both Chinese and foreign scholars that China and India have a long and colorful history of literary exchange.

With the commencement of the 21st century, there has emerged the whole-course media, holographic media, overall media and full-effect media. The government has positively promoted the development of omnimedia and tried to deepen media convergence. In this context, it is an important subject and realistic problem facing the literary and media circles of both countries to think how to inherit the precious heritage of China-India literary exchange, how to adapt to the new era of omnimedia and how to take a down-to-earth approach to promote China-India literary exchanges.

In April 2018, President Xi and Prime Minister Modi held an informal meeting in Wuhan and reached consensus on a series of issues. In December, the foreign ministers of both countries held the First Meeting of the China-India High-Level People-to-People Exchanges Mechanism in New Delhi, implementing the spirit of the top leaders' meeting in Wuhan. It can be said that the China-India literary exchange has entered a new stage of

development. What should we do in this new era? In my opinion, we should do some solid work to upgrade the exchange.

If we were previously engaged in the 1.0 version of the China-India Literary Exchange, we should strive to upgrade it to the 2.0 version from now on.

What is the difference between the 1.0 and 2.0 versions? In the 1.0 era, the exchange was often spontaneous and one-way, and the form of communication was singular. For example, when translating literary works, translators of both countries usually acted individually. Even if there was a translation group, it was only among acquaintances. The results were usually printed publications, and there was little communication between the two governments and scholars. Although both Chinese and Indian scholars were known for their diligence, the translation results were not ideal, and the speed was slow, even slower than that of the Buddhist scripture translation studies in ancient times. It took us a whole century to translate Tagore's works and publish his complete works from the beginning of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century.

Entering the version 2.0 era of China-India literary exchange, this situation will be completely changed.

First, literary exchange is no longer just a personal matter. It will be fitted for the first time with the wings of technology and capital, thanks to the increased support from the government and the large-scale involvement of cultural enterprises.

Second, literary writing is no longer a purely personal effort. There will be other participants besides the author. In addition to Author A, there may be Author B and Author C. In 2016, Yu Xiu began to write the *Stories of India In the Eyes of a Chinese Writer*, covering more than 20 characters, from the Indian president and famous scholars to “the untouchables” and household maids, among others. The author had tremendous help from various people throughout her writing.

She wrote: “In the course of my writing, they repeatedly gave me supplementary information, provided photos and told me that I should also write about this and that person in their family, which was beyond my experience. In the past I only had the experience of being told not to write this and not to write that. It was because of the Indian friends who volunteered to offer those story details that my characters appear so individual and vivid.”

Third, with the continuous progress of translation software and the promotion of 5G technology, the translation of literary works will take on an industrial aspect. Languages are no longer limited to Chinese, English, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, etc. All kinds of national languages could be given the opportunity to enter the stage. Translators are mainly responsible for correcting errors, polishing and improving the quality of the translation.

Fourth, we will enter the stage of convergence media characterized by multimedia interoperability and cooperation, which is the fundamental feature and driving force of cultural

undertakings and cultural exchange in the future, as well as that of the 2.0 version of China-India literary exchange.

Demand drives technological progress, and technological progress in turn generates more demand. Cultural exchanges between China and India have entered into a good era as we usher in version 2.0. We should keep pace with the times and act in line with the trend, present good projects and works for our times to the Chinese and Indian people. I think we can go a long way with the following projects:

Joint shooting of Tan Yunshan opens the door to China-India cooperation in the film industry.

Tan Yunshan (1898-1983) embodied a bridge of friendship between China and India in modern times. He lived in India for 55 years and founded the Cheena Bhavana (Department of Chinese Language & Culture), Visva-Bharati, with the support of Tagore. It remains an important research center of Chinese studies in India. The screenplay *Tan Yunshan* was published in Issue No 5 (August 2010) of New Century Literature and Arts, Singapore, and was highly praised by Professor Wong Wai-leung of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Wong wrote in a letter to the playwright: "You must have collected a large amount of historical data, deliberated painstakingly how to screen them and did a lot of editing to write this masterpiece. The storyline has captured Tan's life without straying into unnecessary details, showing the

writer's excellent skills. Alongside the major events, a few interesting anecdotes were added to enliven the atmosphere."

Professor B.R. Deepak of Jawaharlal Nehru University, who has seen the Chinese script and its translation, volunteered to play Dr Dwarkanath Kotnis in the film. Director Chang Qing was excited by the script. He thought *Tan Yunshan* presented an attractive historical figure and conformed to the spirit of President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative. It thus has "extremely important political and cultural significance", he said. He expressed willingness to contribute to the shooting and release of the film.

The outdoor scenes of the film take place mainly at the Visva-Bharati (literally international university) founded by Tagore. The characters are largely Indian. Therefore, it is a suitable project for exchange and cooperation, with China and India co-shooting the film. The director and I are working to invite Indian film star Amir Khan to play Tagore.

A successful co-shooting of *Tan Yunshan* will open the door to China-India film and television cooperation. Literary exchanges of both countries may smoothly move from literary works to film, television and internet. Later, cooperation can be undertaken to shoot another three films depicting friendship between China and India — *Tagore and China*, *Dr. Dwarkanath Kotnis* and *Tianzhu Heart Shadow* by Ji Xianlin. Moreover, historical themes such as Hsuan-tsang, White Horse Temple, Kumarajiva and Bodhidharma can be further explored.

Jointly build the Tagore Literature Museum.

Tagore had a special feeling for China and a considerable influence on the development of Chinese modern literature. He upheld justice to support China's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and urged the Indian people to support China. The Chinese government, under extremely difficult circumstances, supported Tagore's cause by establishing the Cheena Bhavana in Visva-Bharati. Eighty years later, the Cheena Bhavana remains one of the most spectacular buildings at the university. With soaring demand for Chinese language education, teachers and students of the Chinese studies center in India hope that China will help build a Chinese mansion in the Cheena Bhavana as a special place for China-India literary exchanges. It is expected to include a small lecture hall, reading rooms and dormitories for visiting Chinese teachers and students. The Indian faculty and students look forward to it and have already prepared a land acquisition plan and two sets of design drawings.

This is a very positive proposal, one that broadens our way of thinking in funding the overseas teaching of Chinese, and it can solve the practical difficulties confronting the Indian side. It deserves our serious consideration. I suggest naming the mansion the Tagore Literature Museum.

Continue to translate each other's classics

Since the two countries signed an agreement in 2011 to publish the En-

cyclopedia of Chinese and Indian Cultural Contacts, two volumes have been published — in 2014 and 2015. Meanwhile, translation of a batch of classics from the two countries, including famous contemporary Chinese literary works, is underway. Among them, the Hindi version of Chinese Poetry, *The Analects of Confucius* and *The Four Books*, translated by B.R. Deepak, have been published. Deepak also translated the 500,000-Chinese-character *Ji Xianlin, A Critical Biography* into English and Hindi. The books' launch ceremony was held on the first day of the Beijing International Book Expo on Aug 22, 2018, attended by Gautam H. Bambawale, the Indian ambassador to China at the time, and other representatives.

The translation of Chinese and Indian classics is an important and advanced form of cultural exchange and has lasting effects. We should make great efforts to make the undertaking yield better results.

Since there are so few experts like Professor Deepak who are proficient in both Chinese and Hindi, it can hardly meet the needs of the society if we rely entirely on such translators to directly translate from Chinese to Hindi. What can we do to change the situation of "a room full of Chinese translations of Indian classics in contrast to half a box of Indian translations of Chinese classics"? We may consider translating Chinese classics from English versions into Hindi and other ethnic languages of India.

China and many other countries have used this second-best yet effective method. In the current situation,

translation between Chinese and Hindi can go hand in hand with translating English versions. When there are more sinologists like Deepak, the two ways can become one. For example, Chinese versions of Tagore's works have been translated from English, Russian and Hindi, and finally all have been translated directly from Bengali.

Vigorously develop tourism and tourism literature

Tourism and tourism literature are a major form of human communication. Tourism literature (including travelogues) has eternal charm.

China is the world's largest tourism exporter. Chinese tourists very much enjoy visiting India because of its Buddhist culture, splendid ancient civilization and strong attraction of Bollywood films. Similarly, China's ancient civilization and its achievements in contemporary development are also attractive to the Indian people.

The two peoples need to deepen mutual understanding. Most Indians are surprised at Chinese people eating rice with chopsticks, which shows the importance of mutual understanding.

What will be the strength of the friendship that will emerge from the enhanced mutual understanding of 2.7 billion people? Isn't it strong enough to greatly enhance our friendly relations? To this end, I suggest that China give a pair of giant pandas to the people of India. The giant panda is China's traditional ambassador of friendship and will surely promote enthusiasm for exchanges between the Chinese and Indian people and turn it into a

powerful driving force for friendship.

To develop tourism in India, apart from providing good services, we should also do create supporting facilities. A few years ago, a famous Indian scholar returned to India after completing her teaching assignment in Shenzhen. She told me that foreign guests usually stay in India for two or three days. They don't have the time to visit faraway famous scenic spots. Can we build a Splendid India in Delhi like the Splendid China and Window of the World in Shenzhen? I think it is feasible both socially and economically. It has been more than 30 years since the Splendid China and Window of the World opened in Shenzhen, and they are still flourishing. Ticket sales for Window of the World in 2018 reportedly exceeded 400 million yuan. Splendid China and Window of the World are the second generation of miniature scenic spots after Lilliput. Now, the Huaxia network has developed the third generation of miniature scenic spots — Global Village — which is more cutting-edge, more comprehensive and more in-depth in media convergence. And it occupies less land. Miniature scenic spots like Global Village should also have broad prospects for development in India.

Promote theatrical performances to enhance youth exchanges in literature

Among the youth of China and India is great enthusiasm for mutual appreciation of literature, which is manifested not only in the translation and reading of literary works and enjoyment of films and television

programs but also in theatrical performances.

Wang Xiang, a prominent cultural figure and founder of the Theatre Without Borders (Penghao Theatre), said, "Literature contains everything, but a novel can only be read by one person at a time; theater arts create space that can accommodate all the sentiment and significance that people want to express — spirituality, language, music, body, meaning, emotion, mood and even the whole universe. ... People can read Tagore's poems and novels directly, and we have the responsibility and obligation to bring his theatrical works to the stage and present them to the audience.

"Therefore, in the Ninth Beijing Nanluoguxiang Theatre Festival's Salute Tagore Unit, we performed six plays: *Chitra*, *Post Office*, *Sanyasi* or *The Ascetic (Nature's Revenge)*, *Red Oleander*, *Tan Yunshan* and *Atonement*."

Tagore's plays are very popular with young people in Beijing, Tianjin, Jinan, Lanzhou and Shenzhen, especially among college students. We should take advantage of the situation and carry out theatre exchanges between Chinese and Indian college students.

In addition to performing Indian plays in China, we can also perform Chinese plays in India, including the Chinese versions of Indian plays. It is more meaningful to cultivate the seeds of theatre exchanges in this way than merely to invite professional groups for exchange visits.

In past literary exchanges, we paid more attention to subject matter

such as the translation of masterpieces and research on important issues. In the future, we should pay due attention to various activities — for example, performances of Chinese and Indian plays — and provide necessary policy and financial support to these projects.

Cooperate to rescue and protect literary classics

Because of natural calamities and man-made disasters, Chinese and Indian literary classics have been destroyed in large quantities. Although good results have been achieved in rescue and protection, the two countries still face an arduous challenge. This represents a huge area for cooperation between the two countries.

For a variety of reasons, some Indian cultural relics and documents are scattered all around the world and are held in the collections of major museums. It is painful for the Indian people that they are unable to know or make an inventory of such cultural relics and documents. Therefore, when the Centre for Indian Studies of Shenzhen University, the Shanghai People's Publishing House and the XuelinVerlag proposed publishing a world museum art series, they immediately received strong support from high-level people in India.

The Institute of International Studies of Indian Culture is a renowned research institution founded and led by distinguished scholar Raghu Vira and his son Lokesh Chander (former chairman of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations). As Mr Chander grows older, the question of where the institute and its library will go has

become a difficult one. The books about Japan were shipped to that country in 2016, and Chander said he would give some others to Shenzhen University as a gift.

Considering the significance to India of this collection of books, I declined his kind offer and expressed our willingness to digitize the books. We need only electronic versions, and the originals can be kept in India. It is a good deed that a big country of benevolence and righteousness should perform. We should make a good plan and carry it out well.

At present, the Indian government is working hard on the manuscript rescue and protection project. It is of great significance for India, which in ancient times took sound as a teaching medium. The experience and skills of China in rescuing manuscripts (including rare printed books) can be used for reference by Indian counterparts.

To sum up, there is a huge space for cooperation in literary exchange between China and India. Given the right time, the right place and the right people, great results can be achieved as long as we plan carefully, forge ahead and strive to create an upgraded version of the China-India literary exchange. ■

The author is director of the Center for Indian Studies at Shenzhen University and winner of the ICCR Distinguished Indologist Award.

Eleni Kounalakis attends the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation

Eleni Kounalakis

Eleni Kounalakis, Lieutenant Governor of California, visited Beijing to attend the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation from April 23 to 26. Kounalakis was invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Forum and address both the Local Cooperation Sub-forum jointly sponsored by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Beijing Municipal Government, and the Entrepreneur Conference sponsored by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin met with Kounalakis during the forum, hailing California's important contributions to local cooperation between China and the United States. Li hoped that Mr. Gavin Newsom and Kounalakis would continue to promote California's friendly cooperation with China, whereby lending a key impetus to the sound and stable development of China-US relations. Kounalakis said that both sides should contribute to protecting the common homeland of humanity by promoting cooperation between California and China in areas like climate change.

The following is the full text of the speech made by Kounalakis at the Local Cooperation Sub-forum:

Part I: California

It is an honor to be here in Beijing for the One Belt, One Road conference, representing California, the westernmost part of the continental United States, with a 1,000-kilometer shoreline on the Pacific Ocean. I am honored to be here on behalf of the people of California, and our state's governor, Gavin Newsom.

California is the primary economic engine driving the US economy — which is the largest economy in the world. Our state alone, if it were an independent country, would be the fifth largest economy in the world. We are home to Silicon Valley, Disneyland, Hollywood and so many other iconic places which people around the world identify with American culture and innovation.

We are also home to the largest system of public universities anywhere in the world. The University of California and California State University together have 33 campuses and over 750,000 students. Our community college system has an enrollment of over 2 million students.

Education is important to us in California — and countries around the world participate in our success by sending thousands of international students to our state to study side-by-side with our own American students. In fact, at this moment, 9 percent of the students studying in our University of California system are from China. That is nearly one in 10 of our students at

UC Berkeley, UCLA, UC San Diego, UC Davis, UC San Francisco and the all the other UC campuses combined.

This robust educational exchange fosters the sharing of culture and ideas and builds personal relationships that go on to be the basis of mutual understanding, international cooperation and economic innovation.

Opening our minds, opening our hearts, is a fundamental ideal for Californians. We are the home of the beat poets, we invented blue jeans, skateboarding and popsicles. It is well known that in the United States, we believe that personal liberty — freedom — drives innovation, which in turn drives economic development.

No part of my country exemplifies the connection between freedom and economic development more than California. It is why our state attracts not just students from around the world but anyone seeking to work hard, play by the rules and build a better life for themselves and their families.

I myself am the daughter of a Greek immigrant. My father came to California as a refugee after the Second World War. He came alone, with no money and no English, and moved to the vast, fertile Central Valley, where he worked in the fields as a farmworker, picking fruit. He also went to school, and because of our system of public universities, he was able to go to college and get an education.

My story is not uncommon in

California. In fact, 27 percent of the residents of our state were born outside the United States. That is more than 1 in 4 of our population of 40 million people who are immigrants from another country — Europe, Central and South America, India, Asia, everywhere. If you haven't been to California, please come! And you will see walking down the street a rainbow of people from around the world. We attract the best and the brightest — the most ambitious and hardest working — those who dream of breathing the sweet air of acceptance and freedom.

We know that our diversity is our strength. We also know that it creates special challenges for us. For instance, there are at least 59 languages spoken in our elementary schools. And the US federal government is grappling with difficult immigration issues. But in California we do not hide from challenges — we meet them head on.

Part II: California is addressing climate change; BRI should too

One of the greatest challenges we in California have taken it upon ourselves to address is that of climate change — and global warming.

If you have seen California in the news these last two years you have seen our state experiencing historic catastrophic wildfires. Governor Newsom's top priority is preventing and preparing for these fires — fires that have traveled at the speed of one football field per second and have formed fire tornados — things we have never seen before. We know the catastrophic wildfires are just one manifestation of a rapidly changing climate.

The reason I came to Beijing to participate in the One Belt, One Road conference is primarily to speak about climate change, and urge participants to prioritize this issue and consider how the Belt and Road Initiative can drive positive action around this global threat.

California's previous governors — Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jerry Brown — our current Governor Gavin Newsom, myself, and the vast majority of the people of California all agree: Climate change is a serious, existential threat to the security and stability of our country and the world. We have two choices: We act, or we cope. As the impact of climate change is already being felt with rising tides, melting icecaps and erratic weather patterns, California has chosen to act.

And let me point out that as we have acted, we have also seen our economy grow. Since the year 2000, California's economy has grown by 46 percent and our population has grown by 16 percent, all while greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced by nearly 10 percent.

Currently, we generate about a third of our energy from renewable resources, mostly from wind and solar power. In order to power our grid when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing, we are investing in energy storage, and currently boast the largest storage market in the US.

Increasing energy efficiency is also a priority. We are on pace to double our energy efficiency savings by 2030 through modernizing building codes, requiring more efficient home appliances, and adopting incentive programs to encourage Californians to

simply use less.

On the transportation side, California is home to nearly half of all zero-emission vehicles in the US. We are home to 90 percent of the total US investment in clean transportation and 11 electric vehicle manufacturers. Tesla, which made electric cars cool, is leading the way.

With the policy changes outlined above, California is on pace to drive down greenhouse gas emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. We are also on track that by 2045, 60 percent of all electricity generated from our power plants will be derived from non-carbon-based sources, and all our electricity will be carbon emission neutral. By 2045 the economy of the State of California will be carbon neutral.

As proud as we are of this goal, we are also aware that reducing carbon emissions will not be enough to fix the damage already done.

According to the October 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, to keep warming below 1.5 C, removing carbon already in the atmosphere will also be necessary. This is truly the moonshot.

For carbon-capture projects that have already been verified as effective, our Air Resources Board has developed a protocol that will provide financial incentives for eligible projects. But this is just a start.

And this brings me to the fact that of all California's work in combating climate change, our most important contribution is our investment in research and development. Right now, across our state, the next great breakthroughs are being pursued

by researchers, entrepreneurs and visionaries. These committed women and men are tirelessly working on the next generation of battery technology, low-carbon fuels, renewable energy, carbon capture and so much more.

Part III: California partnering with China on climate

As we have charted this ambitious pathway over the last decade, a strong partnership between California and China has emerged. It is built on a foundation of friendship and a recognition that the earth's changing climate is an existential crisis that threatens us all.

Since 2013, California and China have signed several memoranda of understanding at the national, provincial, and municipal levels. These agreements have established a framework for high-level engagement, agency staff-level policy exchanges, extensive research collaborations at our universities and research institutions, trade delegations, and billions of dollars in investment by both governments.

Our partnership was initiated around sharing best practices to reduce air pollution. California has made great progress in addressing air pollution in the state, and we were more than willing to work with China to meet their challenges. For nearly two decades, we have shared best practices to strengthen vehicle pollution standards, promote environmentally sustainable ports and improve maritime vessel compliance with fuel regulations.

California is extremely proud of our cap-and-trade program. This carbon emissions trading program is designed to limit carbon emissions

while generating substantial revenue. It is considered one of the best models in the world and has been essential in helping our state meet the goals that I just outlined. Since our emission trading system first started collecting revenues in 2012, we have appropriated over \$9.3 billion in clean transportation programs, low-carbon communities, energy efficiency projects, sustainable forests and agricultural lands, and many other programs aimed at reducing greenhouse gases.

As China works to develop its own national cap-and-trade program, California has been happy to assist. We formalized our cooperation through agreements signed with the National Development and Reform Commission and have been closely engaged with the regional pilot programs.

What China is attempting to do is no small feat. When fully operational, China will have the largest emissions-trading market in the world. We look forward to continuing our collaboration to help generate critical resources to invest in clean energy solutions.

Finally, in the area of zero-emission vehicles, California and China are also collaborating.

China now has the most electric cars, motorcycles and buses in the world. Just as California has the highest percentage of electric cars and buses in North America. Our mutual commitment to ZEVs alone is worth recognizing, as together we are helping create the demand that will drive the expansion of the industry.

Nearly 1 in 10 cars now sold in California are zero emission vehicles, and we are proudly home to the Chinese company BYD, which has

manufacturing facilities in California that are producing the next generation of electric buses and shuttles.

Part IV: Conclusion

As you can see, the relationship between China and California around combating climate change is robust and already producing real results. We are proud of this partnership, and because of our experience working together, we believe in China's understanding and ability to help lead the world on this issue.

The Belt and Road Initiative presents perhaps the greatest opportunity to date for China to affirm its commitment to combating climate change. As China continues to develop its goals for the BRI, we in California hope to see this issue prioritized and at the top of the agenda in every single one of the BRI projects.

China has the opportunity, through BRI, to help implement international standards and best practices not just for addressing climate change but for all aspects of environmental protection beyond those I've discussed today.

California stands ready to continue to partner with China, and all the world's nations, to work together toward this important goal.

With that in mind, I would like to close with a quote from arguably one of the most impactful, and best-known of my fellow Californians, the founder of Apple Computer, Steve Jobs.

He captured the culture and ambition of Californians very well when he said this: "The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do."

Thank you. ■

Speech at 2018 Friendship Forum in Haikou, Hainan

Diana Greer
president of USCPFA

Honored guests, delegations from around the world and colleagues and friends,

As president of US-China Peoples Friendship Association and in my own name I personally thank Mme. Li Xiaolin, president of the CPAFFC for inviting USCPFA, and I thank the Hainan Provincial People's Association for hosting the 2018 Friendship Forum. Our delegation included Gregory Brown from Kansas City, Missouri; Barbara Harrison, past president and currently vice-president of the USCPFA; Thomas Harrison, her son and longtime USCPFA member, both from Minnesota; and Kathleen Trescott, national board member from Carbondale, Illinois.

We are honored to be here in the beautiful island setting with all of those here seeking peace and good will. I must say that the revival of the Silk Road, or One Belt and One Road, by President Xi Jinping is truly visionary. I have had the opportunity to attend five Friendship Forums and each one has been quite enjoyable and so inspiring. My speech today is about the common bonds we hold as friends of two very different countries. As a retired music teacher, music history and culture were very important in my teaching, as I have taught many subjects through music and songs of the everyday people

of the world to many US children. So it is with the Chinese people and their children.

In 2008, I was the assistant conductor of the Richmond Children's Choir, which performed in Beijing and Shanghai. In 1993, on my first visit to China, students wanted to try out their English when they found out I was a visiting teacher in Xi'an, Shaanxi province. I was on a Friendship through the Arts tour, and they excitedly showed me around Xi'an. I was quite impressed with their knowledge and kindness. That was 25 years ago.

A similar thing happened to me yesterday. I had a very short transfer time to make it to the gate to a bus taking travelers to Haikou. A young person realized I had only 20 minutes to get to my gate, and he personally took me through security and on to the gate so that I could arrive on schedule. I hope that young person didn't miss his flight on my account.

Education is such an important bond between our countries, and the US should send more students to China, and Chinese students top the list of international students coming to the US. The people of China are an asset to the world and China's best treasure.

Over many decades the Chinese have remained our closest friends — exchanging delegations and helping

each other in times of great need. I often relate to others how the Chinese fought side by side with the American Flying Tigers. Many do not know about the American lives that were saved by our Chinese brothers and sisters. Another common bond is our interdependency in economics and business. Our two economies are completely intertwined, as we depend on countless manufactured products made in China and assembled in the US or China. Minister Counselor Tian Deyou from the Economic and Commercial Office of the Chinese embassy in the US, spoke in Nashville. He said China is the world's No 1 market for automobiles, outbound tourists and high-level education. China is No 2 for medical care and devices and the biggest buyer of soybeans. He said China's stable and growing market should be considered an opportunity, not a threat, to the US. We need each other.

The Chinese people love music, and there is the common bond there between us. As I traveled throughout China I heard an opera singer in Tibet, a professional musical theater puppet show in Chengdu, musical light shows in Yangshuo, singing and signing in the No 1 School for the Deaf in Beijing. Now there is a documentary in the works called *Beethoven in Beijing*

that tells the story of the Philadelphia Orchestra and how the group traveled to Beijing, arranged by President Nixon. China has become one of the largest markets for classical music in the world. In her article for US-China Review, author Jana McBurney-Lin writes about an enduring musical friendship, and that today the Chinese are both the greatest consumers and the most amazing contributors to classical music. Lang Lang and Tan Dun are superstars and have become household names everywhere. It is considered prestigious to have an orchestra in a city or town in China, and the government helps sponsor them, according to McBurney-Lin. She notes that it is inspiring that so many Chinese musicians have reinvigorated American music education.

Now, as we plan for in 2019 for the anniversary of formal diplomatic relations between the US and China, the USCPFA has initiated a new project called 40 Videos for 40 Years, wherein we hope to document some of these amazing China friendship stories. Each of us has a story and it is time that people hear about our longstanding friendship ties.

I know that friendship and caring will prevail between our peoples despite turbulent times. We have come a long way together and our friendship is built on our commonalities, being allies in the past, our love of history, love of education, economic interdependence, love of music and beauty in nature—so that the future will remain promising and full of hope, and peace will be the outcome of our decades of friendship together.

Thank you. ■

Spring a good time to appreciate the beauty of flowers

Wang Qi



A festival marking China-Japan friendship and celebrating International Women's Day

Spring is one of the best seasons of Beijing. When the warm breeze and sunshine gently kiss the cheeks and the fresh air is mixed with the scent of tree buds, people easily forget all the defects of this city and renew their love of it. Flower appreciation is an essential activity in spring. If you can make a

floral handicraft by yourself and put it in your home or office, it will be particularly pleasing to see it every day.

With the opportunity of attending the celebration of International Working Women's Day and Spring Flower Festival for China-Japan Friendship, I had the honor to experience for the

first time the Japanese art of flower arrangement in the vibrant garden of the CPAFFC.

Though the word *ikebana* is a thundering name for a person like me who claims to like Japanese culture, it is an art I have never known in detail, let alone practiced with my own hands. Before going to the flower festival, the only thing I could recall about Japanese flower arrangement was that this activity in Japanese is called *ikebana*, while other impressions of the art remained vague in my mind. I was curious, but I felt a little ashamed of how little I knew about traditional Japanese culture. Full of expectations, I arrived at the activity site. Looking at the colorful wrapping papers, ribbons and scissors that had been laid on the table beforehand, as well as at the various flower bunches nearby, I awaited my encounter with Japanese flower arranging.

Senhua Horie, the representative of Ikenobo Beijing Huayue Research Association and Ikenobo vice-president in China, explained the basics to us. Ikenobo is the oldest school of *ikebana* in Japan and the origin of the later traditional schools of *ikebana* in that country. Seeing that such an authoritative figure was explaining *ikebana* to us, my spirits lifted.

Having had the opportunity to listen to the explanation of the tea ceremony in Japan before, I thought that all Japanese teachers who taught traditional culture would speak gently with a quiet voice, but Ms Horie was quite lively, funny and amiable on the stage. She started with the nature and history of *ikebana*'s emergence in Japan. Under the influence of the

Shinto concept of unity, people believe that nature has a soul, and thus show perfect awe for the ever-changing nature. They also believe that gods can come into the world in the form of a specific plant (such as pine tree), and thus *ikebana* develops and becomes the most classic of Japanese aesthetic arts.

With social development and changes of lifestyle, the idea of *ikebana* has been changing constantly, from emphasizing the display of natural shapes to focusing on the expression of personal feelings. Horie joked that people imagine *ikebana* as elegant and effortless, but sometimes it is a laborious job, especially for “erecting the flower”. *Ikebana* is many times the work of carpentry, as much labor is required to show the classical spirit. Thus, for convenience, she usually wears jeans and other comfortable clothes when arranging flowers. Seldom does she do the job wearing a kimono as she did on this day. Hearing this, everyone present burst into laughter for the teacher's honesty.

Then she introduced in detail the three forms of flower arrangement: “erecting flower”, “growing flower” and “free flower”. What impressed me most was “growing flower”, a unique form of Japanese *ikebana*. It shows the plant itself and its growth in a simple form. Horie vividly described “growing flower” as “4D”, representing the plant at different stages — budding, blooming and withering. Flowers at all these stages can be used as materials to show the growth process of the plant, not only its present state, but also its past and future in the change of seasons. One kind or mixed kinds of flower materials may be used for



One of the flower arrangements

“growing flower”, such as withered willow mixed with blooming camellia.

What is amazing about “living flower” is not only the combination of plants at different growth stages but also the natural law revealed in it. The reconciliation of life and death, the cosmology of yin and yang, reminds us of the Buddhist saying “a world in a flower, and a bodhi in a leaf”.

At the end of the fruitful lecture, Horie said modestly that she would make a “simple” *ikebana* arrangement for us. With a few quick maneuvers — as directly as one might wield an ink-brush for a painting — a unique piece of *ikebana* emerged before the viewers. It could be seen that what the master said was “simple” actually came from years of practice and built-up techniques.

By this time, those who were eager to have a try could no longer sit still. Holding two flowers, a handful of flower mud and a small pair of scissors, each eagerly began an

individual creation. The type of flower arrangement assigned to us was “free flower”, for which everyone would create works according to personal preferences. However, this seemingly simple and open topic was really difficult for a novice like me. As I had not grasped the essence of Japanese *ikebana* and there was no step-by-step training, I grabbed a few flowers randomly, put them down and picked them up, feeling very confused. Not knowing where to start, I asked the teacher on how to put the two bunches of plants into the right position. The group instructor smiled and said: “You do not have to use all these flowers. In fact, Japanese *ikebana* is more concise than you think. You can just choose the appropriate flowers according to your own thoughts, and cut off the unnecessary twigs and leaves.”

Hearing that I only needed to work with a few sprays of flowers, I felt much relieved. Looking at the hydrangea in my hands and with a certain notion I had conceived in my mind, I chose two sprays, and stuck one to the left and another to the right, thus setting up the basic outline. By then, I seemed to have finally calmed myself from my previous impetuous state. Looking at the leaves on the branch, each with its own unique appearance, I used the scissors to trim them slowly in the direction I wanted, as if trimming the hair of a young girl. In Japanese *ikebana*, you need to learn the importance of doing addition and subtraction; you will have to decide between choosing and abandoning, and you will get some gratification from having the beauty at your disposal.

I finished the trimming, but inspiration kept coming. I added two more sprays to complete the initial framework. Then I was at a loss what to do next with the blank in the middle of the frame. With these four lonely sprays of flowers, how could I arrange them in an attractive way without appearing artificial? Horie happened to be passing by, and I quickly asked her timidly in my awkward Japanese: “Teacher, what do you think I should do with the rest of the work?”

She immediately leaned over and looked at my work. Then she told me that a few more flowers could be added and the stems should be cut to stand at different heights.

“Although you can trim the leaves according to your own needs, it is better not to cut off all of them,” she said with some euphemistic humor.

At her words I found that almost all the leaves of the sprays stuck in the mud base and those in my hand had been cut off by me with only bare stems left under the pompom-like flowers.

Having struggled in my mind for awhile, I finally stuck the remaining two *Eustoma grandiflorum* in the mud base and completed the work, though just preliminarily. At this time, Horie came back and said behind me in Chinese: “In fact, you can add some other plants to give the work more aesthetic sense.”

With those words, she picked up one *Reineckia carnea* and put it at the back of the bunch. Soon a touch of firmness stood out amid the charm of floral delicacy.

Finally, after the glass bottle was



One of the flower arrangements

covered with a light-colored wrapping paper, my first Japanese *ikebana* work was complete. Looking around I saw my colleagues and friends around me all held their own works with smiles on their faces. It dawned on me that *ikebana* reflects one's attitudes and expresses one's enjoyment of beauty and willingness to share it. Every leaf of grass or twig of a tree may seem small and inconspicuous, but when you stop and give it a careful look, you will find it exquisite and special. I hope that every woman might be as elegant and tenacious as these flowers — and as delicate and free.

Time passes easily in spring, as it does for all in the earthly hustle and bustle. One may want to leave a little time to get close to nature, learn to appreciate the world and learn about the culture of his or her community. Then you will truly feel how beautiful life is. ■

One Piece sails to Chengdu

Yu Xiaodong

Tourists in Chengdu, Sichuan province, during the May Day holiday happily discovered that in addition to traditional tourist sites like the Broad and Narrow Alley and Du Fu's Thatched Cottage, they were offered one more attraction to visit — *Hello, One Piece, Luffy is Coming!* — at the Sichuan Museum, supervised by Eiichiro Oda. Being its first touring exhibition on the Chinese mainland, it has attracted thousands of fans of the animation.

The exhibition was co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Kouzan Fine-Art Company and the Sichuan Museum. It was organized by Chongqing Dongling Art Works Co. and Yonghengsheng Group Co, with authorization by the Hello, One Piece Executive Committee of Japan.

One Piece, a globally favored manga

One Piece is a manga series created by Japanese cartoonist Eiichiro Oda. The story follows the adventures

of Monkey D. Luffy and his friends to become the next Pirate King. With his in-depth and meticulous concept, Oda gave the story a grand world view and sophisticated settings while illustrating this common theme of teenage manga, the friendship between partners and the courage to embrace dreams. The manga has been serialized in Shueisha's Weekly Shonen Jump magazine since July, 1997, and has a cumulative circulation exceeding 440 million copies. One Piece has been well received

in China and has attracted countless fans, becoming a superstar in the field of manga.

A grand event

After the successful conclusion of its tour in Shenzhen, the exhibition went to its second stop in Chengdu, where it served not only as a visual feast for manga fans but also as a Sino-Japanese cultural exchange event with great significance.

Hu Sishe, vice-president of the



CPAFFC; Sinya Ono, former vice-minister of Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; Sinichi Hirono, executive director of Shueisha; Wang Yi, vice-director of the Culture and Tourism Department of Sichuan province; Zhao Ping, president of Sichuan People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries; and other guests attended the launching ceremony of the exhibition.

In his speech at the ceremony, Hu said, "Japan's animation industry is a major force in the world market and has exerted a positive influence on China's animation industry. The exchange in animation between the two countries not only advances the mutual learning in animation culture but also promotes the mutual understanding and friendship between the teenagers of the two countries."

Ono expressed high praise and expectations for the exhibition. He said, "The joy that manga brings can go across the borders and arouse great sympathy among many children and young people. They can surely find the common values and the shared dream of human society from the same manga."

In his speech, Hirono, executive director of Shueisha, said, "The purpose of this exhibition is to celebrate the 22nd anniversary of the publication of *One Piece*. It is the first exhibition held in China of the Shueisha manga. We are deeply convinced that this exhibition is unusually significant. We hope that through such cultural exchanges, we can enhance the friendship between China and Japan and create a new culture of manga together with our

Chinese friends."

Wang of the Sichuan tourism department said, "Known as 'the land of abundance' and possessing a long history, Sichuan was the cradle of the magical Sanxingdui-Jinsha civilization. The cultural relics from Sanxingdui have been exhibited in Japan many times and are well-liked by Japanese friends. This exhibition will open a door for manga fans in Sichuan to know more about Japanese manga. And it is our hope to carry out more communication and exchange between China and Japan in the field of culture, and make new contributions to people-to-people friendship."

Manga, one of the most important forms of modern art and popular culture, has become a crucial pillar of contemporary multicultural society. Since the middle of the last century, Japanese manga art has made a wide and profound impact throughout the world, with generations of masters, such as Tezuka Osamu, Akira Toriyama and Eiichiro Oda influencing generations of young people.

Cultural exchange has been an important part of the communication between Chinese and Japanese people. This exhibition has been brought into reality with great support from the Japanese embassy in China. With the new theme of manga art, the exhibition has enriched the content of contemporary Sino-Japan cultural exchange and became an important bridge for mutual understanding and emotional exchanges between the teenagers of the two countries.

Behind the scenes

The Chinese mainland touring

exhibition *Hello, One Piece, Luffy is Coming!* was brought to reality after over two years of communication and countless modifications to the original plan. To give visitors an unprecedented and authentic visiting experience, the hosts have made huge efforts to obtain the legal authorization from the Hello, One Piece Executive Committee in Japan. Therefore, this exhibition is very likely to be the only national touring exhibition.

Supervised by Oda, its original creator, the exhibition displayed articles in different art forms, all with official authorization, including the original drawings, restored large-scale scenes and the original story of *One Piece*.

A selection of more than 100 classic illustrations of *One Piece* over the 22 years since its publication were on display, and the large-scale original painting, considered a treasure of Shueisha, made its world debut, constituting a more complete restoration of Mr. Oda's creation and providing the fans an opportunity of make close contact with this manga master.

It is worth mentioning that the silhouette image technology especially developed for this exhibition will be presented for the first time to create a unique and unparalleled experience for visitors.

In addition, visitors can take photos with life-size elements, experience the original illustrations Oda especially created for this exhibition through VR and purchase officially authorized derivatives to comprehensively experience the adventure of Luffy and his crew at sea.

Promoting animation

Chengdu was the second stop of the touring exhibition in China, and the only stop in Southwest China. The exhibition has received great support from agencies and institutes, including the Sichuan Culture and Tourism Department and Sichuan Museum. By presenting the art creation process of Oda, a “national treasure” artist of Japan, the exhibition reflected the creation framework and details of world-class manga, and provided abundant firsthand information for the discussion and research on the history and format of contemporary manga art.

In recent years, many outstanding works of manga have emerged in China’s manga market, while Japanese manga has been exploring new creation concepts, illustration techniques and the use of modern technology. Such explorations by Japanese manga artists are of great significance for reference and enlightenment in the development of Chinese manga and animation, leaving a huge space of mutual learning for the two sides. Chengdu is known as the fourth-largest city of China’s manga and animation industry. Up to now in Chengdu, some 100,000 people are employed in more than 1,000 enterprises in the industry and other relevant industries, many of which are well-known animation enterprises. As a result, the exhibition is not only a themed display of Oda’s works over more than 20 years but serves as a new channel for us to discuss the concepts and methods of world’s top manga art creation, as well as a platform of exchange, display and learning for manga artists in Southwest China. ■

Chinese and Japanese youths look to future

Guo Ning



Messages from Chinese and Japanese young collegians with deliberate thinking over the bilateral relations and its future development

At the turn of the season, everything takes on a brand new look. With peaceful scenes meeting my eyes in Tokyo, I take the comfort with mixed feelings.

The past year celebrated the 40th anniversary of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, and the Chinese People’s Association for Friend-

ship with Foreign Countries and the Japan-China Friendship Center jointly held a host of meaningful exchanges. Among those events, the 500 Chinese and Japanese Collegian Exchange Program activities are still fresh in my memory.

At the beginning of last year, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign

Affairs proposed organizing a similar event in Tokyo as a follow-up to the 1,000-collegian exchange in Beijing two years before. After discussion, it was decided to launch an exchange program with funding from the Japan-China International Joint Cause of Afforestation and to invite 250 Chinese students to visit Japan, where 250 local collegians would join in for communication. The friendship center was then appointed to take charge of operating the program.

As one of the resident officers of the center, I had the honor to participate in the program throughout the process, from making preparations to completion. The work rewarded me with rich experiences and multiple thoughts.

Planning

The first half of 2018 saw a thaw in relations between China and Japan. However, the sentiments of the two peoples were still not highly optimistic. It was especially so with Japanese young people, who appeared apathetic about anything outside. Worse still, their misunderstanding and prejudice against China was widespread. Thus, we were rather worried about finding as many as 250 Japanese collegians to participate in the exchange program. We were also concerned about how to set up the framework of the communication and what results would come out.

Close communication with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the China-Japan Friendship Association, local administrations, universities, colleges and other concerned units in both countries

finally led us to the scheme to launch the program in mid-June, during which time the five Chinese regions — Hubei, Yunnan, Zhejiang and Henan provinces, and the Ningxia Hui autonomous region — would each dispatch a delegation of 50 college students to visit and explore their friendship-partner prefectures in Japan — Shimane, Nagasaki, Iwate, Fukui and Mie — and to converge on Tokyo as a joint delegation for the final gathering with 250 Japanese collegians, who mainly hail from the capital area. Organization on the Chinese side would be led by the China-Japan Friendship Association.

Warm reception

For all the complexity and hardship experienced during the preparation phase, the 250 Chinese students from 20 universities of the five regions of China arrived in Japan on Nov 25 for the 500 Chinese and Japanese Collegian Exchange Program. After a brief stay in Tokyo they branched out for their respective partner prefectures, where they were warmly received.

I accompanied the students from Ningxia to Shimane prefecture, which was quite an impressive experience. The visit was very much valued by the local administration of Shimane, whose officials briefed the guests about the prefecture and the previous exchanges between the two sides. The host also helped arrange the agenda of the visit and even sent officials to accompany the visitors for three successive days, which had been a rarity in the past.

During the visit, the Chinese students planted a friendship tree, had lunch with their Japanese counterparts



Seeing is believing, which is a written message from Japanese youth.

and participated in themed discussions. The delegation also visited Matsue Castle, Yaegaki Shrine and the Adachi Museum of Art and experienced hiking in the forest for fitness. All these activities were classic projects designed for visitors to Shimane prefecture and western Japan. The Chinese students gained a genuine feel for the essence of Japanese culture.

The trip to the forest reminded some of the collegians from Guyuan of Liupan Mountain in their hometown: “We do share the similar landscape and scenery back in Liupan Mountain. However, they have not been protected as carefully as here in Shimane. We will bring your advanced experience back to our hometown.”

The activities were reported in the local press, the San-in Chuo Shimpō newspaper.

Sending messages for the future

On the afternoon of Nov 30, the Chinese students returned from the five prefectures to Tokyo to be joined by about 250 Japanese collegians from more than 30 universities, including Waseda, Hosei, Keio, Meiji, Nihon and the University of Tokyo, for a grand gathering — the China and Japan

Collegian Gala and Dinner — which turned out to be a success.

Considering the interest points of the young people, a special session invited each of the 500 students to write a message for the future in anticipation of relations between the two nations 10 years ahead, when the two countries would celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship. The message could be their best wishes for China-Japan relations in short words, or a piece of calligraphy or a cartoon. The purpose was to inspire the youths to carefully think over their responsibilities, since they would carry on where the older generation left off in the near future. The proposal received a positive response and various moving messages flooded in.

Parliamentary Secretary Tsuji Kiyoto of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Minister-Counselor Yang Yu of the Chinese embassy; Lin Yi, head of the visiting delegation and vice-president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries; and Deputy President Miyamoto Yuji of the Japan-China Friendship Center were invited to address the gala. Performances were given by students from both countries. Video footage showing the Chinese students' visits to the five Japanese prefectures were played. Slides of the 500 messages from 500 collegians were shown in a continuous loop during the whole event. A Chinese student and a Japanese student shared their messages for the future.

The Chinese representative from Wuhan University said that despite some friction between the two nations, they remained indispensable to each

other. Nakano Kazuki from Waseda University, representing the Japanese collegians, expressed the belief that face-to-face communications would bring mutual understanding, even between different nations.

Chinese students from Yunnan province brought to the audience wonderful dancing and singing performances that fused ethnic characteristics with modern elements. Their performance won warm applause and cheers. The collegians from China and Japan shared cheerful talks without any awkwardness, though meeting for the first time. Ito Hiroto from Nippon Veterinary and Life Science University expressed his thanks for being given the chance to be part of the event. He confessed his pre-event concerns about language barriers and possible lack of common topics, which he said totally vanished amid the cordial and friendly atmosphere when communicating with the Chinese counterparts, and he found it hard to part with them. He said he would love to visit China someday to reunite with the Chinese friends he had made during the event. The gala ended in an atmosphere of harmony.

Sentiments and sense of duty

Recent times have seen China-Japan exchanges at low ebb. However, grassroots communication has never stopped between the two nations, thanks to which bilateral relations warmed up again after the mutual visits of the two countries' prime ministers. I feel reassured that efforts for nongovernmental friendship will never end in vain and I should work with more confidence and greater effort.

Given the development of

China-Japan relations up to now, the honeymoon stage should be replaced by a posture of mature co-existence and mutual help, under which both sides can seek common ground while shelving differences and learn from each other's strong points to offset one's own weakness.

More chances ought to be provided for the youths of the two nations to contact, communicate with and finally better understand each other. As the saying goes, "Seeing is believing". The number of Chinese visitors to Japan has been increasing year by year. However, the number of Japanese visitors is still limited. The young generation of Japan needs to see, experience and learn more about China by themselves.

The Japan-China Friendship Center has been running for the common cause of both China and Japan for friendship. As the youngest member among the seven Japan-China friendly organizations, it has the strength and advantages to complete the task and is irreplaceable. It is expected to live up to its full potentials to make greater contributions to China-Japan friendship.

In this year of exchanges among the youth, the two prime ministers jointly proposed a five-year plan of 30,000-visitor exchanges, which will bring new chances to the youth of both countries. I sincerely hope that the young collegians will have a reunion 10 years from now to share their memories of the messages they delivered in the recent event and make greater efforts to strive for a still better future for both countries. ■

Chinese culture tour of diplomatic envoys a success in Henan

Ma Lianhao

From April 17 to 21, the Chinese Culture Tour of Diplomatic Envoys to China, organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Henan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, was held in Henan province, attracting diplomats from Tunisia, Cuba, Republic of Seychelles, Vietnam and the Slovak Republic. Deputy Director-General Zhang Yaqin of the Cultural Exchange Department of the CPAFFC accompanied the foreign envoys on the tour. The activity helped broaden Henan's channels for exchanges with foreign countries and bolstered its profile as a province of rich culture.

On April 20, while meeting with the delegation, Li Zhen, deputy director-general of the foreign affairs office of the Henan Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China and vice-

president of the friendship association in Henan, briefed the guests about the province's development and its role in the Belt and Road Initiative and discussed prospects of conducting people-to-people exchanges and economic and trade co-operation with other countries under the BRI framework. He expressed hope that the delegates would gain an objective and detailed understanding of Henan province and promote their countries' cooperation with it in more fields.

In Luoyang, Dengfeng and Zhengzhou, the delegation learned more about the rich culture and long history of the heartland of China during their visits to the Henan Museum, Luoyang Museum, Shaolin Temple, White Horse Temple and Longmen Grottoes. They also visited Zhengzhou International Hub Development and Construction Co, Luoyang National University Science Park, Luoyang Planning Exhibition Hall, Luoyang Farming

Culture Museum and YTO Group to see what efforts Henan province had made for further development as a leading agricultural powerhouse in China. To understand more about Chinese culture and traditional Chinese medicine, the delegates talked with students, tried Chinese painting and calligraphy, studied Chinese qigong (breathing exercise) and experienced massage and acupuncture at Henan University of Chinese Medicine and Luoyang No 2 Foreign Language School. In addition, they went to Jianye Heartland China Culture Town to see traditional residential buildings and watch folk art performances and local operas.

As a Chinese poem reads, "Good friends feel close to each other even though they are thousands of miles apart." This group of foreign diplomats were mostly young envoys to China. They appeared active in their thinking

and interested in a range of things they saw during the trip. And they had a strong desire for exchanges and cooperation with China. They noted that what they saw and heard on this trip impressed them. The rich culture and long history, distinctive geographical advantages, robust economy and development prospects of Henan were highlighted.

The activity enabled the delegates to find potentials and set priorities for future cooperation. They expressed gratitude to the HPAFFC for its thoughtful arrangements, which had multiple dimensions and different perspectives, from historical tradition to the contemporary development of Henan province. They said they would report to their ambassadors and other authorities back home about the visit, and would suggest having more exchanges with Henan. They expressed a desire for more pragmatic cooperation.

Wang Jinglin, a member of the Standing Committee and secretary-general of the CPC's Luoyang Municipal Committee; Ma Xiaolin, director of Henan Museum; and Xu Jiangyan, vice-principal of Henan University of Chinese Medicine, each met with the delegates.

The Chinese Culture Tour of Diplomatic Envoys to China, organized by the CPAFFC, had been success before in Hubei, Inner Mongolia, Hainan, Heilongjiang, Sichuan, Jiangsu, Hunan and Yunnan. It aims to show Chinese culture and push forward the building of a long-term mechanism for exchanges between Chinese provinces and foreign countries. ■

Helen Foster Snow: Bridge builder of friendship between US and China

He Yan



Helen Foster Snow

The name of Helen Foster Snow has been in my mind ever since I was a young girl.

One day in the spring of 1990, I came home from school and heard from my father that the TV station had just

screened a domestic film with a breathtaking plot. The name of the film was *An American Woman's Adventure*, telling about an American woman named Helen Foster Snow, who had been to Yan'an in the 1930s to interview the

Communists there.

“Who was Helen Foster Snow?” I asked curiously. “Helen was the wife of Edgar Snow, an American journalist who was famous for authoring *Red Star Over China*.” My father sighed with admiration. “She was so brave!”

Shortly after, I left my hometown, Hangzhou, Zhenjiang province, for Beijing to study and work. On Oct 7, 2018, I visited Utah, Helen Snow’s original home in the United States, as a member of a delegation of the China Society for People’s Friendship Studies. It was 28 years after I first heard of her name!

Symposium at Brigham Young University

On the morning of Oct 8, the delegation visited the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University and listened to John Murphy, the curator, introduce the collection of materials related to Helen Foster Snow.

Sheril F. Bischoff, Helen’s niece and a co-trustee of the Helen Foster Snow Literary Trust, with her husband, Garth, in 1997 donated all of Helen’s literature and publishing rights to BYU. At the forum, Sheril made a speech and presented two copies of biographical paintings of Helen — *Bridging and Friendship* — to the members of the delegation. We talked during the intervals of the symposium.

“Have you ever seen your aunt Helen Snow?” I asked.

“I first met her in 1945,” Sheril answered, “when we went to Idaho to visit relatives.”

Sheril was about 8 years old that year. She had seen a beautiful picture of her aunt on an old upright piano.

Helen Foster was born in Cedar City, Utah, on Sept 21, 1907, to a teacher mother and a lawyer father. She was the eldest and had three younger brothers. After graduating from West High School in Salt Lake City in 1925, she enrolled at the University of Utah to study literature.

Helen recalled later: “I had wanted to be a great author since the time I was 8 and read the *Wizard of Oz*. I had read Edith Wharton, who said you have to live abroad in a foreign country to gain perspective before you can write about your own American experience. The contrast is what energizes your brain and talent.”

In July 1931, Helen boarded the *President Lincoln*, an American cruise liner, in Seattle, Washington, with her mother’s old Kodak camera and set off for Shanghai. On Aug 1, she arrived and made an appointment to meet Edgar Snow through the US Consulate in the city.

Back in America, Helen had read Edgar’s articles and admired him very much. She imagined him to be “a brave, strong-willed and sturdy globetrober”. In Sullivan’s cafe, however, she found a young man who was “pale and freckled”.

Edgar’s career was at a crossroads. He told her, “This is the lowest point of my life.” He had contracted malaria and dysentery during a trip to Southeast Asia and had been kicked in the leg by cattle on his way home. It dismayed him that the trip was so littered with

despair, superstition and poverty. Back in Shanghai, the American residents formed a united front against him, denouncing him as “traitor to white people” for his satirical articles.

Although Helen’s first impression of Edgar was a bit disappointing, she reexamined him — “anyhow, he fascinates me”. Edgar fell in love with her at first sight, describing her as a Greek goddess who is admired wherever she goes. She was beautiful and healthy, and her blue eyes were always dancing with a rare mixture of beauty and intelligence. At the end of 1932, they married in Tokyo, Japan, and soon moved to Peiping.

“In your opinion, what is Helen’s outstanding contribution to the Chinese people?” I asked Sheril. She answered easily: “Helen supported the December 9th Movement and gave advice to those patriotic students. She ventured out to Yan’an to interview Mao Zedong, Zhu De and other leaders of the Communist Party of China and took many photos. After that, she launched the Gung Ho movement, together with Rewi Alley and Edgar Snow, to organize refugees in manufacturing production for self-salvation.”

In 1932, after occupying Northeast China, the Japanese Army planned to seize all of North China. On Dec 9, 1935, more than 800 students from Yenching, Tsinghua and other universities paraded in Peiping protesting the national government’s policy of surrendering to the Japanese aggression. On Dec 16, about 10,000 students took to the streets in a bigger demonstration.

Edgar Snow taught journalism at Yenching University, and the Chinese students often went to his home for meetings. On the day of the demonstration, the Snows followed the students to do interviews, ignoring the water cannons, sticks and armor of the military and police.

In June 1936, Edgar became the first Western journalist to visit the Chinese Soviet areas. At the time, Chiang Kai-shek was preparing for the last encirclement and suppression of the Red Army in Northwest China.

Helen wrote; "In his letter from Xi'an, Edgar said he needed an interpreter. Huang Hua, who had been imprisoned for a short time, came straight to our house as soon as he was released the other day. After returning to Yenching, he received a call from me, saying that Edgar needed an interpreter to accompany him on a secret trip to the Chinese Soviet areas. Huang Hua volunteered, saying he was willing to go, although he had to give up his graduation examination. I gave all the money I could get to Huang Hua, who set off by the next train."

As a translator, Huang Hua contributed to the writing of *Red Star Over China*.

Huang Hua was a backbone of the student movement. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he became an outstanding diplomat who founded the China Society for 3S Studies, a Chinese research institute for the study of reporting activities by American journalists Agnes Smedley, Louis Strong and Edgar Snow. The society was the predecessor of the

China Society for People's Friendship Studies. Huang thus forged a lifelong friendship with the Snows.

Helen wrote in her memoir: "From 1935, it was these Yenching-Tsinghua students who were the liaison with the West for the left-wing and Communist elements in China, and they were the engineers of the rapprochement of 1972 — when it was Edgar Snow who got Mao Tse-tung's permission for President Nixon to come to Peking. Thus the 'New China'-America friendship was born in the December 9th movement of 1935 in Peking."

First report from Yan'an

At the Brigham Young University forum, John Murphy showed photos Helen took in China, and I found a detailed illustration on the back of each. Among them, Mao Zedong's autograph was particularly precious.

"I've acquired many collections over the course of my career, but none of these collections and none of the collections I work with on an ongoing basis mean more to me than the Helen Foster Snow papers," Murphy said. "She's an example to us today of what can be accomplished by a single person in terms of establishing relationships between two peoples, two cultures and two countries."

The original name Huang Jing refers to David Yu, one of the friends Helen made with during the December 9th movement. In early 1937, he brought the big news that a Communist Party congress would be held in Yan'an in early May, with the participation of military and political leaders.

Helen realized that this was a great opportunity because Edgar Snow had entered Bao'an in northern Shaanxi (now Zhidan county) in June 1936, but unfortunately did not interview some of the outstanding generals such as Zhu De. Helen decided she had to go to Yan'an to collect historical information about those her husband had missed.

"When Edgar was in Bao'an, only the First Field Army led by Mao Tse-tung completed the Long March to arrive in northern Shaanxi," she wrote. "The other forces met in the northwest in October 1936 to end the Long March. Yan'an was conquered in December after Edgar left the Red area. So I felt I had to go to Yan'an because I was trying to do my exclusive interview in the right place at the right time."

The trip became a turning point in Helen's life.

Huang Jing helped arrange Helen's itinerary and saw her off on the train to Xi'an. He was a delegate of the Communist Party of North China to the congress. When Helen got off the train in Xi'an, she was summarily escorted to the Xijing Guest House by a Kuomintang police chief and handed over to six guards for 24-hour supervision. Not long before, the Chiang government in Nanjing issued an order banning all journalists from traveling to the Chinese Soviet areas.

"Edgar angered the Chiang Kai-shek government by secretly visiting the Chinese Soviet areas in 1936 and publishing interviews. I also had to pay the price for my trip to Xi'an a year ago," Helen wrote. "At that time,

I managed to get the biggest scoop of my life: Zhang Zhaolin not only accompanied me to tour Xi'an, but also took me to interview Zhang Xueliang, who publicly declared that he wanted to stop the civil war and cooperate with the Red Army in the fight against Japan. Since he was the second commander of the National Army under Chiang Kai-shek, my report, published in the London Daily Herald, shocked all the diplomatic corps of the world. Known as a journalist and Edgar Snow's wife, I became doubly unpopular in Xi'an."

When Helen came to Xi'an a second time in 1937, Zhang Xueliang had been imprisoned. The Northeast Army was forced to withdraw from Xi'an, and she was told that Edgar's life would be in danger if he came to Xi'an again, which worried her very much.

The night that Helen decided to flee Xi'an coincided with General Yang Hucheng's departure from the city, and the authorities imposed martial law to prevent a possible mutiny of Yang's troops, which were stationed in Xi'an.

Helen jumped out of the guest house window and climbed onto the wall to look for Kempton Fitch, an American who had promised to meet and help her. Instead, she saw the helmets of a company of guardsmen. Having no choice, she decided to go out through the gate. Fortunately, the guard on duty did not notice. At dawn, she finally got into the car of General Yang's subordinate and sped away through the north gate. The adventure became a scene in the film *An American Woman's Adventure*.

Two weeks after leaving Peiping, Helen finally arrived in Yan'an on May 3, 1937. In four months, she interviewed 61 revolutionaries, wrote biographies for 34 of them and had many memorable long talks with Mao Zedong.

Under harsh conditions, Helen contracted five types of diarrhea and lost more than 20 pounds. "I still can't stop laughing, it was the same look on Edgar's face when he came back from the northwest in 1936," Helen wrote. "Every line of my notes in Yan'an was written with the blood of life. Every roll of film was developed with sweat and tears."

In 1939, under the pseudonym Nym Wales, Helen published *Inside Red China* in New York. When China and the US established diplomatic relations in 1979, the book was republished in New York. American writer Harrison Salisbury said in the foreword that Helen Snow's *Inside Red China* was a companion to Edgar Snow's *Red Star Over China*, and like *Red Star Over China* was one of the greatest classics in China's revolutionary epic. Just as he was the first to reach Bao'an, so she a few months later was the first to report from Yan'an. ...The two books written by the Snows were themselves testimonial of the symbiosis of the Americans and the Chinese.

The cause of bridging

Among Helen's collection, there was a green plaid cotton rug in a checked pattern of yellow and black with the red inverted triangle logo of

Gung Ho embroidered on it.

"This is one of my favorite artifacts," Murphy, the Brigham Young University library curator, said as he displayed it. "There are two that have survived, and only this one is in the US."

Professor Peter Chan of the university asked me to read the embroidered Chinese characters: "Produced by the Baoda Textile Cooperative of Baoji county", which meant that this cotton cloth was manufactured by the cooperative at Gung Ho headquarters in Baoji, Shaanxi province, China.

"Gung Ho" — literally industrial cooperatives — means working together. Helen arrived in Shanghai on Dec 3, 1937, after the Japanese army launched a massive offensive on Shanghai on Aug 13, which devastated China's industry and displaced Chinese people.

Rewi Alley recalled: "It seemed to us in 1937 that the big problem was how to develop enough economic strength in the hinterland for the resistance to carry on. Helen, Edgar's then wife, said, 'There must be a people's movement for production. ... industrial cooperatives are the answer!' Edgar agreed. ... I went home and altered the plan I had made, in accordance with their ideas."

On Aug 5, 1938, Chinese Industrial Cooperatives was founded in Wuhan. During the next seven years, nearly 2,000 industrial cooperatives employing more than 300,000 people were systematically organized in China under extremely difficult conditions.

The Snows campaigned tirelessly, soliciting support for China's Gung Ho movement in the US, the Philippines and elsewhere. This was done in close association with the International Committee of Indusco, whose chairwoman was Madame Soong Ching-ling.

Along with Ida Pruitt, Helen helped set up and ran the American Committee in Aid of the Chinese Industrial Cooperatives in New York, becoming its vice-chair. Anna Roosevelt, the mother of the US president, was honorary head. Eleanor Roosevelt, the US First Lady, was a sponsor. The committee collected \$5 million in wartime relief funds for Indusco.

A year before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Snows returned to the US. In 1949, they announced their divorce. In 1958, Edgar's *Journey to the Beginning* was published. He wrote, "Helen was an extraordinary woman, full of energy and creativity, a loyal collaborator, both my partner and my critic."

During the McCarthy era in the US, when the Korean War broke out and US-China relations deteriorated, Helen was seen as a communist sympathizer, her manuscript was banned and her life was miserable.

Edgar was hounded out of the US with his second wife and moved to Switzerland, where he lived until his death in 1972. Helen lived alone in a Connecticut farmhouse and continued writing year after year. She ended up with some 64 books and manuscripts.

After the establishment of

diplomatic relations between the US and China, Helen was invited by the CPAFFC to visit China twice — in 1972 and 1978 — at her own expense. She said, "Neither Edgar nor I have ever accepted a penny from any government or corporation. If we do, we will lose our readers. We are the authors of independent thought."

On Sept 20, 1991, on the eve of Helen's 84th birthday, the China Literature Foundation awarded her the first Literary Prize for Contribution to International Understanding and Friendship. When Helen was unable to show up for health reasons, China sent a delegation to deliver the prize money and gifts to her home and found her still busy at her typewriter.

"It is up to the younger generation to make up for all the shortcomings of the past and pass on the torch of friendship," Helen wrote in her book *Return to China*. "I aspire for the younger generation to be able to study history and continue carrying forward the cause of bridging."

In 1996, the CPAFFC conferred the title Friendship Ambassador. Helen died on Jan 11, 1997, at the age of 90.

During an interval at the BYU forum, I asked Sheril, "What do Americans think of Helen Snow?"

She replied, "In the US, including Utah, Helen is not well known but known only to scholars specializing in China issues. Later in life, she studied New England history and family history."

"When did you first come to China? Do you remember the last time you saw Helen?" I asked.

"My husband and I came to China for the first time in 1985," Sheril answered, "when we saw Huang Hua and Rewi Alley. The second time was in 1987. I visited Xi'an on behalf of Helen and made acquaintance with the translator An Wei. So far, I have visited China more than 10 times. The last time I saw Helen was when I visited her in a nursing home in Connecticut, together with my husband. Since we live in California, we usually communicate by phone."

"I just want to follow in Helen Snow's footsteps," Sheril added. "I am very grateful to the Chinese people for the friendship they have given me, which was established by Helen."

After the forum, Murphy and Alva H. Merkley, assistant dean of the David O. McKay School of Education at Brigham Young University, presented small gifts to members of the delegation.

Merkley said: "Over the past three decades, Brigham Young University has sent 70 faculty members to teach at Chinese colleges and universities. I am in charge of the program, and as an unofficial ambassador I hope the friendship between the American and Chinese people will pass on from generation to generation."

Murphy said: "Helen Snow's greatest achievement in her long life was to build a bridge of friendship between the people of the US and China. The goal of Brigham Young University is to carry forward the cause of bridging, which Helen worked all her life to achieve." ■

Editor's note

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.

Sparkling friendship

Zheng Chen

The year 2019 celebrates the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Russia. The two nations have progressed shoulder to shoulder through ups and downs for over half a century. The promising prospects of friendly relations between China and Russia not only have bestowed on me — a person engaged in people-to-people diplomacy — the opportunity to realize my potential but also enabled me to become acquainted with those who have devoted their whole lives to maintaining China-Russia friendship. They deeply impressed me with their glorious deeds and personal charisma. It is often said that human beings are the greatest wealth under the heaven. Then these old acquaintances are a treasure for the cause of China-Russia friendship.

Some Russia-friendly people have carried on the work of their fathers and grandfathers, who either once fought dauntlessly together with the Chinese military and its people against Japanese aggression or participated in the modernization process of new China as experts dispatched to China by the Soviet government. Some, encouraged by the early friendly relations between China and the Soviet Union, started off from Sinology studies to engage in a lifelong devotion to promoting Chinese culture and enhancing mutual understanding between the two peoples. Together, their stories form a chronicle of more than 70 years of friendly China-Soviet and China-Russia relations. Every time I think about it, I am deeply moved. Because of space limits, it is hard to recount all their stories. And it is even

harder to decide which to tell. Here I'd like to relate a few sparkling moments from my memory.

“We would like to express gratitude to the Chinese people on behalf of our grandfather”

The year 2015 marked the 70th anniversary of victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and World War II. The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries invited Soviet veterans and their relatives to China for commemorative ceremonies. The oldest veteran was 93 and the youngest was 88. But when we went to the airport and met them at the lounge bridge, we saw a group of vigorous veterans whose silver hair and wrinkled countenances could not

hide the determination and willpower characteristic of soldiers and the excitement of returning to China. The head of the delegation and president of the China branch of the Committee of All Russian Veterans, Colonel Abbasov, briefly greeted us and introduced a middle-aged gentleman beside him with a straightforward request:

“This is the grandson of Skorniakov, who died as a member of the Soviet volunteer air force squad helping China in World War II. He was buried in a cemetery for martyrs in Wuhan. The young man wants to take this opportunity to visit Wuhan and commemorate his grandfather, which is also the family’s wish.”

After gathering more information about the Soviet volunteers, we booked a flight for him to go to Wuhan and contacted the Hubei Provincial People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries to help him visit the cemetery.

A woman from the visiting delegation came to us with a similar request: “My grandfather was also buried in the Soviet martyrs’ cemetery in Wuhan. This is the first time someone from my family has had a chance to come to China since his death. Would you please kindly arrange my visit to Wuhan?”

Despite the short notice, we successfully fulfilled the wishes of these two descendants of Soviet soldiers. Carefully arranged by the local friendship association, the two Russian guests visited the Wuhan cemetery, dedicated bouquets at the monument to Soviet martyrs and placed flowers in front of the tombstone of all.

Upon their return to Beijing, the

two took me by the hands and said excitedly words to the effect of “Thank you so much. Thank you. The visit to Wuhan has realized the dream of our entire family. It is comforting for us to see the cemetery being taken good care of by specially assigned staff. We were moved to see local people coming to commemorate the martyrs spontaneously and greeting us with hospitality. They took photos with us. Even with the language barrier we could feel their great enthusiasm through their eyes and tones. Their gratitude for the Soviet pilots was visible. The sacrifice made by our grandfathers and fathers for this great nation was definitely worthy. On our part, we also would like to express gratitude to Chinese friends for what they have done, for they have let our fathers and grandfathers feel no lonely here.”

Seeing tears glittering in their eyes, I realized there are things more precious than gold — a grateful heart and the heart to understand others.

“I have left behind part of my heart in China”

In May 2014, a friendly Russian delegation came to China to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the CPAFFC. Among the delegates was Ivan, grandson of Ivan Vasilyevich Arkhipov, head of Soviet experts team. In the early 1950s, after the People’s Republic of China was founded, Arkhipov, as an economic adviser to the Chinese State Council, worked diligently to help the country rebuild its national economy and implement the first Five-Year Plan. When China-Soviet relations fell into the doldrums, he kept a cool

head and insisted on neighborliness and friendliness, for which he made unremitting efforts. In China, he was usually not called by his name but as Ar Lao, literally “Venerable Ar”.

Every time he mentioned his grandfather, Ivan looked very proud and seemed to have endless stories. “From a common lathe operator to the first vice-president of the Soviet Ministers Conference, socialist labor hero, five-time winner of Lenin Medals — grandfather remains a legend especially to me,” Ivan said, “Moreover, grandfather always stressed that it was one’s working competence and actual contribution rather than his or her honorary titles that were worthy of respect.

He regarded the years working with his Chinese friends as the most precious and unforgettable experience in his life. When he first came to China with other experts, they encountered many practical difficulties. His grandfather summoned all the expert team leaders for a three-day meeting during which he said to his fellow colleagues: “We are not here for sightseeing or idle talk. We came for work and for work only. The Chinese have perfect trust in us, and we ought to help them wholeheartedly.”

In 1958 before he completed his task and returned to Russia, the grandfather was awarded the China-Soviet Friendship Medal and a certificate of appreciation by Premier Zhou Enlai, Ivan recounted. In 1996 he was invited to China again by the CPAFFC and was awarded the title of Friendship Ambassador.

“That was the last time he came to China, when my father accompanied

him to meet many of his old friends,” Ivan said. “At their departure, they held each other’s hands tightly hoping for a longer stay together.

“Of all the titles and awards he received throughout his life — and they are countless — he cherished the Chinese friends’ appreciation most. When he boarded the train to leave China, he looked back at the land he loved so much and, with tears in eyes, said: ‘I have left part of my heart in China.’”

Influenced by what they saw and heard from the old man in daily life, Arkhipov’s grandchildren developed affection and respect toward China. In recent years, Ivan established a foundation in his grandfather’s name and joined the Russia-China Friendship Association. He has been actively working on cooperation with China and frequently traveling between the two countries. Every time he meets with Chinese partners, he talks profusely in such an enthusiastic manner reminiscent of his grandfather and those Soviet “big brothers” who genuinely helped us in the 1950s. I enjoyed watching him talking, for I saw in his eyes, which looked so much like his grandfather’s, the valuable continuation of friendship toward China.

**“I will keep working for
Russia-China friendship until
I’m 100 years old”**

The name Kulikova is undoubtedly not new to many Chinese and Russian friends. She is a gentle but strong-willed woman of both nobility and simplicity. She is sometimes like a caring mother and sometimes a close

friend always ready for a heart-to-heart chat. She is the first vice-president of the Russia-China Friendship Association and a leading figure in the friendly nongovernmental exchanges between Russian and Chinese people.

As early as her time as a student at the Moscow Institute of International Relations in 1957, Galina Kulikova was engaged in preparations for the founding of the Soviet-China Friendship Association. She joined the association right after her graduation the following year and soon began working for enhanced relations with China during the first “honeymoon period” between the two countries. Kulikova served as the secretary and then the vice-president of the Soviet-China Friendship Association (later renamed the Russia-China Friendship Association), as the association’s representative in China and the cultural counselor of the Soviet embassy (later the Russian embassy) in Beijing for over 10 years. For decades she has been working very hard for friendly relations between the two peoples and has made a tremendous number of Chinese friends. Kulikova has published a book — *Russia and China: People-to-People Diplomacy* — based on her work over half a century. Kulikova was recognized as a “Russian meritorious cultural worker” for her achievements over many years and was given the Chinese Language and Culture Contribution Award by former premier Wen Jiabao. She was also named Friendship Ambassador by the CPAFFC.

Now, Kulikova is in her 80s, having undergone surgery on both knees, and is living alone in her old Soviet-era apartment on a slender pension and with mobility difficulties.

However, material constraints never weakened her faith in and passion for Russia-China friendly relations. The busy life of hers has left us with many impressive stories. For example:

Once she received a visiting art troupe of Chinese children. She was worried that the nutrition provided by breakfast was insufficient for the children. So she got up early every day to go to the market, pulling her shopping cart, to buy fresh milk for them.

When she was in Beijing as the association’s representative, she often invited Chinese friends to her home for meals, the preparation of which may have begun a day earlier and continued until she could present a full table and a sumptuous feast. Once she was accompanying a visiting delegation from China and accidentally fell and struck her forehead. Her first reaction was not to tend the bleeding wound but to comfort her Chinese friends, telling them not to worry. After applying a simple dressing, she again became the calm and optimistic hostess for the Chinese visitors and continued her work until seeing them off at the airport.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Soviet friendship association faced the need for reform, and Kulikova had to find herself a new job as well. She had many promising alternatives but chose to join the Institute for Far East Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences to continue her China research. She simply could not let go of the cause of working for Russia-China friendship, for which she had devoted nearly more than half her life. With the institute, she soon began to search for support for further exchanges between

Russia and China.

At the reception celebrating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the CPAFFC, I sat with a group of old acquaintances from Russia. Kulikova chatted with me in a between-neighbors sort of way: “You know I had surgery on both my knees and have to go to hospital for regular checkups. Every time I told the doctors I was still working, they were shocked. But I explained that work was actually the secret of my staying healthy.

“I still want to do more for the friendly relations between Russia and China. I think I will keep working till 100 years old!”

With those words, she joined other friends at the table in hearty laughter. I was deeply moved by her spirit. I said in my heart: “Dear lady, you’re our most valuable treasure; you’ve expressed our common wish. We sincerely wish you a long life and vitality, like an ever-green tree that will yield more fruit for Russia-China friendship.”

Recalling the stories of these Russian friends warms my heart. I looked through the window of my office, and outside was spring in its prime, warm and bright just as my heart feels. Compared with the existence of heaven and earth, the life span of a human is negligible. The stories of friendly Russians recorded here may be only a tiny part of the China-Russia friendship cause, but their wisdom and their contribution will remain brilliant and their virtue and their charisma will always shine like gold. ■

Galina Kulikova’s 58 years engaged in people-to-people diplomacy with China

Cai Yunzhe



Kulikova shows President Li Xiaolin’s family photos.

Galina Veniaminovna Kulikova is vice-president of the Russia-China Friendship Association and a Merited Cultural Worker of the Russian Federation. The much-respected woman is active year-round in people-to-people diplomacy between China and Russia.

In 2012, the nearly 80-year-old Kulikova finished her book *Russia-China People-to-People Diplomacy*. Dedicated to the 55th anniversary of the founding of the friendship association, the book, based on the activities of the association, records 60 years of friendly exchanges between the Chinese and

Russian peoples. In the book, readers can find not only great names in history — key contributors to the friendship between Russia and China, including Ivan Vasilyevich Arkhipov, group leader of former Soviet Union experts to China, as well as Russian Sinologist Andreev — but also those who have been committed to the friendly exchanges between the two countries in the 21st century.

The author, an important participant and witness to the friendly exchanges between the two neighboring countries, has made great efforts to deepen the Russia-China friendship.

The book's 304-entry index and 350 pictures are sufficient to show its value.

With deep feelings and respect for the friendship between the two peoples, Kulikova has been enthusiastically devoted to the cause of developing people-to-people friendship. When asked why she decided to write such a book, she said that many Russians and their Chinese counterparts had been committed to forging friendships between the two peoples during the 55 years of development of the Russia-China Friendship Association. As a member of the association, she learned much and tried to keep pace with the admirable heroes whom she depicted in her book. Although some of them have passed away, their selfless contribution to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the Russian and Chinese peoples is etched in her mind. She said she hopes her book will help the public in both countries come to know of their great deeds. In the book, she not only reviews the past but also looks into the future. She expects that the young people of the two countries will grasp the essence of the older generation's work and make new contributions to the deepening of Russia-China friendship.

Thanks to Kulikova and numerous contributors like her, the Sino-Russian relationship has succeeded in meeting all kinds of challenges and weathering all challenges over the past seven decades to enter a new comprehensive strategic partnership. We are convinced that under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative the two countries will make greater achievements in political, economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation. ■

Poetic spring of friendship breezes into Youjiang

Sichuan Friendship Association



“Friendly Spring” enters Jiangyou city.

At the end of March, the Sichuan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (SPAFFC) and the Jiangyou People's Government hosted an outing for the city's foreign friends to enjoy the beauty of spring. The annual event, known as Friendly Spring, was organized by the Jiangyou Friendship Association on March 30 and 31. Invited to the activity were Thailand's Consul General to Chengdu Vithit Powattanasuk, Acting Deputy Consul-General of New Zealand Ryan McLane and consular officials of Pakistan, Thailand and the United States, together with representatives of business associations in Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore,

Cambodia, Japan, Israel, Thailand, France, Germany and the US. Guests also included business executives, experts, friends and overseas students.

Besides sightseeing, they visited local business of particular industries the hometown of Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai (701-762) and discussed possibilities for cooperation with Jiangyou.

Friendly Spring is an iconic program created by the SPAFFC many years ago for enhancing understanding and friendship between Sichuan and people from all over the world. It is carried out in the form of a spring outing in different places of the province. The host invited foreign friends in Sichuan to participate in the activity

in gratitude for those who have long been concerned about and rendering support to Sichuan's economic and social development and contributing to the province's opening-up and external cooperation. It is hoped that through the activities foreign consulates, business associations, foreign enterprises and international friends will acquire a better understanding of the province for more exchanges and cooperation.

Both the Jiangyou and Mianyang governments put the event high on the agenda. They set the theme for the event — “Experience Li Bai culture and promote better cooperation” — in hope that international friends would enjoy the charm of Li Bai's poetry amid Jiangyou's spring scenery.

Arrangements were made for guests to visit high-tech companies in new energy, new materials and modern manufacturing to get some idea about the city's development potential. They also took a tour of the unique Soy Sauce Culture Garden to acquire some knowledge about an important (arguably the most important) ingredient in Sichuan cuisine. The guests were impressed by a video promo the municipal government had produced to illustrate Jiangyou's geographic advantages, natural resources, industrial clusters, tourism culture and ecological agriculture.

Guests said Jiangyou's opening-up and cooperative gesture had struck an impressive note. Consul General Vithit Powattanasuk, who was visiting for the first time, said he was glad to see what Jiangyou had done in protecting historical heritage. He said many Thai people know Li Bai but don't know that his birthplace was Jiangyou.



Tasting of famous Sichuan snacks

He confirmed his commitment to exhausting every possibility to promote exchanges and cooperation between Thailand and Sichuan in culture and other fields.

Akhtar Mahmood, consul from the Pakistani Consulate General in Chengdu had long read Li Bai's poems. “Li Bai was not only a great poet in China but also a literary giant of the world,” he said.

He is working on translating Chinese poetry into Urdu, including Li Bai's poems, “to help more Pakistanis learn about Chinese poetry culture.”

Jo Hong Joon, chief representative of the Korea Tourism Organization's Chengdu office, said that until he came over he did not realize that Jiangyou was Li Bai's hometown. He said he would give his fellow countrymen a good lesson about it and, in the future, hopefully bring some here for a better understanding of Li Bai's poems.

Through the spring outing, the SPAFFC has once again strengthened the understanding of and kindled passion for Jiangyou in foreign consular and business circles, as well as among international friends from all

walks of life in Sichuan. It has injected fresh impetus into the expansion of Jiangyou's external exchanges to promote practical cooperation.

On the sidelines of the event, Consul General Vithit Powattanasuk proposed adding Jiangyou flavor to the food festival to be held alternatively in Sichuan and Thailand this year. Li Demu, president of Toyota Motor (China) Investment Co's Chengdu branch, expressed willingness to expand Jiangyou's molded parts business into the international market.

Jiangyou Agricultural Investment (Group) Co has made contact with the commercial division of the Thailand Consulate General in Chengdu. The Chengdu Representative Office of Malaysia External Trade Development Corp also indicated that it would find suitable Malaysian companies to drive forward mutually beneficial cooperation with Jiangyou in production of condiments and molded parts.

Reporters from Sichuan province's mainstream and new media provided full coverage of the event at multiple levels and from different perspectives. ■

“Rainbow Nation” holds investment roundtable seminar in Sichuan

Sichuan Friendship Association

From Feb 24 to 26, Debora Balatseng, minister plenipotentiary of the Republic of South Africa to China, led a team of economic and agricultural councilors to Sichuan and, together with the Sichuan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (SPAFFC), held a successful roundtable seminar in Chengdu about investing in South Africa. Balatseng was invited as guest speaker for the World and Sichuan Lecture Hall series to introduce the latest economic and social development of South Africa to college students in Sichuan and tell of the bright prospects of friendly exchanges and cooperation.

At the beginning of this year's Chinese New Year holiday, the first investment promotion campaign the South African Embassy organized in China unfolded in Sichuan, emphasizing the great importance the South African government attaches to its exchanges and cooperation with Sichuan.

It was also the third time the SPAFFC and the South African Embassy have cooperated to promote South Africa in Sichuan and promote mutual

understanding, exchanges and cooperation between the two sides.

At the Feb 25 roundtable seminar, SPAFFC President Zhao Ping and Minister Plenipotentiary Balatseng delivered speeches. Reviewing the steady and healthy development of relations between China and South Africa since the establishment of diplomatic ties, Zhao recounted the close exchanges and cooperation between Sichuan Province and South Africa in sister city relationships, economy, trade, education, culture, tourism and other fields over the years

and introduced the latest economic and social development and the pattern of opening-up and cooperation in Sichuan, expressing willingness to jointly fostering more vibrant cooperation and closer China-South Africa people-to-people connections. Minister Plenipotentiary Balatseng pointed out in her speech that South Africa is of strategic significance to China, with more than 300,000 Chinese nationals living there. South Africa claims the largest and oldest Chinese community in Africa. Five Confucius Institutes have taken root



Roundtable exchange on investment in South Africa

in the country, along with growing Chinese business community. South Africa, with its advanced infrastructure and a diverse economy, is an alluring yet productive investment destination, where employment opportunities can be created, exports promoted and inclusive growth boosted. Moreover, South Africa's doors are open to Chinese enterprises. The government has encouraged Chinese businesspeople to invest in South Africa, which has added visa service centers and rolled out new multiple entry visas to Chinese entrepreneurs.

Thandukwazi Nyawose, economic counselor from the South African embassy in China, introduced South Africa's basic facts, including a history of South Africa-China relations, its current investment advantages, preferential policies, key investment areas, airline routes and visa application process, among other issues.

Mashudu Silimela, the agriculture counselor, spoke about South African agriculture, agricultural imports from and exports to China, current trade cooperation, forestry, livestock and fishery trade data, prospective products to be exported to the Chinese market in the future and investment opportunities.

The SPAFFC also invited a few dozen Sichuan entrepreneurs who had invested or were interested in investing in South Africa to the seminar. They actively interacted with the South African diplomats. Young entrepreneurs from the Sichuan Association for the Promotion of Modern Logistics Development and companies of agricultural science and technology, legal consultation and cultural communication raised

questions on cold-chain transportation of agricultural produce, investment access, legal assistance and investment risks in South Africa. Balatseng and two counselors answered them with enthusiasm.

At the reception dinner after the seminar, red wine and beef from South Africa brought unique flavors. The dinner proceeded in an atmosphere of friendship between the two peoples and included strong interest by Sichuan entrepreneurs in South African investment.

The SPAFFC invited Balatseng to be the guest speaker at the 12th session of the World and Sichuan Lecture Hall series on Feb 26. The series was initiated by the SPAFFC in 2013 for the purpose of promoting people-to-people diplomacy, building an international exchange platform with broad involvement of people from all walks of life at home and abroad, enhancing the mutual trust between Sichuan and the rest of the world and encouraging interaction between peoples.

In a lively fashion, this activity aims at boosting exchanges of ideas between visionary people at home and abroad, and serves Sichuan's opening-up and internationalization process from multiple perspectives and at various levels as part of its effort to strengthen two-way understanding between Sichuan and beyond and give a strong push to the province's integration into the world's development process.

At the beginning of the new semester, Chengdu University organized 300-plus faculty members and students from various colleges, including students from South Africa,

to take part in the Lecture Hall activities.

In her speech, Balatseng presented a picture of South Africa's latest social and economic development. She briefed the audience about "Vision for 2030: South Africa's National Development Plan", and the special, close relationship between South Africa and China. She also analyzed the huge potential for Sino-South African cooperation in politics, economy, trade, science, technology and education. Additionally, she patiently answered the students' questions. The atmosphere was warm and positive. The platform and bridge of friendship created by the World and Sichuan Lecture Hall series opened a window for the students to learn more about South Africa and cemented the friendship between the peoples of South Africa and China.

The South African embassy and Chengdu University reached a consensus on strengthening cooperation in education and people-to-people exchanges. Balatseng expressed willingness to strengthen exchanges in faculty training with Chengdu University, facilitate mutual visits by scholars from both sides and encourage South African students to study at Chengdu University.

She and her colleagues expressed satisfaction with the visit, which enhanced mutual understanding and economic, trade and cultural exchanges. She said the embassy will continue to give prominence to the development of friendship and cooperation with Sichuan, and present Chengdu and Sichuan to South Africa and the entire African continent. ■

Charming land of abundance receives youth leadership delegation from University of Chicago

Sichuan Friendship Association

A delegation of 18 young elites from the University of Chicago — at the invitation of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and organized by the China-United States Exchange Foundation — completed a successful study tour in Sichuan from March 26 to 28.

The foundation, established in 2008 by Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Vice-Chairman Tung Chee-hwa, is committed to strengthening people-to-people communication and mutual trust through exchanges in various fields between China and the US. Since its inception, the foundation has undertaken an array of projects as part of its effort to boost Sino-American cooperation in the economy, environment, education and other fields, and has achieved remarkable results.

Known as one of the most prestigious private universities in the United States, the University of Chicago is highly regarded in the humanities and social sciences fields. Its Harris School of Public Policy functions as an impor-



Delegation of young leaders from the University of Chicago

tant training base for public servants and a research institution on government issues in the United States. It has trained a legion of outstanding public leaders for the United States and has undertaken a number of government research programs.

To enhance the understanding and perception of China by students from well-known American universities, the foundation painstakingly arranged for a delegation of master's

and doctoral students majoring in public administration, public policy, economics, finance and international relations to visit China. Apart from the US member, delegates came from Paraguay, Spain, Turkey, Israel, the Republic of Korea and Pakistan. They had working experience in government, finance, network technology and international affairs. Most were coming to China for the first time.

During their visit to Sichuan,

the students held discussions with officials of the overseas investment division of Sichuan Development and Reform Commission and learned something about the social and economic development of Sichuan. They paid a visit to Southwest Jiaotong University's State Key Laboratory of Traction Power for a snapshot of China's achievements in high-speed railway construction and took a tour of AECOM (Chengdu) Design & Consulting Co, a subsidiary of the well-known American architectural firm that recently settled in Sichuan. The students also visited the Tianfu New Area Planning Exhibition Hall. The study tour was a complete success in Sichuan.

SPAFFC Secretary-General Xiang Qionghua met with the delegation in Chengdu and briefed the students about what Sichuan had done in promoting opening-up and external cooperation in recent years. She said she expected the younger generation of American elites to gain insight into a holistic and real China through their own perspectives and to sense the allure of Sichuan as they sought to contribute to the enhancement of understanding, trust and friendship between the Chinese and American peoples. Xiang was also invited to discuss with the students topics of their interest. She told them that young people must work hard in a practical manner, think globally and seize opportunities for self-advancement.

A leading official from the overseas investment division of the Sichuan Development and Reform Commission was invited to give the delegation a panoramic view of Sichuan's geographical location,

natural resources, industrial advantages, opening-up, cooperation and the diversity and imbalance of economic and social development in the province. Both sides exchanged ideas in a frank, in-depth manner on Sichuan's foreign investment promotion and operations, differences in residents' incomes and corresponding solutions, poverty eradication efforts and achievements and modernization and environmental protection.

At the State Key Laboratory of Traction Power of Southwest Jiaotong University, the delegates visited the Super-Maglev (multi-functional HTS magnetic levitation loop test line), the maglev train test platform and the generalized comfort simulation test bed to gain an understanding of the remarkable progress and broad prospects of China's high-speed railway construction. On the evacuated tube transport-HTS superconducting maglev experimental platform, members of the delegation took on the high-speed maglev train and excitedly talked about what they saw, heard and felt.

Thanks to SPAFFC's active and careful liaison work, the delegation had a study tour at AECOM (Chengdu) Design and Consulting Co during their stay in Sichuan as they had hoped. As a US-funded company in Sichuan and a leader in the architectural design industry, the AECOM branch currently undertakes many projects of conceptual planning and urban design, including the Chengdu Tianfu Olympic Sports City. Senior executives in urban planning, garden planning, construction and residential environment business development across the company's various departments held discussions

with the delegation. The two sides candidly exchanged views on many topics, including how multinational companies adapt to China's local environment and get along with the government and about AECOM's unique attributes, environmental protection concepts and its way to success in China.

During their stay in Sichuan, the students also visited the Tianfu New Area Planning Exhibition Hall and Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding and Research Base. They learned about Sichuan's natural resources, urban construction and development and development history from ancient times to the modern era, and they came to understand the important positioning and significance of Sichuan's construction and development for the all of China. All in all, they built a positive foundation for further exchanges and cooperation between China and the United States.

Members of the delegation said the trip to Sichuan was brief but thrilling. Not only did they feel the invigorating pulse of western China but they came to a more profound understanding of the development outlook on innovation, coordination, green approaches, openness and sharing. Organizers of the delegation — both the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China-United States Exchange Foundation — gave credit to SPAFFC's thoughtful arrangements and said that they would continue to organize delegations of this kind to visit Sichuan in the future. ■

Voice of Friendship honors outstanding contributors

Staff Reporter



In May 2019, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin, Vice-President Xie Yuan and Vice-President Hu Sishe issued certificates to Outstanding Unit Contributors and Outstanding Individual Contributors selected by the editorial board of Voice of Friendship for their contributions to the magazine in 2018.

Outstanding Unit Contributors (CPAFFC)

- Department of American & Oceanian Affairs

- Department of European & Asian Affairs
- Cultural Exchange Department

Outstanding Unit Contributors (local friendship associations)

- Henan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries
- Chengdu Municipal People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries
- Hebei Provincial People's

Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

- The People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries of the Ningxia Hui autonomous region

Outstanding Individual Contributor

CPAFFC President Li was recognized for her article *Flowers of Friendship Blossom*, together with five other winners.

Forum on subnational cooperation at the Second Belt and Road Forum a success

Wang Qi



On the afternoon of April 25, jointly hosted by the CPAFFC and Beijing Municipal People's Government, a themed forum — Subnational Cooperation of the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation — was successfully held at the China National Convention Center in Beijing. The forum centered on deepening subnational cooperation and sharing development benefits.

Li Xiaolin, president of the CPAFFC and CIFCA; Chen Jin-ling, mayor of Beijing; Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; Sinlavong Khoutphaythoune, secretary of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party Vientiane Committee and mayor of Vientiane, Laos; and Christian Wulff, former president of Germany, attended the opening ceremony and delivered speeches.

Vice-President Xie meets with representatives of US organizations attending forum

Zhang Yang



Vice-President Xie Yuan met with representatives of Sister Cities International and the US-China Friendship Association from the United States, who were in Beijing to attend the Subnational Cooperation Themed Forum of the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

Xie told the guests that as cooperation between Chinese and other countries' sub-national administrative areas developed in recent years with increasing momentum, the Second Belt and Road Forum set up for the first time the Subnational Cooperation Thematic Forum. During the subforum, more than 100 delegates from around the world discussed the achievements and prospects of the subnational exchanges and cooperation between China and other countries.

Vice-President Hu Sishe meets with Montenegro Ambassador to China Darko Pajovic

Yu Xiaodong



Hu Sishe, vice-president of the CPAFFC met with Darko Pajovic, the Republic of Montenegro's ambassador to China, and his delegation on April 30.

Hu said the relationship between the Republic of Montenegro and China had been developing well and he hoped for more exchanges in the fields of people-to-people communication and culture, as well as economy, under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. The ambassador briefed his hosts about the programs Montenegro had developed with China in recent years and said the two countries should maintain close contact for more cooperation and exchanges in various fields.

Exhibition of photos, books and paintings from DPRK held in Beijing

Hong Lei



On April 9, an exhibition of photos, books and paintings from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was launched in Beijing in celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the DPRK. It also marked the anniversary of the first state visit to China by Kim Jong-un, chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK.

Vice-President Lin Yi of the CPAFFC; Pak Kyong Il, chairman of the DPRK-China Friendship Association and vice-chairman of the DPRK Committee for Cultural Liaison with Foreign Countries; Jong Hyon U, charge d'affaires of the DPRK embassy in China; and President Wang Yanling of Beijing Seven Star Group attended the opening ceremony and made speeches.

Vice-President Song Jingwu meets with Chairman Okamoto Tamotsu of Japan's Council of Local Authorities for International Relations

Pan Lin



On April 25, Vice-President Song Jingwu met with the Japanese delegation led by Chairman Okamoto Tamotsu of the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR), who was in Beijing to attend the local cooperation panel of the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation at the invitation of the CPAFFC.

Vice-President Song said that with the joint efforts by the government and other sectors of society in China and Japan, bilateral relations had returned to a normal track and was enjoying a strong positive momentum.

Secretary General Li Xikui attends opening ceremony of 15th Special Olympics World Summer Games in UAE

Jia Ji

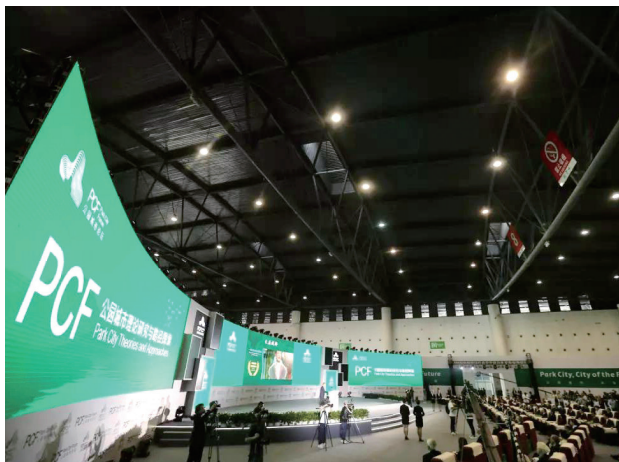


At the invitation of Timothy Shriver, chairman of Special Olympics, Li Xikui, secretary-general of the CPAFFC, led a delegation to attend the opening ceremony of the 15th Special Olympics World Summer Games in the United Arab Emirates on March 14.

During the activity, Li met with Timothy Shriver, chairman of Special Olympics; Patricia Marroquin, the first lady of Guatemala; Charles Nyambe, regional president and managing director of the Special Olympics Africa Region; David S. Evangelista, regional president and managing director of the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia Region; and others. They had discussions on caring for the disabled and the establishment of friendly city relationships and reached a consensus.

Chengdu and Vienna discuss construction of Park City

Chengdu Friendship Association



On Earth Day, April 22, 2019, the first Park City Forum was held in Chengdu. Vienna, Austria's Ernst Vooler, the speaker of Parliament, led a delegation to attend the forum and put forward a suggestion from his state.

Vooler, who was in Chengdu for the first time, said that in Vienna they use technologies to build new buildings, expand the living space of citizens and make sure that green space and water areas account for 50 percent of the city's ground. This, he said, is their way of practicing the sustainable development concept. He suggested that Chengdu continue to pay attention to the development of public green spaces and ensure full coverage of public healthcare, social services and educational institutions.

Shenyang foreign friendship body promotes people-to-people exchanges with Germany

Shenyang Friendship Association



The Shenyang People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries is actively carrying out cultural exchanges with Germany and making efforts to cultivate successors for Sino-German long-term friendship.

In June 2017, Shenyang Huimin Middle School signed a letter of intent to establish friendly and cooperative relations with Max-Weber-SchuleSinsheim in Germany. In the past two years, the two schools have reinforced their relations through various forms of exchanges between teachers and students.

In March 2019, a few teachers and students of Huimin Middle School went to Germany for cultural exchanges. At the Max-Weber school, the Chinese teachers and students saw and mulled over differences between Chinese and German education systems and developed a deep understanding of German schools.