

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

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People-to-people



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Lin Songtian: China's success is the UN's success

Tu Lili

On Aug 1, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with Siddharth Chatterjee, the UN's resident coordinator in China. The two sides had friendly and in-depth exchanges on the United Nations' contribution to China's development, China's achievements in development, the country's policies for cooperation with Africa and their results and other topics of common interest.

Among those present at the meeting were Beate Trankmann, UN Development Programme Representative in China; Shahbaz Khan, UNESCO representative in China; Justine Coulson, UN Population Fund representative in China; Nenad Radonjic, UNICEF representative in China; and Ji Yongjun, deputy director-general of Asian & African Affairs for the CPAFFC.

Lin invited Chatterjee and his party to visit the CPAFFC. He recalled the friendly history of close cooperation and partnership between China and the United Nations over the past half-century and more. He said that with the support of the UN and other international communities, China has achieved a great leap from high-speed development to high-quality development and high-level opening-up.

With Xi Jinping at its core, the



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian meets with Siddharth Chatterjee, the UN's resident coordinator in China, at the CPAFFC's headquarters in Beijing.

CPC Central Committee has always adhered to and developed the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the vision of people-centered development and the purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly. China has made remarkable achievements and historic changes in development over the past decades. It depends on the concerted and tenacious efforts of its 1.4 billion people.

Despite the joint influence of

changes unseen in a century and the COVID-19 pandemic, China won its battle against poverty as scheduled last year, achieved the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, lifted every one of its people out of absolute poverty and contributed over 70 percent of the world's poverty reduction, Lin said.

Based on what he had seen and heard, Lin mentioned the poverty alleviation and development miracle in

Ningde, Fujian province, and Minning town in the Ningxia Hui autonomous region. He said these were all successful in implementing President Xi's important remarks on targeted poverty alleviation and green development.

China's success in development and poverty reduction is also an important achievement of the UN in achieving its 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The country's success "is of important demonstration significance" to Africa and other developing countries in their pursuit of independent and sustainable development, Lin said.

Citing his own work experience, Lin spoke of China's policies and practical measures in Africa. He said Africa is rich in natural and human resources and full of hope and vitality for development. However, it faces three major development bottlenecks: underdeveloped infrastructure, lack of talented people and a shortage of funds. Whoever helps Africa solve these problems will be Africa's true friend and reliable partner, he said.

President Xi Jinping values China-Africa relations and has made several trips to Africa and attended the Johannesburg Summit and Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), together with African leaders. The meetings ushered in a new era of win-win cooperation and common development. An important outcome of the two summits was support for Africa in breaking the three development bottlenecks and helping African countries enhance their capac-

ity for independent and sustainable development.

Lin praised the valuable support given by UN agencies in China at the early stage of China's reform and opening-up and its active promotion of South-South cooperation.

"China's success is the UN's success," Lin said.

As a major platform for international development cooperation, the UN plays a constructive role in coordinating global resources to accelerate the development of all countries and promote common development.

China firmly supports the UN's work and its core role in international affairs and is willing to further deepen South-South cooperation under the framework of the UN, share its development experience with African countries and others and work for the realization of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Chatterjee happily recalled his work experience in Africa and China. He spoke positively of China's policies toward Africa and the achievements resulting from its aid. He said international aid can solve the problem of short-term survival but it cannot help Africa achieve independent, sustainable development. China's cooperation with Africa focuses on long-term development and is committed to "teaching a man to fish rather than give him fish", he said. China's path is worthy of emulation by the international community, he added.

Chatterjee and his party appreci-

ate China's rapid economic and social development and high-quality development achievements. He noted that since the restoration of its lawful seat in the UN, China had worked hand-in-hand with the UN to achieve mutual success.

"The success of the UN is also the success of China," he said, acknowledging the fact that in recent years, under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping, China had focused on achieving its carbon peak and carbon neutrality goals; coordinated environmental protection with economic development; balanced climate change and people's livelihoods; committed itself to green, sustainable and high-quality development; and played an important role in accelerating the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The two sides agreed that deepening the China-UN partnership is of great significance. They should uphold real multilateralism, strengthen coordination and cooperation, give full play to their respective advantages, work together and focus on agriculture, green development, women, children and youth. They will build a platform for experience-sharing and cooperation with Africa, implement the Global Development Initiative, make greater contributions to poverty reduction and independent and sustainable development in Africa and contribute more to the building of an even closer community with a shared future for mankind. ■

Key to Sino-US relations lies in history and reality

Wang Mengying

On June 26, the 2022 Pearl S. Buck International Symposium was successfully held in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu province. The symposium, themed “Mutual understanding and reciprocal learning for the future”, was hosted by Jiangsu University and supported by China Institute of International Studies and Zhenjiang Pearl S. Buck Research Association.

CPAFFC President Lin Songtian was invited to deliver a video speech. Participating in the opening ceremony online and offline and delivering speeches were Xu Bu, president of CIIS; Du Kewei, director-general of the China Center for International People-to-People Exchange; Guo Jian, chairman of the Zhenjiang CPPCC; Yan Xiaohong, president of Jiangsu University; Mary Sue Bissell, president of the US-Asia Institute; Anna Katz, president and CEO of Pearl S. Buck International; and Professor Alessandra Lavagnino, director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Milan. More than 1,000 representatives, including experts and scholars from Chi-



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian delivers a video speech.

nese and foreign institutes and universities, attended the symposium online and offline and had candid, friendly exchanges.

Lin expressed congratulations on the successful hosting of the symposium and said that Pearl S. Buck, a well-known American writer, chose to stand on the right side of history to fight against the Japanese fascist inva-

sion and safeguard justice and peace during World War II. She sought extensive international support and assistance for China's resistance against Japanese aggression. Moreover, she was dedicated to promoting cultural exchanges between China and the United States, helping shape Sino-American friendships featuring mutual understanding, mutual assistance, am-

ity and setting great examples of bilateral people-to-people exchanges and friendly coexistence. She will always be missed by the people of both countries for her deeds, Lin said.

“Faced with severe difficulties in Sino-US relations, it is high time for us to host activities in commemoration of the 130th anniversary of Pearl S. Buck’s birth,” Lin said. “This activity, with a positive response among people from all walks of life of the two countries, shows again the common wish of the two people for friendship and helps pull bilateral relations back to a rational and right track.”

Lin noted that the Sino-US relationship is the bilateral relationship with the most intertwined interests, most extensive fields of mutually beneficial cooperation and broadest common interests. It’s a pity, he said, that some American politicians still maintain a Cold War mentality, which features the idea of winning at the loss of the others and a zero-sum game. Because of this mentality, as well as strategic anxiety and panic about maintaining hegemony, they are neither willing nor brave enough to admit the facts that the Chinese people, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, have found the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics which suits China’s own national conditions; that China has successfully lifted more than 1.4 billion of its people out of absolute poverty with more than 40 years of relentless efforts, leaving no one behind; and that emerging-market

countries have risen as a whole with common aspirations for peace, development and cooperation.

Lin said there exists grave miscalculation about China in the US, which is misleading the American people and international opinion. This constitutes the fundamental reason for the deteriorating Sino-US relationship, he said. The key to solving the problem lies in history and reality.

Pearl S. Buck, Lin said, devoted her whole life to the cause of friendly exchanges between the two peoples. The valuable enlightenment she left behind is that the two peoples, despite different cultural values, beliefs and skin colors, can coexist in peace and friendship and achieve win-win results with mutual respect and reciprocal learning.

Lin said the Chinese and American people hold the key to bilateral relations. It’s the two peoples who develop, contribute to, safeguard and benefit from bilateral friendship. It’s also they who bear the brunt of a ruined bilateral relationship. China and the US both stand to gain from cooperation and will only lose from confrontation. Both peoples are eager for mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and common development.

“The CPAFFC would like to build more platforms to advance exchanges and cooperation on subnational levels and between friendship cities, enterprises, think tanks and media outlets,” Lin said. “In this way, we can strike up the main tune of the times featuring

peace, development, cooperation and win-win results.

“We hope that more people of insight and vision from the US — like Pearl S. Buck, Edgar Snow and members of Flying Tigers — will stand on the right side of history, make active moves, send reasonable messages, advance the Sino-US relationship on the right track and safeguard world peace and justice with concerted efforts.”

Qu and other Chinese speakers said that Pearl S. Buck served as a bridge between Oriental and Western cultures. The ideas of cultural equality and interaction reflected in her works correspond with the major country diplomatic philosophy held by China, featuring openness, inclusiveness, mutual benefits and win-win results.

According to the Chinese speakers, we should replace cultural estrangement with exchanges, clashes with mutual learning and a sense of superiority with coexistence. We should give full play to the role of cultural exchanges in cultivating people, while guiding and educating the younger generation to understand and recognize the history and reality of bilateral exchanges. We should discover and cultivate more cultural envoys and contributors for better bilateral relations, like Pearl S. Buck, so that the two countries can stride toward a more beautiful future.

Katz introduced the former residence of Buck in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, as well as the table and typewriter she used for her writing. She said that all cultures are colorful and

worth learning about.

“Buck advocated for mutual learning and mutual acceptance. She introduced to Western readers the China she knew so well and loved so much,” said Katz, “She devoted her latter half of life to facilitating mutual understanding between the two peoples and improving bilateral relations, leaving behind an invaluable transcultural and humanitarian heritage.”

Bissell of the US-Asia Institute said that Buck’s life, as a bridge connecting two cultures, has important implications for today’s US-China people-to-people and cultural exchanges. The two countries cannot enhance mu-

tual understanding and share a peaceful future without dialogue. She said the US-Asia Institute looks forward to promoting bilateral exchanges and collaboration and carrying forward Buck’s dream together with the Chinese side.

Lavagnino said that Buck’s works continue to enlighten a wide range of readers in Italy and to draw wide attention from a large number of scholars there. She hoped for another visit to China after the pandemic and academic exchanges on Pearl S. Buck research with Chinese counterparts.

Activities during the opening ceremony also included the launching ceremony for the University Alliance

of Pearl S. Buck Research, the release of the International Pearl S. Buck Research Index Report (2022) and a display of books focusing on research about Buck in China.

This year marks the 130th anniversary of Pearl S. Buck’s birth. She came to China in childhood and lived and worked in China for 40 years, viewing China as her second homeland. She actively publicized and supported China’s resistance against Japanese aggression, engaged in breaking through the cultural barriers between the West and the East and made contributions to Sino-American cultural exchanges and people-to-people friendship. ■



Chinese and foreign guests speak at the symposium.

CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attends ACFS 2022 National Conference

Jin Hanghang

On June 11, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, was invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Australia China Friendship Society 2022 National Conference online and deliver a keynote speech.

Opening remarks were made by Mark McGowan, premier of the state of Western Australia; Robin Matthews, president of the ACFS; Anthony Leong, secretary-general of the Pacific China Friendship Association; and Xiao Qian, Chinese ambassador to Australia. More than 200 guests from all walks of life in Australia attended the event, including Simon Wu, president of the Western Australia branch of ACFS, and Long Dingbin, consul general of China in Perth.

Lin conveyed his congratulations on the success of the conference. He commended the ACFS for staying true to its original aspiration and contributing to China-Australia friendship for over 70 years. He also expressed heartfelt thanks to friends from all sec-

tors who have long been committed to promoting friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

"This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries," Lin said. "Over the past five decades, under the guidance of the leaders of both countries, we have maintained frequent high-level exchanges, and our economic, trade, cultural and subnational cooperation have borne fruitful results, bringing great benefits to our two peoples.

"The history and reality of China-Australia relations have proved that even though the two sides differ in their social systems, ideologies and cultural values, we can achieve peaceful coexistence, win-win cooperation and common development so long as we respect each other and seek common ground while reserving differences."

He noted that Chinese civilization has lasted for more than 5,000 years and developed such core values as "be-

nevolence, people-orientation, integrity, sound reasoning, harmony, unity, diversity and integration". This is the unique cultural power that has enabled the Chinese nation to overcome all kinds of difficulties and challenges and maintain strong vigor and vitality, he added. It is also the fundamental reason the Communist Party of China has stayed true to its original aspirations and mission of pursuing happiness for the Chinese people, rejuvenation for the Chinese nation and the common good for the world. It's also why it has adhered to its people-centered philosophy and way of peaceful development, pioneering a unique Chinese path to modernization and developing a new model for human advancement.

"The CPC rallied the Chinese people and led them to follow the path of peaceful development, reform and opening-up, and to take economic development as the central task. The CPC has fulfilled its first centenary goal, as 1.4 billion Chinese people now enjoy a moderately prosperous life in all respects," Lin said.

“Faced with a pandemic unseen in a century that has ravaged the world, China contained it at minimum cost and with the most effective measures. We took measures to the greatest extent to protect people’s lives and health, and coordinated COVID-19 prevention and control with economic and social development scientifically and effectively.”

He noted that China is committed to peaceful development, promoting world peace and prosperity through its own development and pursuing win-win cooperation for common development with other countries. In this regard, he said, President Xi Jinping has proposed a series of new ideas, made new proposals and suggested new measures, including the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Initiative for Building a New Type of International Relations and a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind.

“These have yielded tangible and solid results benefiting the people of developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the South Pacific Islands,” he said. “China’s foreign policies and actions, which are committed to win-win cooperation for common development, are in line with the expectations of the governments and people of developing countries. This is the fundamental reason why China’s foreign policy is so well-received.”

Taking the 50th anniversary of



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attends and delivers a keynote speech.

diplomatic ties as a new starting point and the official implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership as a new opportunity, Lin said, the CPAFFC would like to partner with friends of China and Australia to make endeavors in the following areas:

First, he said, we will carry on people-to-people and cultural exchanges to enhance mutual understanding, friendship and trust between the two peoples.

Second, we will strive to deepen cooperation between sister cities for the common development of China and Australia.

Third, we will promote more co-

operation with friendly organizations and build more bridges for friendly communication between the two peoples.

Fourth, we will push forward trilateral cooperation for regional peace and prosperity.

Mark McGowan said that Western Australia and China enjoy strong trade ties, great potential for cooperation and mutually beneficial exchanges in various fields. Since 2006, China has been Western Australia’s largest trading partner. Sixty percent of its total exports go to China, accounting for 80 percent of Australia’s total exports to China. China has always been an important trading partner for Australia

and for Western Australia in particular.

“I have visited China many times. China is developing rapidly and has a promising future,” he said. “The Western Australian government is committed to strengthening exchanges and cooperation between the local governments of the two countries and contributing to the development of bilateral relations. I will also make positive efforts to promote friendship between the Australian and Chinese people.”

Robin Matthews noted that 50 years ago Australia and China established diplomatic ties. Since then, cooperation in the economic, trade, education and people-to-people fields has yielded fruitful results.

“However, due to political reasons, anti-China forces keep hyping up, and misunderstanding and

prejudice against China are deepening, which we do not want to see,” she said.

“The Australia China Friendship Society will continue to play its role as a bridge to enhance mutual understanding and trust and maintain the friendship between the two peoples. It is hoped that the new government will open dialogue and cooperation with China with the same enthusiasm.”

Xiao Qian said, “This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China-Australia diplomatic relations. We have written a success story of friendly cooperation. Mutual benefit and win-win results have always been the mainline of our bilateral relations.”

At present, Xiao said, China-Australia relations are at a new juncture of development, facing

many challenges but even greater opportunities. A healthy and stable relationship serves the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples and is crucial to the stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region. As long as the two sides follow the right development direction, uphold the principles of mutual respect and mutual benefit, step up dialogue and communication and properly handle differences, relations will surely embrace an even brighter future.

Founded in 1951, the Australia China Friendship Society is Australia’s earliest friendship organization with China. It has branches in eight Australian states and is committed to friendly relations with China. It has maintained long-term friendly exchanges and cooperation with the CPAFFC. ■



Opening ceremony of the ACFS 2022 National Conference.

No binary choice for New Zealand between China and US

Jin Hanghang

On June 18, the NZCFS 2022 Annual Conference was held in Auckland, New Zealand, the country's largest city. Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, was invited to make a keynote speech online.

Dave Bromwich, president of the New Zealand China Friendship Society (NZCFS); Sir David Carter, former speaker of Parliament of New Zealand and honorary president of the NZCFS; and Wang Xiaolong, Chinese ambassador to New Zealand, attended the event and gave speeches. John McKinnon, former New Zealand ambassador to China; Ruan Ping, Chinese consul general in Auckland; and about 60 Chinese and New Zealand guests from various social circles were also present at the annual conference.

Lin extended congratulations on the 70th anniversary of the founding of the NZCFS. He commended the NZCFS for staying true to its original aspiration and contributing to the establishment of diplomatic relations and long-term friendly and mutually



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attends and delivers a keynote speech.

beneficial cooperation between the two countries. He also expressed “heartfelt thanks” to NZCFS members who have long been committed to promoting China-New Zealand friendship.

Noting that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Lin said that over the

past five decades, under the strategic guidance of leaders on both sides, the countries have respected each other, sought common ground while shelving differences and pursued common development.

“Our bilateral relations have stood the test of the changing international landscape and have always been

at the forefront of China's relations with Western developed countries," Lin said. "This relationship has become a successful example of win-win cooperation between countries with different social systems, cultural values and development stages and has created many firsts that both sides should be proud of,

"The history and reality of China-New Zealand exchanges over the past half century demonstrate that as long as the East and the West treat each other with respect, seek common ground while shelving differences and adhere to the principle of equality and mutual benefit, both sides can coexist peacefully and achieve win-win cooperation for common development."

Lin said that the Chinese people will always remember Rewi Alley, who served as a bridge of China-New Zealand friendship. He was an old friend and comrade of the Chinese people, who lived and worked for many years at the CPAFFC compound. Following the restoration of Alley's former residence, where a photo exhibition on his life was held last year, the CPAFFC is working to make statues and photo exhibitions of him and other outstanding representatives of China's international friends before autumn to carry forward Alley's spirit and build a demonstration base for the future growth of China-New Zealand friendship.

"In the face of major changes unseen in a century and the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic, some countries

have chosen to deny the reality of the rapid development of China and other emerging economies. They cling to a Cold War mentality and, out of anxiety and panic, incite ideological and bloc confrontation, politicize people-to-people and cultural exchanges and cooperation and attempt to deprive people from other countries of their right to development," he said.

"Against this backdrop, it is inevitable that friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation between China and New Zealand face noise and challenges. However, it is gratifying to note that the will and commitment of our two peoples to pursue common development through mutual respect, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation remains unchanged."

Lin noted that China regards New Zealand as an important strategic cooperative partner and has full confidence in the positive prospects of bilateral relations. He said China is ready to share development opportunities and huge market dividends with New Zealand.

To this end, he continued, the CPAFFC would like to work with the NZCFS to expand people-to-people and cultural exchanges, deepen win-win cooperation and explore trilateral cooperation between China, New Zealand and countries of the Pacific Islands.

"We will fully implement the important consensus reached by our two leaders. We will bear in mind the common interests of our two countries

and the well-being of our two peoples, carry forward the Rewi Alley spirit, promote bilateral friendship, work together for an even brighter future of China-New Zealand relations and write a new chapter of friendship," Lin said.

Dave Bromwich remarked that Alley, as founder of the NZCFS and a bridge of friendship between the two peoples, had made important contributions to the establishment of New Zealand-China diplomatic relations. His commitment to promoting mutual friendship has been the unchanging mission of the NZCFS over the past 70 years.

"Thanks to the CPAFFC for your long-term support and assistance," he said. "Our two sides have witnessed the profound friendship between the two peoples and the fruits of mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields."

Currently, Bromwich said, the two countries are experiencing an impact from the international situation, and bilateral relations are encountering difficulties, twists and turns.

As friends, "we are fully committed" to supporting and providing aid to New Zealanders from all walks of life, helping them to acquire a fair and objective knowledge of China and an awareness that China's development will bring peace, stability and prosperity to all countries. This is the responsibility of the NZCFS, he said.

"We will, as always, make efforts to enhance understanding, friend-

ship and mutual trust between the two peoples. We will focus on exchanges and cooperation” in the areas of youth, media, economics, trade, science and technology “to inject new impetus into the sound and steady development of bilateral relations”, Bromwich said.

Wang Xiaolong said the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and New Zealand is an important milestone. Both sides should take it as an important opportunity to summarize their useful experience and jointly plan for the future.

“The remarkable achievements of China-New Zealand relations over the past 50 years cannot to be taken for granted. They are the result of the joint efforts of both sides,” Wang said.

“Looking ahead, we need to work together to take bilateral relations to a new level, enhance mutual respect and trust, seek common ground while reserving differences and strive for win-win results. This will make China-New Zealand relations more mature and resilient, and help our two countries and peoples work together for a brighter future.”

David Carter said: “Everyone has their own reasons for giving up the weekend to attend today’s event. I’m here out of admiration and respect for the Chinese people, their culture, history, cuisine and what I’ve seen in my life that China has achieved. Its biggest achievement has been bringing 400 to 500 million people out of poverty into



The site of the activity.

the middle-income group, 100 times larger than the population of New Zealand.”

“New Zealand is a sovereign country with an independent foreign policy. We can make friends with any country and no one can tell us what to do,” Carter said. “Although China and the US are both big countries, this is not a binary choice. New Zealand should and must make its own choice. That is to make friends with both countries.”

Carter recalled that in 2008, New Zealand signed a free trade agreement with China. After years of effort, there is still no free trade agreement reached between New Zealand, the United States and European Union. From this perspective, he said, fair trade is an important criterion for defining a true

friend.

“Nowadays many people have a misconception about China. In fact, China is a modern economy, not a communist country where people are oppressed. Of course, China doesn’t agree with us on everything — and we can certainly disagree — but we have a responsibility to do so with respect and to recognize their achievements. The NZCFS has the responsibility to dispel such misconceptions and help New Zealanders see China as a worthy friend,” he said.

Founded in 1952, the NZCFS is a national friendship organization for cultivating relations with China. It has 14 branches and is committed to upholding friendly relations. It has maintained long-term friendly exchanges and cooperation with the CPAFFC. ■

CPAFFC President Lin Songtian meets Uzbekistan ambassador

Cai Yunzhe

On June 14, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with Farhod Arziev, Uzbekistan's new ambassador to China. The two sides had candid and in-depth exchanges on the development of China-Uzbekistan relations and people-to-people friendship and cooperation. Hao Zhongwei, deputy director-general of the CPAFFC's department of European and Asian affairs, attended the meeting.

Lin noted that Uzbekistan is a friendly neighbor and comprehensive strategic partner of China. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of China-Uzbekistan diplomatic relations and the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the strategic partnership between the two countries.

"Under the strategic guidance of our two presidents, political mutual trust has been deepened, and cooperation in various fields has yielded fruitful results, bringing tangible benefits to the two peoples," Lin said.

In January, the heads of the two countries jointly attended a video sum-

mit marking the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the five countries of Central Asia. In February, President Xi Jinping met with President Shavkat Miromonovich Mirziyoyev, who was in China for the opening ceremony of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. They exchanged in-depth views on promoting bilateral relations, reached broad consensus and drew up a blueprint for bilateral development.

The CPAFFC is ready to work with the Uzbekistan embassy in China, Lin said, to actively promote implementation of the important consensus reached by the two presidents on friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two peoples and to further consolidate public support for friendship between the two countries.

Based on his experience, Lin said that China had made great achievements in upholding socialism with Chinese characteristics and committed itself to reform, opening-up and high-quality development. China has realized the "two miracles" of rapid economic development and long-term

social stability.

Meanwhile, he spoke highly of the Uzbek people's adherence to a development path suited to their national conditions. "It gives the country a new look and presents a bright vision for national development," Lin said.

He noted that China and Uzbekistan share a long history of exchanges, profound cultural heritage and common goals. Praising the two peoples as "hard-working, brave and honest", he said both keep their promises and have similar cultural values and philosophies.

"Leaders of the two countries adhere to the people-centered governance philosophy and share a broad common language and interests," he said. "It is a unique advantage of people-to-people diplomacy for mutual understanding and affinity between the two peoples."

Lin pledged that the CPAFFC will work with the Uzbekistan embassy and relevant parties of the two countries to promote friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation in the areas of friendship cities, youth, culture, edu-

education, think tanks, media and capacity building.

Arziev thanked Lin for his introduction and said Uzbekistan regards China as a sincere, reliable and friendly neighbor, a good example of mutual learning and a close brother. His country cherishes the comprehensive strategic partnership, appreciates China's long-term support and assistance to Uzbekistan's economic and social development and looks forward to all-around exchanges and cooperation with China, he said.

"Uzbekistan has formulated The New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for 2022-26, and identified its national development vision, goals and implementation measures. We look forward to learning from China's advanced experience in poverty eradication, green development and the construction of special economic zones and free trade zones," he said.

Arziev expressed the embassy's willingness to work with the Chinese side to implement the initiative by the heads of China and the five Central Asian countries and jointly hold the Year of Folk Culture and Art in 2023 to promote people-to-people exchanges and enhance mutual understanding, friendship and trust between the peoples.

Arziev warmly invited Lin to visit Uzbekistan at an early date. Lin thanked him for the invitation and said the CPAFFC will actively promote the co-hosting of the Year of Folk Culture and Art set for next year.

The two sides also exchanged in-depth views on domestic and international issues of common concern. ■

German-Chinese friendship cities look to new opportunities for beneficial cooperation

Zhang Ji

On June 15, a German-Chinese forum on friendship cities was held online. Hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the forum was themed "Green environment and digitization: New dynamic of mutually beneficial cooperation between German-Chinese friendship cities". CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attended the online opening ceremony and delivered a speech, as did CPAFFC Vice-President Yan Dong; Chinese Ambassador to Germany Wu Ken; Vice-Governor of Shandong province Ling Wen; Frank Ruckert, charge d'affaires of the German embassy in China; State Minister of Bavaria Melanie Huml; and Edeltraud Klabuhn, first deputy mayor of Duisburg. The president of the Sino-German Friendship Association and former Chinese ambassador to Germany, Shi Mingde, and Vice-President of the Federation of German-Chinese Friendship Associations Jurgen Eberbach made remarks at the closing ceremony.

Representatives of local governments, legislative bodies and foreign affairs offices from eight pairs of friendship states/provinces and three pairs of friendship cities of the two countries delivered speeches, including Guo Ningning, executive vice-governor of Fujian; Zhao Haishan, vice-governor of Hubei; Zhang Xin, vice-governor of Guangdong; Mo Gongming, deputy director-general of the Chongqing Municipal People's Congress; Heike Raab, state secretary of Rheinland-Pfalz; Bernd Buchholz, minister of economy of Schleswig-Holstein; Stephan Keller, mayor of Düsseldorf; Corinna Nienstedt, head of the State Office of Hamburg; Michael Jacke, mayor of Minden; and Bernhard Weber, chief representative of Baden-Württemberg in China.

CEOs and representatives of 16 enterprises from China and Germany, including BMW, Volkswagen, SAP, Shandong Heavy Industry, iFLYTEK, H3C and Alibaba Cloud, made online or video keynote speeches. In their speeches, they discussed the fruits and

opportunities of mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation. More than 300 people from all walks of life in China and Germany attended the online activity.

Lin noted that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Sino-German relations. Fifty years ago, he said, leaders of the two countries, with political wisdom and farsightedness, advanced bilateral diplomatic relations.

“In the new century, bilateral relations made a triple jump with the establishment of a comprehensive strategic partnership,” Lin said.

He remarked that the past 50 years of Sino-German and Sino-European exchanges demonstrate that as each other’s most important trading partner, it’s in the interest of both China and Germany, as well as Europe at large, to pursue mutually beneficial results, deeply integrate development interests, safeguard and advance sound and stable bilateral relations and strongly safeguard each other’s strategic independence.

History and reality also show clearly that the West and the East can co-exist peacefully for win-win results and common development as long as they can show mutual respect, seek common ground while shelving differences, and pursue mutually beneficial cooperation on equal footing.

Lin spoke highly of the role of friendship cities (state/province) in forging a strong bond of people-to-peo-

ple friendship between the two countries.

He said the CPAFFC would like to carry out the important consensus reached by the state leaders of the two countries to build more platforms for friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation between local governments, friendship cities and enterprises.

In this way, he believes, we can better benefit the two countries and the two people by deepening people-to-people exchanges and cooperation in the fields of culture, education, tourism, think tanks, media outlets and youth; consolidating mutual understanding, friendship and trust between the two people; and advancing mutually beneficial cooperation in the transition into green, low-carbon and innovation-oriented development, new energy, new infrastructural development, digital economy, platform economy and city governance.

Wu Ken, Chinese ambassador to Germany, said the past 50 years have seen successful German-Chinese relations featuring common development and win-win results. Despite differences in historical and cultural backgrounds, political systems, and levels of development, the two sides, with no fundamental conflicts of interest, have far more common interests than differences. Subnational cooperation has always served as an essential driving force for enhancing bilateral relations. With much in common between

China’s 14th Five Year Plan and Germany’s transition to green energy and digitization, there are new opportunities for cooperation and bright prospects for subnational cooperation.

Shandong province’s Vice-Governor Ling Wen said the province had been deepening commercial cooperation with Germany in recent years as the latter had become its biggest trading partner in EU. Mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields, including high-end manufacturing, information technology, new energy, biomedicine and business is being deepened and advanced.

The past 35 years of friendship state/province relations between Shandong and Bavaria witnessed close and fruitful bilateral cooperation, Ling said, adding that in the future Shandong is going to promote cooperation with German partners on key industries, continue to enlarge the size of mutual investments and facilitate mutual understanding and amity between the two peoples.

State minister of Bavaria Melanie Huml said this event offered brilliant opportunities to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Germany and China. Bavaria, which enjoys a long history of friendship with China, values China as its most important trading partner in the world. A total of 1,500 companies in Bavaria have business contacts with Chinese counterparts. Many Chinese companies have made successful in-

vestments in Bavaria.

“We follow closely China’s successful reform and opening-up, and recognize its rapid development,” Humal said. “What’s more, we value the sister state/province relations between Bavaria and Shandong as well as Guangdong, and are looking forward to more mutually beneficial cooperation on climate change and new energy technology with our Chinese partners.”

Frank Ruckert, charge d’affaires of the German embassy in China, said that the past 50 years saw mutual learning and understanding between the two peoples. Both countries are dedicated to combating climate change and developing their own economies. The local governments of the two countries will play important roles in realizing transformation into renewable energy and digitization.

Edeltraud Klabuhn, first deputy mayor of Duisburg, said that Duisburg and Wuhan became the first German-Chinese friendship relationship in 1982, and this year marks its 40th anniversary. As the largest base of steel in Europe and an important inland port, Duisburg is speeding up its transformation from an industrial city into a large-scale ecological park and expecting further cooperation with Wuhan in new energy and smart logistics.

At the subforums themed “Green cooperation” and “Cooperation on digitization”, representatives of German-Chinese sister cities (provinces/states) recalled their friendly exchanges with



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attends and delivers a keynote speech.

each other, reviewed the fruits of contact and looked forward to opportunities for cooperation.

They spoke highly of the role of cooperation between friendship cities (province/state) to facilitate people-to-people friendship, economic and trade cooperation and mutual learning between civilizations.

Further, they applauded the efforts made by the CPAFFC in deepening bilateral people-to-people friendship and cooperation. They are looking forward to more mutually beneficial cooperation on green and low-carbon development and digitization so that more contributions can be made on tackling climate change, public health crises and advancing collaboration on multilater-

alism and global governance.

Representatives of German business circles are optimistic about the great potential brought by the vast market in China and confident about doing business in China for the long term.

The German-Chinese Forum on Friendship Cities is one of the activities conducted in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Germany and China. Local governments and enterprises from both sides actively participated in the forum, which enjoyed wide coverage from multiple media outlets, displaying the common aspiration of the two peoples to be engaged in friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation. ■

Globalization: Common prosperity and win-win cooperation

Liu Chang

On June 20, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, attended the eighth China and Globalization Forum Ambassadors' Roundtable and delivered opening remarks entitled "Globalization: Common Prosperity and Win-Win Cooperation".

The UN resident coordinator in China; the permanent representative of the African Union to China; ambassadors to China from the European Union, Australia, Brazil, Croatia, Italy, France, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, South Africa, Portugal, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates; and leaders of international organizations — totaling 20 distinguished guests — attended and delivered speeches. The event was presided over by Wang Huiyao, founder and president of the Center for China and Globalization.

Lin noted that globalization helps optimize the allocation of industrial factors based on UN regulations, fair competition and market rules for mutual benefit. As it has turned out, mankind has become a close-knit com-

munity with a shared future and shared interests and has achieved win-win cooperation for common development. Facts speak loudly that economic globalization stands as the irrevocable trend and holds the key to development and prosperity for all countries. It is not a favor furnished by one country to another, nor will it ever be reversed or changed.

"Economic globalization empowers world growth, but it does not naturally solve the problem of how to share the pie," Lin said. "Some countries hold capital first. The interest groups in control of capital and technologies are free to monopolize distribution of benefits brought about by globalization, while the masses are deprived of their fair share.

"Social fragmentation, political polarization and nationalism are on the rise. Some politicians in those countries just won't let go of the Cold War mentality, such as zero-sum games. They politicize, weaponize and create camp politics in economic cooperation, undermining global industrial, supply and capital chains and threatening the lives, work and very existence of people. It is crystal clear in the eyes of every unbi-

ased person that economic globalization is not to blame but rather the systematic failure of revenue distribution and overall governance in those countries."

Lin noted that for more than four decades, China has pursued a policy of reform and opening-up and taken a people-centered approach for common prosperity at home while grasping opportunities brought along by globalization in the international arena. It remains committed to building a community with a shared future for mankind; promoting the Belt and Road Initiative, guided by the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits; and working with other countries for win-win cooperation and common development.

Globalization, as proved by China's success, is the right way to economic development and people's well-being. But the key to success is ensuring that all the achievements of development are shared by all. China has been participating in, benefiting from and contributing to economic globalization, and has blazed a trail of globalization with Chinese characteristics, striving for modernization and common prosperity at home, while

promoting globalization for win-win cooperation for common development internationally. It is contributing Chinese solutions and wisdom to globalization in the 21st century.

“In spite of the backlash against economic globalization, the trend of history remains unstoppable,” Lin said. “Peace and development remain the underlying themes of our times. Peace, cooperation and development are the common aspiration of people from all over the globe. There exist differences in social systems, development modes, values and ideas. However, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation for common development will be achieved so long as mutual respect, seeking common ground while shelving differences and equal and mutually beneficial partnerships are in place.

“China will, along with other countries, make globalization more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial for all, so as to build a better world for a better life for all people around the world.”

The ambassadors spoke highly of China’s important contribution to the world economy and globalization and shared their views on promoting the resumption of cross-border movement of people and post-pandemic economic recovery, practicing multilateralism and upholding the international order based on common rules.

Lin responded to the ambassadors’ concerns. On China’s “dynamic COVID clearance” policy, Lin used detailed data to introduce the country’s important achievements in coordinat-

ing epidemic prevention and control with international assistance and economic and social development.

He said China puts people and life first and respects science. It has effectively protected the lives, health and safety of over 1.4 billion Chinese people at minimal cost. China’s experience shows that COVID-19 can be prevented, controlled and treated, Lin said, adding that global action is the key. China has not only contained the epidemic itself, but also provided vaccines and other assistance to more than 120 countries and international organizations. It has also served as the main engine for world economic recovery and development.

If China followed the US and Western “lie flat” policy, there would have been 4 to 5 million novel coronavirus deaths and hundreds of millions of infections, he said. It is not difficult to imagine what would happen in the world’s fight against COVID-19 and global economic recovery if China had adopted Western policies.

Lin suggested that the ambassadors adopt a different perspective by “standing in another’s shoes”. They should understand that China has a population of over 1.4 billion and that the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government are for the people. He also hoped that they would gain objective knowledge of China’s epidemic prevention policies. Countries around the world can effectively control the epidemic at an early stage and make joint efforts to restore cross-border flows, exchanges and cooperation, he

said.

About the international order based on common rules, Lin noted, China has established diplomatic relations with 181 countries and become the largest trading partner of more than 120 countries and regions. China is a staunch defender and practitioner of common rules. The common rules in the world are the international system with the UN at its core. The international order is based on international law. And the basic norms governing international relations are based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, rather than the “domestic disciplines” of a certain country. China stands ready to work with other countries to practice true multilateralism and safeguard world peace and prosperity.

The eighth China and Globalization Forum Ambassadors’ Roundtable was co-hosted by the Center for China and Globalization and the China Society for International Economic Cooperation. It focused on the theme “Grasping the world transition and coping with global crisis: Strategies for China and globalization in an era of uncertainty”. Former political leaders, diplomatic envoys to China and representatives of international organizations from many countries, as well as domestic and foreign political, economic and academic elites were invited to the event. Participants had in-depth discussions on hot issues in the field of globalization and made suggestions to improve global governance. They reached broad consensus. ■

Opening of China-Laos railway advances connectivity

Wu Jiong

Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met online with Phet Phomphiphak, minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Laos and president of the Laos-China Friendship Association, on June 21. They had candid and friendly exchanges via video and reached broad consensus on China-Laos relations, people-to-people cooperation, international and regional situations and other issues of common concern.

Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the CPAFFC, Cheng Haibo, head of CPAFFC's department of East Asian Affairs, Synava Souphanouvong, vice minister of Energy and Mines of Laos and vice president of the LCFA; and Hounghet Chanthavong, vice-president of National University of Laos, also attended the meeting.

Lin Songtian once again congratulated Phet Phomphiphak on becoming president of the LCFA. He said that China and Laos are good neighbors, good friends, good comrades and good partners with adjoining mountains and rivers and common goals. More than

60 years ago, the two countries established diplomatic relations. Since then, political mutual trust has been deepened, traditional friendship has been enhanced and mutually beneficial cooperation has yielded remarkable results. The bilateral relationship has grown stronger over time and sets a good example for state-to-state relations.

"In recent years, under the strategic guidance of leaders of the two parties and countries, the China-Laos comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation has been developing rapidly in an all-around way," Lin said. "We have made remarkable achievements in jointly building a community with a shared future of strategic significance."

Lin noted that on Dec 3 last year, leaders of the two parties and countries saw the China-Laos Railway open to traffic. It has become a new symbol of traditional friendship and a demonstration project of high-quality cooperation between the two countries under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Laos, the only landlocked country in Southeast Asia, has become a

country directly connecting to China, a huge consumer market with 20 percent of the world's population. Lao is also a hub connecting China with ASEAN countries and the world. The opening of the China-Laos Railway has brought tangible benefits to the two peoples and injected strong momentum to connectivity between China and ASEAN, as well as win-win cooperation and common development in regional countries.

Lin said that both China and Laos are committed to the leadership of the Communist Party, the socialist path, a people-centered development philosophy, modernization and common prosperity.

In 2021, China achieved its first centenary goal as scheduled, lifting more than 1.4 billion people from poverty, famine, war and homelessness and embarking on a new journey of socialist modernization with full confidence to achieve common prosperity.

Last year, the 11th National Congress of the Communist Party of Laos was successfully held, presenting a new vision for national develop-

ment. China and Laos firmly uphold the two countries' common interests and the cause of socialism, human development and progress.

Lin said the world has entered a new period of turbulence and change as it faces a pandemic unprecedented in a century. To answer the questions of the world and the question of the times, President Xi Jinping has proposed a series of new ideas, concepts, propositions and measures, including the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the initiative to build a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind, which have received wide recognition and a positive response from the international community.

"The 21st century is the century of Asia. The rise of the East and the decline of the West is a general trend. Governance in the East and chaos in the West has become a reality. We'd like to stay close and united with Laos and other ASEAN countries, carry forward the China-ASEAN spirit as close as family and Asian solidarity and cooperation, Lin said. Taking implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership as an important opportunity, we will promote the high-quality development of regional economic integration and the building of a peaceful, tranquil, prosperous, beautiful and friendly home for China and ASEAN countries."

Lin pledged that the CPAFFC

will maintain close communication with Laos to prioritize the following three areas:

First, he said, we will carry on traditional friendship and open up new prospects for people-to-people friendship in the new era.

Second, we will focus on common development and strive for tangible results in mutually beneficial cooperation.

Third, we will step up coordination and cooperation to jointly safeguard the idea that Asian countries are as close as family.

"We will give our full support to the LCFA for the success of the 2022 Conference on China-ASEAN People-to-People Friendship Organizations in the near future, and look forward to the exchange of visits between the two sides at an early date, as COVID-19 conditions permit," he said.

Phomphiphak thanked Lin for his warm congratulations. He hailed the traditional friendship between the two countries and parties, as well as China's support in all aspects. He invited Lin to visit Laos at an early date.

Phomphiphak said the Laos-China traditional friendship was profound and that bilateral relations are at their best in history. Laos firmly supports the Belt and Road Initiative of Chinese President Xi Jinping, he said, calling it an important lever for bilateral cooperation. Upholding the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, Laos has actively promoted implementation of Belt and

Road projects, such as the Laos-China railway and road, and brought tangible benefits to the two countries and their people.

He said Laos hopes that through the Laos-China railway, more products with Lao characteristics and quality resources will be exported to China and other countries. Laos welcomes Chinese enterprises as they take the opening of the Laos-China railway as an opportunity to invest in Laos and deepen economic and trade exchanges so that people along the line will have a greater sense of gain and happiness.

"I highly agree with President Lin on the three priorities of promoting Laos-China people-to-people friendship," Phomphiphak said. "I will lead all members of the LCFA to keep close contact with China in multiple channels and fields, innovate modes of communication and promote friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two sides in economy and trade, culture, tourism, human resources and fighting epidemics. We will carry forward the traditional friendship between the two parties, two countries and two peoples and make new contributions to Laos-China and ASEAN-China relations. Laos looks forward to the successful hosting of the 2022 Conference on China-ASEAN People-to-People Friendship Organizations with the joint efforts of China and ASEAN." ■

CPAFFC President Lin Songtian meets Kazakhstan ambassador

Cai Yunzhe

On June 22, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with Nuryshev Shakhrat, Kazakhstan's new ambassador to China. The two sides had candid and in-depth exchanges on China-Kazakhstan relations and people-to-people friendship and cooperation. Hao Zhongwei, deputy director-general of the CPAFFC's department of European and Asian affairs was also present at the meeting.

Lin congratulated Shakhrat on his second appointment as ambassador to China, noting that Kazakhstan is a friendly neighbor and permanent comprehensive strategic partner of China. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of China-Kazakhstan diplomatic relations.

In recent years, under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping and President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, political mutual trust between the two sides has been further consolidated, strategies have been further aligned and practical cooperation has yielded fruitful results. The countries have set an example of good-neighborliness, friendship and mutual benefit and exemplified the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian and Nuryshev Shakhrat, Kazakhstan's new ambassador to China, pose in front of the slogans 'Common development' and 'Cooperation for win-win results'.

through concrete actions.

In January, the heads of the two countries jointly attended a video summit marking the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the five countries of Central Asia. In February, President Xi met with President Tokayev, who was in China for the opening ceremo-

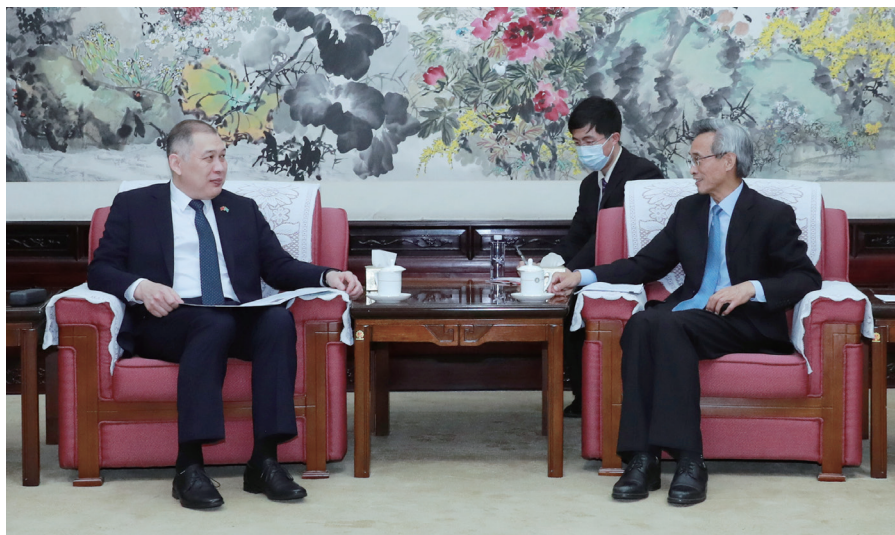
ny of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. They jointly outlined a blueprint for China-Kazakhstan relations. The closeness and solidarity between the two leaders laid a solid foundation for comprehensively deepening friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

Lin noted that Kazakhstan, lo-

cated at the hub of Asia and Europe, was the starting point of the Belt and Road Initiative. As a reliable cooperative partner of Kazakhstan, China is willing to work with Kazakhstan to implement the important consensus reached by both countries' heads of state, promote cooperation between local governments and friendship cities in education, culture, science and technology, tourism and other fields, fully relying on favorable conditions such as high political mutual trust and the complementary advantages of cooperation. Thus, more tangible benefits will be brought to our two peoples, he said.

Lin introduced the successful implementation of President Xi's important remarks on targeted poverty alleviation with successful stories in Ningde city and Minning county. Based on his experience, Lin told his guest that China has made great achievements in upholding socialism with Chinese characteristics and has committed itself to reform, opening-up and high-quality development. He suggested Shakhtrat visit more places in China and promote friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries at the local level.

Lin said that Kazakhstan is one of the priorities of the CPAFFC's people-to-people diplomacy. The CPAFFC fully supports the ambassador in his duties in China and will contribute to promoting friendship between the two countries. The organization will join hands with the Kazakhstan embassy in China to promote friendly exchanges



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian talks with Nuryshv Shakhtrat.

and mutually beneficial cooperation, promote convergence of interests and mutual understanding and safeguard regional peace, stability, development and prosperity, he said.

Shakhtrat thanked Lin and agreed. He said that Kazakhstan cherishes its permanent comprehensive strategic partnership with China. "Our two presidents have established a close personal friendship and a high level of political mutual trust," he said. "It has become a solid foundation and guarantee for in-depth all-round cooperation between our two countries."

President Tokayev is fluent in Chinese.

"Kazakhstan is committed to development and revitalization. It is a supporter, practitioner and beneficiary of President Xi Jinping's Belt and

Road Initiative. Kazakhstan hopes to conduct all-around friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation with China," Shakhtrat said.

He noted that the Kazakhstan embassy in China values its traditional cooperative relations with the CPAFFC, and will work actively with the Chinese side to implement important points of consensus reached by the heads of the two countries, strengthen people-to-people exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation and continuously enhance the friendship between the two peoples.

The two sides also exchanged in-depth views on domestic and international issues of common concern and the annual cooperation plan. They reached broad consensus. ■

Online dialogue of friendship associations of four countries with ancient civilization a success

Wang Peilin

On June 24 the Online Dialogue of Friendship Associations of Four Countries with Ancient Civilizations was held successfully. It was initiated and hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, with participation by China, India, Egypt and Greece.

Lin Songtian, president of the CPAFFC; George Floras, managing partner of the Belt and Road Associates in Greece; Aly El-Hefny, vice-president

of the Egypt-China Friendship Association; and George Fernandes, president of the India (Maharashtra State)-China Friendship Association, attended and delivered opening remarks. Yan Dong, vice-president of the CPAFFC, read out the Joint Declaration of Friendship Associations from Four Countries with Ancient Civilizations on World Peace and Development.

About 100 participants from all walks of life in the four countries at-

tended the dialogue online in a warm and friendly atmosphere, including, among others, Xu Bu, president of the China Institute of International Studies; Wang Huiyao, founder and president of the Center for China and Globalization; Jiang Jingkui, professor at the Institute for International and Area Studies, Tsinghua University; Wang Qifa, expert on Confucian culture from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Liu Yihong, CASS expert on Islamic



civilization and philosophy; Anita Sharma, vice-chancellor of K.R. Mangalam University, India; Vikash Singh, Indian expert at Beijing Foreign Studies University; Mahitab, Egyptian expert at the Western Europe and Africa Communication Center, China Foreign Languages Administration; Mahmoud Soliman, Egyptian expert at Shanghai International Studies University; Chrisi Vitsilaki, rector of the University of the Aegean, Greece; Pella Karpathiotaki, Greek expert on international studies; and Lefteris Kontos and Philip Kontos, Greek sinologists and members of the Greece-China Association.

Participants held in-depth discussions on three themes: “Advocate Harmony through Mutual Learning”, “Uphold Justice with Ancient Wisdom”, and “Promote Peace and Development Through Friendly Exchanges”. They also shared their achievements in research on civilizations.

Participants agreed that under the current international situation, it is good for the CPAFFC to host the online dialogue, as it comes at the right time and is of special significance. The dialogue speaks for peace, justice and civilization. It advocates the right path of peaceful and civilized development, equity, justice and win-win cooperation.

Participants reached broad consensus on mutual respect, exchanges, mutual learning and common prosperity between civilizations and issued a joint declaration on world peace and development.

Xinhua News Agency, CGTV,



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attends the dialogue and delivers a speech.

BTV, people.cn, Xinhuanet, ThePaper.cn, Phoenix TV, Prasar Bharati, China Arab TV and other mainstream media outlets reported the event.

Participants expressed their belief that civilization is the crystallization of wisdom for human progress and the common intellectual treasure of all people. It is the spiritual bond that upholds and promotes the common values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom for all mankind. It is also an important force that enhances world peace, harmony, development and prosperity and guides human society toward a bright future.

CPAFFC President Lin said that China, India, Egypt and Greece all boast time-honored histories and splendid civilizations that have made outstanding contributions to the development of those nations respectively and

to the common progress of mankind. Chinese civilization has lasted for more than 5,000 years and developed the core values of “benevolence, people-orientation, integrity, sound reasoning, harmony, unity, diversity and integration,” he said, adding that this is the unique cultural power that has enabled the Chinese nation to overcome all kinds of difficulties and challenges and maintain strong vigor and vitality.

Lin noted that China has always advocated equality, mutual learning, dialogue and inclusiveness among civilizations, and that the Chinese nation understands the values of different civilizations with a broad mind. It respects people of different countries in exploring their own development paths.

“We eliminate estrangement through exchanges, avoid clashes

through interactions and replace superiority based on pride and prejudice with coexistence among civilizations. Only in this way can we achieve common prosperity in all civilizations through exchanges and mutual learning,” Lin said.

Wang Huiyao said Chinese civilization advocates harmony between man and nature, peace among all nations, not imposing on others things one doesn't want, integrity and sincerity and the idea that the world is one family.

Jiang Jingkui said civilizations are intertwined with one another, each with its own strengths. One should respect both one's own culture and the culture of others, and learn from each other to advance human civilization for common prosperity.

“Civilization is an open road in which people live as one family,” Mahitab said. “It is a national treasure that can be embodied in the youth.”

George Fernandes noted that the Indus Valley civilization, one of the earliest known in the world, is a composite culture of inclusiveness. It holds that “the world is one family” and hopes to establish peaceful and harmonious relations between people and countries, with improving people's lives as an important goal.

“We highly commend and congratulate China on President Xi Jinping's leadership in lifting it out of absolute poverty,” he said. “It is a great feat and an example for other countries to follow. Civilizations are enriched by mutual learning and the world moves

forward through cooperation. Countries should not erect artificial barriers to exchanges and cooperation.”

Chrisi Vitsilaki said: “The Greek civilization has a long history in which integration has played a key role. We advocate dialogue among civilizations and have participated in and benefited from it. We should fully recognize and respect the diversity of civilizations, carry out extensive cooperation by means of culture and language and enhance mutual understanding, friendship and trust through constant inclusiveness. Instead of tearing down bridges or inciting conflicts, we should build bridges of exchange and cooperation for the world.”

Participants agreed that it is never civilized to follow the law of the jungle or deliberately incite ideological or camp confrontation with a zero-sum Cold War mentality or various forms of hegemonism that deprive people of their development rights and interests.

Lin noted that on the new journey of pursuing a peaceful and happy life, the people of the world are currently confronted with both the natural disaster of COVID-19 and the man-made disasters of geopolitics. He said there are countries that incite ideological confrontation and camp confrontation, seek absolute security, maximize its own interests through willful use of unilateral sanctions, and engage in saber-rattling with no moral compass.

In the face of conflict, he said, some countries stoke the flames, provide weapons to slaughter civilians and create global crises instead of facilitat-

ing dialogue for peace. A country ignores its hundreds of millions of coronavirus infections and over 1 million deaths, but busies itself with agitating war and conflict overseas to make huge profits from chaos.

Such hegemonic acts have fully exposed the selfishness, greed, barbarism and bloodiness of capitalism. They are clearly not civilized actions, nor do they represent democracy or human rights, he said.

Aly El-Hefny said the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the unprecedented sanctions imposed by the United States and the West have had a disastrous impact on the entire world and the global economy. They have triggered a global energy and food crisis, he said.

“We belong to a community with a shared future and will have a common future. We need to respect each other, work together in solidarity and take global actions to meet challenges and oppose violence, confrontation and bullying of any kind,” he said.

Pella Karpathiotaki said that the democracy claimed by some Western countries is not the democracy advocated by Athenian civilization but has been warped by ideology and weaponized. As a narrative tool for interfering in other countries' internal affairs, it is used to slander and attack other countries with double standards over issues such as political systems and human rights, so as to suppress and contain the development of emerging countries. Such an approach has repeatedly undermined international relations and

made peace and justice more fragile. It is extremely uncivilized, she said.

Participants agreed that it is the common pursuit of civilized countries to work together and to live harmoniously as one family. It is their common proposition to value not only their own culture but also the culture of others. The best way for civilized countries to get along is to have mutual respect, seek common ground while shelving differences, learn from each other, maintain exchanges and dialogue, and strive for peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation. People should work together to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Lin noted that in the face of major changes unseen in a century, President Xi Jinping put forward the initiative of building a community with a shared future for mankind, and laid out three paths to realize this great vision. He raised the question of the times, based on China's fine traditional culture and successful practices in economic and social development, with the aim of achieving win-win cooperation for common development for the Chinese people and those of other countries.

First, we should uphold the common values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom for all mankind, develop the whole-process people's democracy with people at the center and foster a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, equity, justice and win-win cooperation, he said.

Second, we should implement the Global Development Initiative and

pursue high-quality development via the Belt and Road Initiative, guided by the principle of extensive consultation, joint contributions and shared benefits.

Third, we should implement the Global Security Initiative, foster new thinking on common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and work together to build a world of lasting peace and common security. This has brought new vision, illuminated new pathways and presented new choices for building a better world.

Xu Bin said: "No matter what civilization it is, if it shuts itself off for a long time, it will inevitably decline. Only through exchanges and mutual learning with other civilizations can one maintain one's vitality. As ancient civilizations, we should set an example of friendly dialogue, exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations. We should draw nourishment from each other's fine cultures and seek wisdom and inspiration to tackle the current challenges in peaceful development.

"We should manifest the vitality of ancient civilizations and show the world our harmonious beauty. We should encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations and promote mutual understanding, amity and integration with people of different countries. We should add new impetus to the sustainable development of an open and inclusive world of lasting peace."

Wang Qifa called on people to inherit and carry forward the values advocated by China's fine traditional

culture, put them into concrete practice in light of the general trend of world civilization and promote the common progress of world culture.

George Floras said: "The world is at a crossroads. As countries with splendid ancient civilizations, we should take it as our guide and speak out for the betterment of the world. The Belt and Road Initiative is a great initiative that builds a bridge of friendship and cooperation between people of all countries and promotes common development and prosperity, rather than a zero-sum game. The closer people get to each other and the closer countries cooperate, the less market there is for hegemony."

Vikash Singh said civilizations have always influenced each other and have facilitated each other's achievements. Citing China and India for example, he noted that both countries are located on the Asian continent and over the past 2,000 years the two have learned from each other, grown together and benefited from each other.

"The story of China importing Indian brown sugar and India importing Chinese white sugar still inspires China, India and the rest of the world," he said. "It also helps eliminate misunderstandings and weakens the so-called China threat theory."

Joint Declaration of Friendship Associations from Four Countries with Ancient Civilizations on World Peace and Development

We, the heads of friendship associations from four countries with ancient civilizations including China, India, Egypt and Greece, held a virtual dialogue under the theme “Upholding Justice and Achieving Common Development” on June 24, 2022. We had candid, friendly and in-depth exchanges, reached consensus on a broad range of issues of common interest regarding world peace and development, and decided to issue the following joint declaration:

We agree that as countries with time-honored histories and splendid civilizations, China, India, Egypt and Greece have shared views and interests in upholding equity and justice, safeguarding world peace and promoting common prosperity. It is the shared aspiration of civilized countries to overcome difficulties through solidarity and pursue common development in harmony. It is the common call of civilized countries that one should respect both one’s own culture and the culture of others in order to advance human civilization. It is the common view of civilized countries that countries should treat each other with respect, seek common ground while shelving differences, engage in mutual learning, exchanges and dialogues, and pursue peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation. Working together to build a community with a shared future for mankind will lead us to a better tomorrow.

We agree that civilization is the crystallization of the progress of hu-

man society, the common intellectual treasure of people all over the world, the cultural bond that upholds and promotes the common values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom for all mankind, and the important force for promoting world peace, harmony, development and prosperity, guiding human society toward progress.

We agree that it is the common aspiration of peoples of all countries to pursue peace, seek development and promote cooperation, and to work together to build a community with a shared future for mankind. We should abandon the law of the jungle and resolutely oppose the Cold War mentality of zero-sum games and all forms of hegemonic practices that deliberately incite ideological confrontation and camp confrontation and deprive people across the globe of their development rights and interests. We highly appreciate the firm stance and determination of most governments and peoples in the world, including those in China, India, Egypt and Greece to uphold fairness and justice and to safeguard world peace and development.

We firmly support each other in upholding the United Nations-centered international system, the international order based on international law and the basic norms governing international relations built around the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. We firmly practice true multilateralism and promote the construction of a new type of

international relations featuring mutual respect, equity and justice, and win-win cooperation.

We highly appreciate the people-centered development philosophy, the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and the initiative to build a community with a shared future for mankind put forward by President Xi Jinping. We firmly support each other’s unremitting efforts in striving for national rejuvenation and improvement of people’s well-being while putting the people front and center. We agree that it is the common aspiration of people around the world to achieve win-win cooperation for common development and live a happy life of peace, harmony and prosperity.

We would like to join the people around the world in strongly calling on all parties to embrace peace and oppose conflict; uphold justice and reject hegemony; stand for solidarity and cooperation, and oppose division and confrontation. Let the light of civilization shine across the world and dispel the dark clouds at an early date!

- Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries
- India China Friendship Association (Maharashtra)
- Egyptian Chinese Friendship Association
- Belt and Road Associates in Greece

June 2022 ■

Common aspiration for safeguarding unity, peace and prosperity in Asia

Wu Jiong

On June 30, the 13th Conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship was held successfully on site and online simultaneously.

Gu Xiulian, president of the China-ASEAN Association; Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries; Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the CPAFFC; and representatives of friendship associations and organizations from 10 ASEAN Countries and China, had candid and friendly exchanges on the theme "Direction of Cooperation on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship during the Pandemic and Post Pandemic of COVID-19". They reached broad consensus and unanimously approved a joint declaration, voicing their common aspiration for safeguarding unity, peace and prosperity in Asia.

About 200 participants attended the conference, including representatives of friendship organizations, friendly individuals, local government officials, scholars, think tanks and media from China and 10 ASEAN countries.

In her keynote speech, Gu Xiulian said that China and ASEAN are important strategic partners committed



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attends and delivers a video speech.

to regional peace, stability, unity, harmony, development and prosperity. Over the past 30 years, China and ASEAN have developed a dynamic, enriching and influential relationship, she said.

In November, President Xi Jinping and ASEAN leaders announced that the two sides would upgrade bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership and build a peaceful, secure, prosperous, beautiful and amicable home together. This

opened a new chapter in China-ASEAN relations and charted a new direction for friendly cooperation between the two peoples.

Gu noted that China had presented the world with a simple, safe and wonderful Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Beijing earlier this year. The event played an important role in promoting global solidarity and cooperation to tide over difficulties and sent out a strong message to the world: "Together for a Shared Future".

People-to-people

Later this year, the Communist Party of China will convene its 20th National Congress to draw up a new blueprint for China's future development and guide the Chinese people in comprehensively building socialist modernization.

Looking to the future, Gu expressed willingness to work with the friendship organizations of ASEAN countries to implement the important consensus reached by leaders of both sides.

"We should join hands to overcome COVID-19, promote innovation and development, enhance mutual understanding and affinity, carry forward the Asian spirit and inherit, maintain and develop China-ASEAN friendship in the new era so as to make new contributions to building an even closer community with a shared future," she said.

Leaders of friendship organizations in ASEAN countries congratulated China on its

great achievements in completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects and eliminating absolute poverty. They commended the fruitful outcomes of high-quality Belt and Road Initiative cooperation between the two sides, such as the Laos-China Railway and the Myanmar-China Economic Corridor. They thanked China for its generous donation and vaccine assistance in the fight against COVID-19.

They also agreed that ASEAN countries and China are friendly neighbors. The establishment of a comprehensive strategic partnership at the end of 2021 marks a new era for bilateral relations, they said.

Facing a complex and volatile regional and international situation and various risks and challenges, they said, the two sides should carry forward the Bandung Spirit and the Spirit of Asian Solidarity, jointly uphold the UN Charter and international equity and justice and make positive contributions

to the peace, stability, development and prosperity of the region and the world.

CPAFFC President Lin noted in his speech that China and ASEAN enjoy geographical proximity and both cultural and people-to-people affinity. He said that diversity, openness, inclusiveness and solidarity are built into the DNA of China and ASEAN.

"Solidarity, harmonious and peaceful coexistence, universal harmony and Asia as one family have always been our common pursuit," he said. "Upholding the beauty of each civilization and harmony with diversity among civilizations have always been our common aspiration. Mutual respect, seeking common ground while shelving differences, exchanges and dialogue, mutual learning and win-win cooperation for common development have always been our common way to get along with each other. To build a closer China-ASEAN community with shared interests and a shared future has always been our common goal."



2022 Conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship held successfully on site and online simultaneously.

Lin said history and facts have repeatedly proved that inciting political camp confrontation, seeking absolute security and maximizing one's own interests at the expense of the security of other countries — or depriving other peoples of their right to live — are never civilized actions. Going back on promises, the willful use of unilateral sanctions, exerting extreme pressure or saber-rattling, all of which rely on power with no moral compass, are never civilized actions.

Ignoring one's own deep-seated political, social, health and livelihood issues while stoking flames overseas and creating regional turmoil and global crises to disrupt the world — all to profit from chaos and to maintain hegemony — are never civilized actions, Lin said. "Such actions are incompatible with Oriental civilization, let alone the often-touted civilization, democracy and human rights of the West, and are certainly against the will of the people."

Lin introduced China's developmental achievements and the mutually beneficial cooperation between China and ASEAN. He noted that President Xi had put forward new thinking, new concepts, new ideas and new measures, such as Belt and Road Initiative, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and the initiative for building a community with a shared future for mankind. These have received wide recognition and a positive response from the international community, especially ASEAN countries.

Lin pledged that the CPAFFC stands ready to work closely with all

ASEAN members to build a peaceful, safe, secure, prosperous, beautiful and amicable home together and to be a good partner in guiding people-to-people exchanges and cooperation, promoting win-win results and safeguarding peace and stability.

Lin also answered questions about the sharing of China's experience in poverty alleviation and about the hopes for resuming China-ASEAN tourism at an early date. He said China is willing to share its success in poverty reduction and development with ASEAN countries without reservation.

"We look forward to sharing the China-Laos Railway experience with leaders of ASEAN friendship organizations as soon as possible after the epidemic and discussing the prospects of friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation," Lin said.

Regarding the resumption of tourism, he said that China always puts people and life first, adhering to the active epidemic prevention measure of "dynamic COVID-19 clearance", which has effectively brought the epidemic under control nationwide and maximized the protection of the lives and health of all people.

At present, domestic tourism in China is rapidly recovering, and flights and high-speed trains have increased significantly. However, the United States and the West have responded negatively, and the global pandemic remains at a high level. China is still under great pressure to prevent imported cases and a domestic rebound. It is believed that as long as all parties work together in a scientific

and effective manner, people-to-people exchanges between China and other countries can resume at an early date.

In the afternoon, two subforums and the closing ceremony were held. The subforums were themed "China-Laos Railway Connecting China-ASEAN" and "Enhancing ASEAN-China People-to-people Friendship, Deepening Mutual Learning and Understanding between Civilizations".

Experts and scholars from China, Brunei, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and other ASEAN countries engaged in in-depth analyses on the topics and presented their professional interpretations. Nearly 100 friendly individuals from both sides exchanged views online and looked forward to a bright future for China-ASEAN relations.

The Conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship is an exchange and cooperation platform jointly founded by the CPAFFC and 10 ASEAN friendship organizations in 2006. It is held every two years in turn in various countries. This was the 13th conference and was hosted for the first time by the Laos-China Friendship Association, with the main venue in Vientiane, Laos. Other participants attended online.

It has been agreed by all parties to hold the fourth Leaders Meeting of ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship Organizations in China in 2023, as well as the 14th Conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship in Malaysia, which will be hosted by the Malaysia-China Friendship Association.

Joint Communique of the 13th Conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship

We, the representatives of friendship associations and organizations from 10 ASEAN countries and China, attended the 13th Conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship [including] via video link hosted by the Laos-China Friendship Association in Vientiane, capital of Lao PDR, on June 30, 2022. In the meeting, we discussed the strengthening of friendship relations and cooperation for a people-to-people framework between ASEAN-China and China-ASEAN friendship associations and organizations in the future, in order to exchange views on the development of mutually beneficial cooperation, build friendship and cooperation for fundamental mutual respect and mutual trust for the well-being of the people of 10 ASEAN countries and China and also contribute to the strengthening of friendship cooperation and development of the region for greater prosperity.

In accordance with the Joint Communique of the 12th Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, and in order to continuously uphold the Bandung Spirit, we agree to further strengthen cooperation in the following areas:

Fight against the COVID-19 pandemic

Strengthening comprehensive cooperation between ASEAN-China and China-ASEAN friendship associations to fight against COVID-19 by encouraging and supporting qualified organizations in 10 ASEAN

countries and China to conduct exchanges and provide mutual help in terms of technical assistance, medical experience and staff, funding and equipment to prevent and control the COVID-19 pandemic, thus strengthening the ASEAN-China and China-ASEAN friendship associations and organizations in contributing to the building of friendship relations between peoples in order to restore life to normal.

Cooperation to restore normal living

We will strengthen people-to-people friendship exchanges, such as people's living safe from COVID-19; push for the resumption of tourism, education and culture; and encourage people-to-people exchanges for mutual understanding and mutual trust. Therefore, we agree to implement the friendship project on building hotels, tourism sites, hospitals and schools in eligible countries to demonstrate the value of friendship relations and cooperation in a bilateral and multilateral people-to-people framework as a symbol of mutual understanding and respect of each ASEAN country and China.

Synergy between the Belt and Road Initiative and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025

As friendship organizations, we are willing to promote the strategic integration of the Belt and Road Initiative and The Master Plan

on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 in accordance with the Joint Communique of the 12th ASEAN-China Conference on People-to-People Friendship that was held on 11 November 2019, in Bandung city, Indonesia.

Encourage international cooperation on three levels

We shall work together to establish a mechanism for international exchange at three levels: first, encouraging dialogues between the capitals or provinces of ASEAN countries and China; second, encouraging dialogues between ASEAN and China's districts or cities; and, third, supporting establishing friendship schools or hospitals between ASEAN countries and China.

Jointly safeguard regional peace, stability, development and prosperity

We commit to continuously carry forward the traditional friendship of ASEAN-China as one family and the Bandung Spirit and the spirit of Asian Solidarity; firmly support the building of an ASEAN community and the centrality of ASEAN in regional cooperation; firmly oppose any action undermining regional peace, stability, development and prosperity; and promote closer ASEAN-China cooperation, including China's vision to build an ASEAN-China community with a shared future.

Establish a follow-up mechanism

We commit to help control and address the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in society to restore people's normal lives in 10 ASEAN countries and China.

The follow-up mechanism will be implemented actively between ASEAN-China and China-ASEAN friendship associations and organizations. We decided to hold the fourth Leaders Meeting of ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship Organizations in China in 2023, as well as the 14th Conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship in Malaysia, which will be hosted by Malaysia-China Friendship Association.

Participating organizations:

- Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries
- China-ASEAN Association
- Brunei-China Friendship Association
- Cambodia-China Friendship Association
- Association for Indonesia-China Economic, Social and Cultural Cooperation
- Laos-China Friendship Association
- Malaysia-China Friendship Association
- Myanmar-China Friendship Association
- Association for Philippines-China Understanding
- Singapore-China Friendship Association
- Thai-Chinese Friendship Association
- Vietnam-China Friendship Association ■

Lin Songtian: Join hands to bring marginalized Africa back to the main track of development

Wu Yuna

On June 30, the 33rd annual session of the Crans Montana Forum opened in Brussels, Belgium. Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, was invited to attend online as a special guest and delivered a keynote speech.

More than 200 politicians and former politicians from 17 countries, including Mauritius and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, attended the opening ceremony in person. Opening remarks were given by Thomas Yayi Boni, former president of the Republic of Benin and former president of the African Union; Pascal Affi N'Guessan, former prime minister of Front Populaire Ivoirien; Gilbert Houngbo, former president of Togo and president of the International Fund for Agricultural Development; Soares Sambu, vice-prime minister of Guinea Bissau; Abdoulaye Diop, minister of foreign affairs of Mali; Ryad Mezzour, Morocco's minister of industry and trade; Christine Hoebes, minister in the Presidency of Namibia; Alain-Claude

Billie-by-nze, Gabon minister of state; and Daid Hussein Lid, Somalia's minister of agriculture and irrigation.

Lin of the CPAFFC conveyed his congratulations on the opening of the forum. He said that Africa is the youngest continent and is full of hope and development vitality, having abundant natural and human resources, as well as strong political aspirations for sustainable development.

Thanks to China-Africa cooperation, Africa has built up a momentum and is experiencing rapid development. It has the opportunity and capability to realize "corner overtaking" and become a new growth pole of the world economy in the Fourth Industrial Revolution wave and economic globalization.

"It is regrettable that the world today is confronted with profound changes and a pandemic — both unseen in a century," Lin said, adding: "The Ukraine crisis triggered by geopolitics and a Cold War mentality has seriously damaged the security of global industrial, supply and capital

chains and led to a global food, energy and financial crisis, making the people around the world — especially those in Africa and other less developed countries — innocent victims.”

Lin emphasized that major developed countries have concentrated their attention and funds on ideological and bloc confrontation, politicized mutually beneficial economic and trade cooperation, tried to create another version of NATO in the Asia-Pacific region that further marginalized Africa, and made African people suffer in a severe production and survival crisis, as well as threatening them with famine. All those things have aroused high vigilance by emerging economies,

such as BRICS and Africa.

“China pursues the new path of win-win cooperation for common development and will never adopt the old mindset of zero-sum game,” Lin said. “China has been committed to developing relations with other countries on the basis of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit, mutual learning and common development. We stand ready to share without reservation our development experience, opportunities and achievements with Africa.”

Lin noted that China’s policy toward Africa is action oriented. Under the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, President

Xi Jinping has announced Ten Major Cooperation Plans, Eight Major Initiatives and Nine Major Programs on China-Africa cooperation. The sole purpose is to support African countries in improving their capacity for self-sustaining development, breaking development bottlenecks — inadequate infrastructure, lack of professional and skilled personnel and shortages of financial resources — to achieve win-win cooperation for common development.

China’s policy toward Africa is open and transparent, he said. The political declarations and action plans adopted after consultation at each conference of the triennial FOCAC are



The 33rd annual session of the Crans Montana Forum opens in Brussels, Belgium.

all open to the public through media and serve as the common guidelines and measures of China-Africa cooperation.

China has always kept its word when implementing its policies regarding Africa. It has never broken its promises, never attached political conditions, never interfered in the internal affairs of African countries and never forced others to do anything against their will.

Lin expressed the belief that an Africa of lasting peace, development and prosperity will not only conform with the common interests of the people of Europe, China and the rest of the world but also is the common responsibility of the international community. To support Africa's self-sustaining development is not only a historical responsibility and a moral requirement but also a practical demand for Europe. With a socially stable and economically prosperous Africa, Europe will no longer have to tackle severe refugee problems. Instead, it will embrace a huge consumer market.

Lin noted that Africa has been eager to achieve its own development and has been looking forward to international cooperation, but it has never been lacking in pompous strategic slogans from major powers. Africa needs concrete measures and actions of mutually beneficial international cooperation instead of empty promises. Africa needs equality and mutual respect, not



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian talks with Jean-Paul Carteron, chairman and founder of the Crans Montana Forum.

preaching or lectures. Africa wants capacity-building for self-sustaining development rather than simple exporting of raw materials. Africa welcomes win-win cooperation for common development instead of “one gains, one loses”, Lin said.

Lin thanked Jean-Paul Carteron, founder of the Crans Montana Forum, for his gracious invitation and decades of commitment to building a platform for high-level dialogue and friendly, mutually beneficial cooperation. He expressed willingness to actively support the forum as a bridge of communication and cooperation with China, Africa and Europe; to promote tripartite cooperation on the basis of fully respecting Africa's wishes and consent, to bring marginalized Africa back to the main track of development; help Africa achieve lasting peace and independent, sustainable development; and make new contributions to building a closer community with a

shared future for mankind.

Jean-Paul Carteron, chairman and founder of the Crans Montana Forum, thanked President Lin for providing ideas and suggestions for Africa's integration into the world. He said that China is an indispensable country for international cooperation. The Crans Montana Forum will join hands with the CPAFFC to promote global cooperation and exchanges and will work together for a better world, he said.

The Crans Montana Forum is a Swiss NGO with a history of 36 years. Its mission is to build a better and more humane world by fostering international exchanges and cooperation through enhanced dialogue between government policymakers, leaders of international organizations and business elites. The theme of the annual session was “The World in the Era of Africa's Economic Sovereignty”. ■

China and US have every reason to pursue win-win cooperation and common development

Liu Wei

On July 15, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with Michael Hart, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, and executives of Intel, Herbalife, Wal-Mart, Ford Motor Company, Warner Bros. Discovery and other American companies in China.

Lin congratulated Michael Hart on his appointment as president of the chamber and thanked the organization for its unremitting efforts and positive contributions to promoting exchanges and cooperation between China and the United States and enhancing understanding, friendship and mutual trust between the two peoples over the years.

Lin said that history and reality have proved that China and the US benefit from cooperation and suffer harm from confrontation. The people of both countries, especially the business community, look forward to friendly and mutually beneficial coop-

eration.

Recently, there have been some encouraging and positive signs in China-US relations, Lin noted.

First, he said, Chinese Vice-Premier Liu He had a phone conversation with US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen. The two sides had a pragmatic and candid exchange of views on the macroeconomic situation, global industrial and supply chains and other topics.

Second, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Indonesia. They had a comprehensive, in-depth, candid, substantive and constructive dialogue and communication.

Lin noted that China has a civilization reaching back more than 5,000 years, while the US is the representative of modern civilization. Since the announcement of the Shanghai Communiqué, China-US relations have experienced ups and downs over five decades. "However, peace, friendship

and win-win cooperation remain the main theme," Lin said, adding that "it has given us a lot of inspiration".

This year, in February, a meeting commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Shanghai Communiqué was held in Shanghai. Participants agreed that while China and the US have different social systems, roads of development and cultural values, they can completely realize peaceful coexistence, win-win cooperation and common development, so long as both sides respect each other and seek common ground while shelving differences.

Lin said that China-US relations look complicated, but are actually very simple. The crux of the problem lies in the US perception of China. The US, with its hegemonic logic about the superiority of Western powers, definitely wouldn't understand Chinese culture and China's philosophy about peaceful, cooperative and common development. The US is unwilling and afraid to acknowledge the success of

the Communist Party of China and the socialist system, nor will it acknowledge the fact that China has lifted more than 1.4 billion people out of absolute poverty and brought them to a peaceful, harmonious, prosperous and beautiful life.

Western powers sought their own rise and absolute security by resorting to colonial wars and bloody plunder but ended up in cruel mutual killings, regime replacement and dead-end positions. The Chinese civilization, by contrast, has always believed that peace is most valuable and that the world should work together for common prosperity and universal harmony. China has been pursuing a new path of win-win cooperation and common development, promoting the common development of all countries through its own development. It will never repeat the old zero-sum game pursued by the US and the West.

As long as the US takes China's history and culture, policy ideas and reality into consideration and treats China as a cooperative development partner rather than a strategic competitor, problems in China-US relations will be easily solved.

The reason China-US relations may not work well lies in the US perception of China. The two cannot fight it out, nor can they live without each other. They can do well only by observing the three principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation.



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian and Michael Hart, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, pose in front of a couplet that reads ‘Common development’ and ‘Cooperation for win-win results’.

Lin said the essence of China-US economic and trade relations involves mutual benefit, mutual needs and win-win cooperation. Last year, bilateral trade reached \$750 billion, up 28.7 percent year-on-year. Of that, US trade with China hit a record high — up 21 percent year-on-year — saying that “business is business”. Business leaders and capital are rational. What business cares about is a stable investment environment and a predictable invest-

ment return.

With a population of 1.4 billion and a huge consumer market of over 400 million middle-incomers, China is pursuing a new vision for development and is committed to high-quality development and high-level opening-up.

At home, China has accelerated its development of a new pattern — dual circulation — in which domestic and external demand complement one another. It has made every effort to

promote the development of free trade zones, duty-free ports and a unified national market, and it has actively fostered a market-oriented, international and law-based business environment. Abroad, China has promoted the Belt and Road Initiative and physical, soft, heart-to-heart connectivity between China and the rest of the world.

The mutually beneficial cooperation between China and the US has great potential and broad prospects, Lin said, adding that he hopes the ACCC will continue to play a constructive role and amplify the voice of rationality.

Hart thanked President Lin for the meeting and presented him with the American Business in China White

Paper 2022. He said this is the 24th consecutive year that the chamber has published a white paper, which is the result of the collective wisdom of its member companies.

In the face of COVID-19, the most challenging and unpredictable factor, more than two-thirds of the companies surveyed said China remains their main global investment destination. The white paper speaks highly of the efforts made by the Chinese government to improve the business environment and recognizes the 33 economic stabilization measures issued by the State Council in May, expressing the confidence of US businesses in China's economic development and markets.

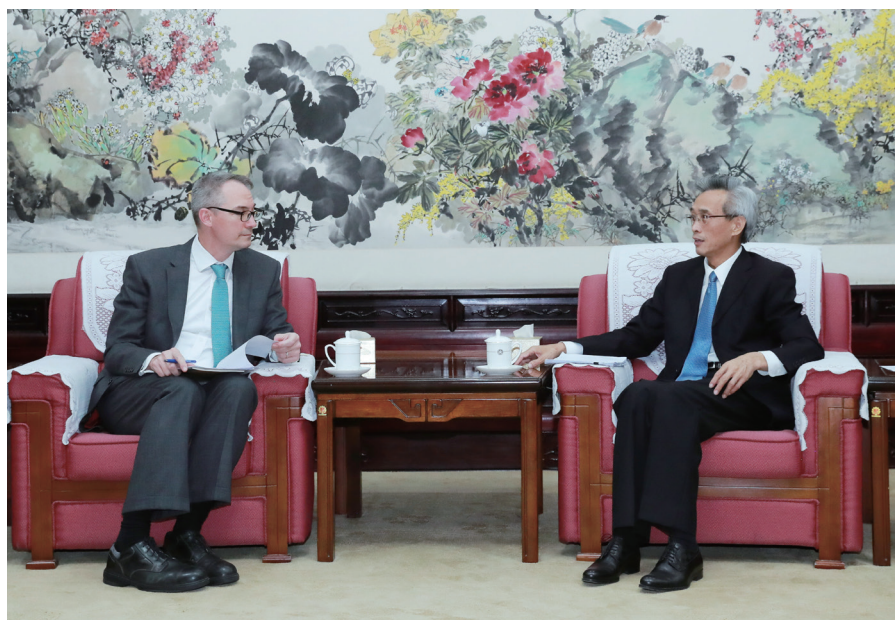
“The Chamber is willing to ac-

tively facilitate face-to-face discussions between the two governments to improve the prospects of US-China relations,” Hart said.

Executives of the five US companies in China shared their own development path and achievements, detailing their practices and accomplishments in promoting China-US relations and serving public welfare undertakings. They also covered the difficulties and challenges they are facing and put forward ideas and suggestions.

Lin thanked US companies in China for their participation in and support for China-US exchanges and cooperation and China's rural revitalization. He encouraged them to continue to care about China's development, work with Chinese partners — including the CPAFFC — actively fulfill their social responsibilities, forge friendship bridges between the Chinese and American people and build broad consensus, leaving no audience for American politicians who talk big.

Lin invited the ACCC and American companies in China to visit Fujian and Shanxi provinces and other places in the near future, and he invited top company representatives to visit China, when epidemic prevention and control conditions permit, to enhance mutually beneficial economic and trade cooperation and people-to-people exchanges between China and the US. ■



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian talks with Michael Hart.

CPAFFC President Lin Songtian meets new chief of South Korean chamber of commerce

Zhou Xiaodan

On July 18, President Lin Songtian of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries was invited to attend a banquet hosted by Yoon Doseon, chairman of the Korea Chamber of Commerce in China and president of CJ Group China. CJ Vice-President Hah Bongsoo and Cheng Haibo, deputy director-general of the Chinese association's department of East Asian affairs, were also present at the banquet.

The two sides exchanged ideas and reached consensus on bilateral people-to-people friendship, economic and trade cooperation, prospects for China's economy and the international situation.

Lin congratulated Yoon on his election as president of the Korea Chamber of Commerce in China. He said he appreciated the contributions made by the chamber and CJ in advancing bilateral people-to-people and cultural exchanges, as well as mutually beneficial commercial cooperation. Lin said that several months earlier, President Xi Jinping spoke with the president-elect of the Republic of Korea, Yoon Suk-yeol, on the phone and congratulated him on his election.

Vice-President Wang Qishan, as the special representative of President Xi, attended the inauguration ceremony of President Yoon. All these arrangements clearly revealed the high importance China attaches to its relations with the ROK.

"I believe that the two countries, under the strategic leadership of their state leaders and close collaboration between governments, businesses and private sectors, will raise Sino-ROK relations to a new level, bring more benefits to the two countries and their people and make new contributions to peaceful and stable development in the region and the world at large," he said.

Lin noted that this year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the ROK, as well as the China-South Korea Year of Cultural Exchanges. China and the ROK are and will remain each other's close neighbors, and the two countries are inseparable cooperative partners. History shows that it is in the common interests of the two countries and their people to safeguard and develop friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation. Both countries have great potential to complement

each other and collaborate for win-win results.

Lin spoke of the great achievements made by China in its transformation from high-speed growth to high-quality growth. He said China, as the main driving force propelling global economic growth, contributes about 30 percent of the growth of world economy.

The Belt and Road Initiative introduced by President Xi has been well implemented, he said, and China is connected via railway with more than 180 cities in 23 countries in Europe. More than 1,000 China Railway Express trips per month are operating. The high-speed railway network connecting Beijing and Singapore, which covers many Southeast Asian countries, is under construction as planned. Asia has become a community with shared stakes and a shared future.

Lin said that Asia is our common home. Solidarity in the face of difficulty, peaceful coexistence and amity between Asian countries as one family are typical Oriental cultural values. It is our common practice in relations with neighboring countries to respect each other, seek common ground while

reserving differences, carry out exchanges and dialogues, learn from each other and pursue win-win results and common development. It's our common aspiration to build a community with more intertwined interests and a shared future, he said.

"The CPAFFC would like to work together with the Korea Chamber of Commerce and other friends in different circles in South Korea to explore new channels for consolidating bilateral people-to-people friendship," Lin said.

"As long as the COVID-19 situation permits, we'd like to comprehensively deepen non-governmental friendly exchanges, as well as mutually beneficial collaboration in commerce and between our youth and media outlets so as to increase amity and connectivity between the two peoples."

Yoon applauded the long-term support from the CPAFFC for the Korea Chamber of Commerce in China and CJ, expressing appreciation for the cooperation between them. He recognized and appreciated the introduction made by the Chinese side on China's economic outlook and the potential — and priorities — of friendly Sino-ROK cooperation and the analysis of the current international situation. He said the Korean side would like to enhance friendly bilateral exchanges and mutually beneficial collaboration hand in hand with its Chinese counterparts to make contributions to stable bilateral relations in the long run. ■

CPAFFC President Lin Songtian meets European Chamber President Jörg Wuttke

Fan Lili

On Aug 2, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with Jörg Wuttke, president of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China, and his wife.

The two sides had candid in-depth exchanges on the crisis in Ukraine, the global economic situation, COVID-19 prevention and control, international exchanges, China-EU cooperation with Africa and other issues.

Also attending were Guido Giacconi, vice-president of the European Chamber; Gao Yan, CEO of thyssenkrupp Greater China; and Hao Zhongwei, deputy director-general of the Department of European & Asian Affairs of the CPAFFC.

Lin said he appreciated Wuttke's long partnership with China, his witness of China's tremendous achievements in economic and social devel-

opment over the past 40 years and the historic changes of the new era. Wuttke has led the European Chamber to put down roots in China, actively promoted China-EU economic and trade exchanges and cooperation and made unremitting efforts and positive contributions to China-Germany and China-EU friendly cooperation, Lin noted.

Lin listed China's achievements in reform and opening-up over the past four decades. He said that in the first half of this year the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical crises had triggered a sharp slowdown in global economic growth and brought high inflation. Against this backdrop, China's economic aggregate grew by 2.5 percent year on year, foreign trade by 9.4 percent and actually used foreign capital by 17.4 percent, demonstrating strong resilience once again. The world is facing the risks and challenges

of COVID-19, climate change, a food crisis and economic recession, and no economy is immune. Solidarity and cooperation are the only way to overcome global challenges, he said.

Lin said that China and the European Union are important forces for maintaining world peace and stability and promoting development and prosperity. The two sides are committed to building a partnership for peace, growth, reform and civilization and to bringing together the two markets and civilizations.

Lin noted that the opening of China-Europe freight trains has connected more than 190 cities in 24 European countries and become an important link of interest between Asia and Europe. He added that China and Europe are highly complementary and enjoy broad prospects in mutually beneficial economic and trade cooperation, especially in low-carbon and green innovation fields and the digital economy.

“China is ready to firmly support the EU in achieving strategic independence and economic prosperity,” Lin said. “The two sides should enhance mutual understanding, friendship and trust, as well as remain committed to win-win cooperation and common development and firmly safeguard the fundamental interests of China, Europe and their peoples.”

Lin explained China’s latest epidemic prevention policies to the foreign guests. He said that China’s COVID-19 prevention and control policies must be understood from the perspective of its

national conditions. China has a population of over 1.4 billion, accounting for 20 percent of the world’s population. That is the country’s basic national condition. The Chinese government is the government of the people, and the Communist Party of China is the party of the people, he said.

The Central Committee of the CPC with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has always adhered to the overall requirements of effectively coordinating COVID-19 prevention and control with economic and social development. It has put people and their lives first and respected science. China has adopted proactive policies to prevent and control the COVID-19 pandemic, taken the most effective measures to protect people’s lives and health to the maximum extent and effectively prevented large-scale virus infections and deaths.

Meanwhile, China has kept pace with the times and adopted more precise and efficient proactive prevention and control policies to minimize the impact of the pandemic on economic and social development.

Lin expressed hope that the European Chamber and its member companies will understand and support China’s active prevention and control policies from the perspective that the CPC and the Chinese government govern for the people, and send positive messages to European companies in China as a bridge and bond for China-Europe friendly cooperation.

Lin also answered questions about China’s policies, measures and achieve-

ments in Africa. He said Africa is the youngest continent with rich natural and human resources and has a strong desire for development. It has risen and is accelerating its industrialization and urbanization. There are broad prospects for mutually beneficial cooperation between China, Europe and Africa in infrastructure, green, low-carbon and innovative development, as well as the digital economy.

“Helping Africa achieve peace, stability, development and prosperity serves the common interest and is our shared responsibility. China and the EU should work together to strengthen cooperation and help Africa achieve lasting peace and independent, sustainable development,” Lin said.

Wuttke thanked Lin for his kind invitation and introduction of China’s latest COVID-19 prevention and control policies, and he expressed his admiration for China’s economic and social development achievements. He said he very much agrees with Lin’s view that China-EU relations should focus on cooperation and seek common development, adding that the European Chamber and its member companies have confidence in China’s development and will continue to deepen their engagement in the Chinese market, enhance mutual understanding, tighten cooperative ties and jointly promote world development and prosperity.

Founded in 2000, the European Chamber now has more than 1,800 member companies and seven chapters in nine cities across China. ■

CPAFFC Vice-President Li Xikui attends opening ceremony of First International Intangible Cultural Heritage Week

Gan Qianyi

On Aug 9, the First International Intangible Cultural Heritage Week (Weinan, Shaanxi) opened in Weinan, Shaanxi province. It was co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Shaanxi Provincial People's Government.

Li Xikui, vice-president of the CPAFFC; Ye Niuping, vice-governor of Shaanxi province; Fan Weibin, municipal Party secretary of Weinan; and Shahbaz Khan, UNESCO representative in China, attended and spoke at the opening ceremony. Mbelwa Kairuki, the Tanzanian ambassador to China; Mauro Mendes, governor of Mato Grosso State of Brazil; and Mithona Phouthorng, governor of Koh Kong province in Cambodia, delivered video remarks.

The theme of the event was "Pass down intangible cultural heritage for a better life".

More than 300 participants



CPAFFC Vice-President Li Xikui (5th, right) attends opening ceremony of the activity.

attended the event on site or online, including experts and scholars from Cambodia, Iran, Japan, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Thailand and

Uzbekistan, along with Chinese representatives from political, academic and business circles.

Li Xikui delivered his

congratulations on the opening of the event. He said that China's intangible cultural heritage is not only a living gene of Chinese civilization but also an important source of modern cultural creativity. He expressed hope that we could take this event as an opportunity to build an international exchange platform and inherit national culture.

He said that through innovation and creativity, we can enhance the added value of intangible cultural heritage and boost economic and social development. With intangible cultural heritage as a carrier, we can present a true, three-dimensional and comprehensive China and tell China's story well to the world. Through intangible cultural heritage exchanges, we can promote cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and other countries and value not only our own culture but also the cultures of others.

Li said the CPAFFC will give full play to its advantages in people-to-people diplomacy, public diplomacy and urban diplomacy and take intangible cultural heritage as a link to implement President Xi Jinping's instruction on making Shaanxi an example of inland reform and opening-up.

The CPAFFC will help Shaanxi integrate into the development pattern of the Belt and Road Initiative, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation

between China and other countries and promote exchanges and mutual learning between the Chinese civilization and civilizations of others, Li told the gathering.

He also pledged that the CPAFFC will make efforts to increase mutual understanding and friendship between Chinese and foreign people and contribute to strengthening public support for building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Ye Niuping praised Shaanxi's intangible cultural heritage as rich and colorful with distinctive features. The purpose of Heritage Week is to give full play to the leading role of the CPAFFC's people-to-people diplomacy, build a platform for international cooperation and continuously deepen exchanges between Shaanxi province and the rest of the world, he said, adding that he hoped the event would serve as an opportunity to further consolidate and expand international friendship-city relations, promote mutual understanding and affinity and people-to-people exchanges and make more practical exploration for Shaanxi to deeply integrate into the development pattern of the Belt and Road Initiative and boost high-quality development through high-level opening-up.

Shahbaz Khan said in his speech that the cultural heritage of humanity is more than monuments and collections of objects, it also includes examples

of intangible cultural heritage passed down from our ancestors for the benefit of future generations. They strengthen our sense of identity and continuity and connect us to our past, to each other and to the wider world, he said, adding that maintaining intangible cultural heritage can be a bond of emotion for a shared community of mankind. He assured the gathering that UNESCO will carry out its mission in culture and work closely with all stakeholders to safeguard the cultural heritage of humanity.

Li Xikui, diplomatic envoys and representatives of international organizations had discussions with the Shaanxi Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries on relevant work. They also visited Weinan Technician College to learn the teaching situation of the affiliated Intangible Cultural Heritage Skills Training Institute. They also visited Huazhou International Shadow Puppetry Expo Park to see the development of the local shadow play industry. Shadow play is a traditional performance art that features a silhouette show of puppets made of donkey hide.

The First International Intangible Cultural Heritage Week included an art exhibition, urban dialogue, experiences with intangible cultural heritage, all-media online activities, a cultural and creative products competition, visits by foreign students and other activities. ■

Youth and Entrepreneurship

— Remarks by CPAFFC Vice-President Jiang Jiang
at China-Bahamas Youth Forum

Jiang Jiang

Dear young friends — I am honored to join you at this youth forum to celebrate 25 years of diplomatic relations between China and the Bahamas. On behalf of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, I would like to extend warm congratulations on the opening of this forum.

Despite the geographical distance between China and the Bahamas and our distinct national circumstances, our two countries and peoples have long enjoyed a deep friendship. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties 25 years ago, our bilateral relations have grown smoothly, with fruitful cooperation in a wide range of fields, setting a good example of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit and shared prosperity between countries different in size. We have every reason to be proud of what we have accomplished over the past quarter-century, and to be confident in what lies ahead in the next 25 years and beyond.

Today, we focus on the theme of youth and entrepreneurship. It is because we are fully aware that young people are the future of every country and the hope of nations. How young people join the tide of entrepreneurship and innovation is important to the future growth of both

China and the Bahamas and to global development and prosperity.

President Xi Jinping said, “The youth are pioneers who are more passionate and motivated about innovation than anyone else.” Young people are energetic, agile, enterprising and open to new things. They are in the best time of doing things. “Since ancient times, heroes have been young.” Looking at world history, most entrepreneurs, pioneers and innovators who have made outstanding contributions to the development and progress of mankind have built their careers step-by-step since they were young.

We live in a globalized world where all countries are interconnected and all things are interlinked through an intelligent network. This has provided enormous space for young people to excel, innovate and embrace entrepreneurship. However, in the face of the combined impact of changes unseen in a century and the COVID-19 pandemic, global development is also facing new and daunting challenges. Young people in China, the Bahamas and the world at large are presented with both precious opportunities to achieve career success and the historical responsibility to rise up to these challenges. Under these circumstances,

what should young entrepreneurs do? I believe the following three qualities are important to have.

First, a deep commitment to the greater good and a noble sense of mission.

As an ancient saying goes, “A person who aspires to be a saint can become a saint; a person who aspires to be a sage can become a sage.” Young people can have different life goals and career choices. But it is always important to bear in mind that “only things done in the interest of the people can be called a worthy cause.” One must always have a clear sense of right and wrong and put the greater good first, knowing that doing the right thing can lead one to profit and true success.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to generate profit. People all hope to earn more from their hard work. But for aspiring young entrepreneurs, the real worthy ambition is to keep progressing with the times and contribute to the shared future of humanity. This is how each of us can prove our worth to society and become better selves. While pursuing personal success, we need to take up social responsibilities, be generous and kind, actively serve our communities and countries and give back to society.

This will help build a sound image for your startups, foster positive dynamics between business interests and social responsibilities and drive both social and economic progress. This is what it means to be a young entrepreneur in the new era.

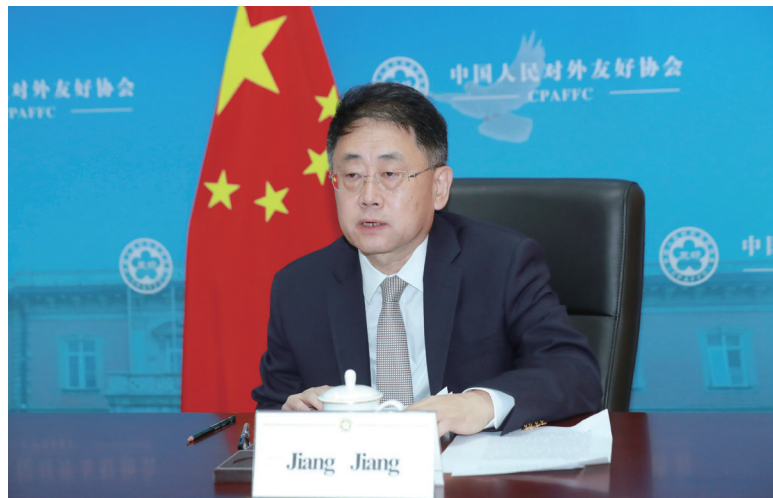
Second, unyielding perseverance and the courage to withstand setbacks.

Starting a business is like sailing at sea and looking for treasure. The journey will not always be smooth. To learn to keep the boat steady, or even to climb back aboard after falling into the water, puts your perseverance and willpower to the test. This requires unflinching courage and firm resolve, as well as knowledge about science and the latest technological and social advancements. Anyone who has the strongest determination, tenacity and perseverance will find the way to success. Fear nothing, be patient and brave and one step at a time!

Third, emphasis on both self-reliance and a global perspective.

In the context of economic globalization, countries are more closely linked and interdependent than ever before. The daily flow of capital, technology, products, industries and people between economies has formed a close-knit global network of shared interests. The younger generation needs to look beyond the horizon. In addition to focusing on the local economy, like the pond at one's doorstep, it is important to set one's eyes on the vast ocean of the global economy and embrace its openness.

It is important to leverage one's advantages and understand the global



CPAFFC Vice-President Jiang Jiang speaks at the forum.

context. One needs to be able to spot new drivers of global economic growth, analyze the dynamics and demands of the global market and make good use of global public goods. This will help you get on the express train of development, driven by new industries and new models.

Also, while being familiar with local business rules, one needs to fully understand and comply with international rules. You can play a role in improving the global economic governance system, and you can push for globalization that is more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial for all.

Whatever the way the world changes, one thing remains unchanged: It is humanity's yearning for a better life, the desire for and pursuit of development and the enthusiasm and motivation of young entrepreneurs. The Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative put forward by Chinese President Xi Jinping are

designed to facilitate consensus on cooperation and set up cooperation platforms. This has provided broad markets and great opportunities for young entrepreneurs from all countries.

I hope that young people from both China and the Bahamas will get on the express train of China's development, share more of China's development dividends and succeed in your entrepreneurial efforts.

The CPAFFC is ready to work with the Bahamas Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture and the Chinese embassy in the Bahamas to create more opportunities for exchanges between the young people of our two countries. You are the generation who will define our world's future. So my message to you is: cherish your youth and seize the great opportunities, rise to the challenges and make your dreams come true. You have a great future ahead of you and a lot to contribute to an open, inclusive and beautiful world — a world that enjoys lasting peace and common prosperity. ■

CPAFFC Vice-President Yuan Mindao makes video speech marking opening of Month of Activities Celebrating 30th Anniversary of China-ROK Diplomatic Relations

Zhou Xiaodan

On Aug 17, the month of activities celebrating the 30th anniversary of China-ROK diplomatic relations opened in Jinan, Shandong province. It was hosted by the Shandong Provincial People's Government. More than 2,000 participants from all walks of life in China and the Republic of Korea attended the event in person or online.

Li Ganjie, secretary of the Shandong Party Committee, and Zhou Naixiang, governor of Shandong province, attended or addressed the opening ceremony. Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, was invited to deliver a video speech at the opening ceremony.

In his speech, Yuan noted that China and the ROK are geographically close to each other and culturally connected. Over the past three



CPAFFC Vice-President Yuan Mindao addresses the opening ceremony.

decades since the establishment of diplomatic ties, China and the ROK have been committed to mutual respect, equality, win-win cooperation, common development, openness, inclusiveness and mutual learning. Bilateral cooperation in various fields has yielded fruitful results and brought

benefits to the two countries and peoples.

Facing the complex and volatile international situation and various risks and challenges, the two sides should stick to the original purpose of establishing diplomatic relations and ensure the steady and lasting progress

of China-ROK friendship, he said.

Yuan noted that Shandong is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization. It is also one of the Chinese provinces having the earliest cooperation with the ROK, the most active exchanges and the largest number of friendship cities. The ROK is Shandong's second-largest trading partner and second-largest source of foreign investment. The two sides have made gratifying achievements in economic and trade exchanges, personnel exchanges and friendship-city cooperation.

Yuan expressed hope that the event would help both sides seize opportunities, convey friendship, showcase achievements and achieve win-win cooperation.

The theme of the event is "30 years of win-win cooperation and together for a shared future". A number of activities were scheduled, including the China-ROK Industrial Docking Exhibition, the Joint Conference on Friendship and Cooperation Between Friendship Cities, the Confucianism Exchange Conference, a symphony concert and a picture exhibition on 30 years of China-ROK cooperation, among others. It covers economy and trade, think tanks, environmental protection, youth, culture and other fields to play a positive role in further strengthening local exchanges and practical cooperation between China and the ROK. ■

CPAFFC Vice-President Yan Dong marks 30th anniversary of friendship-city relations between Guiyang and Palmerston North

Jin Hanghang

On Aug 17, a commemoration meeting was held to celebrate the 30th anniversary of friendship-city relations between Guiyang, China and Palmerston North, New Zealand. Yan Dong, vice-president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, delivered a video speech.

Ma Ningyu, mayor of Guiyang; Grant Smith, mayor of Palmerston North; Wang Xiaolong, Chinese ambassador to New Zealand; Clare Fearnley, New Zealand ambassador to China; and representatives from economic and trade, education, culture, agriculture and other relevant departments and enterprises of the two cities, totaling nearly 100 people, attended the meeting on site or online.

Yan Dong congratulated Guiyang

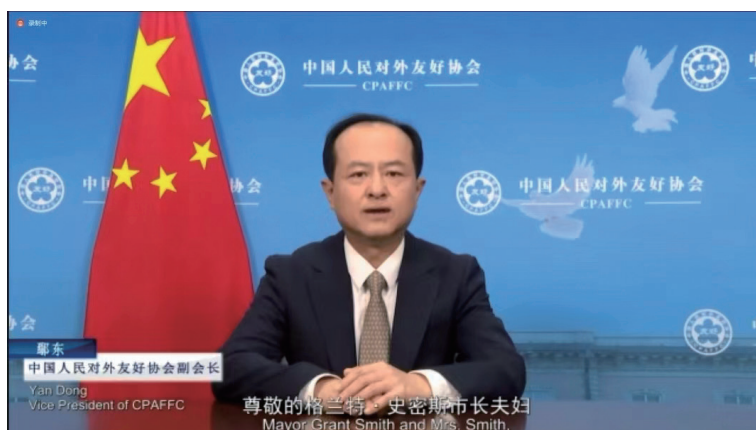
and Palmerston North on the 30th anniversary of their friendship-city relations and fruitful cooperation. He noted that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and New Zealand, which have mutual needs and complementary strengths for cooperation and development and enjoy broad prospects. Friendship cities play an irreplaceable role in developing bilateral relations and promoting friendly exchanges and cooperation. They are also important carriers of deepening friendship and mutual trust between our peoples and promoting common prosperity and development.

The CPAFFC will continue to build bridges, provide platforms and create opportunities for local

governments in the two countries to deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, make greater contributions to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship and consolidating public support for China-New Zealand friendship.

Ma Ningyu said that over the past 30 years, with the support of the governments of China and New Zealand, and under the guidance of the embassies of the two countries and the CPAFFC, Guiyang and Palmerston North have had frequent exchanges and harvested fruitful results. In the future, Guiyang will work with Palmerston North to push cooperation in trade, animal husbandry, culture, education and tourism to a higher, wider and deeper level, to better benefit the people of the two cities and make new contributions to the development of the China-New Zealand comprehensive strategic partnership.

Grant Smith said, “People-to-people and cultural exchanges have helped us understand each other and enjoy close ties. Since establishing friendship-city relations, our two sides have carried out practical cooperation in areas of government visits, personnel exchanges, trade and investment, educational exchanges, agricultural science and technology, digital economy and culture and art. We have achieved fruitful results. These cannot be achieved without mutual respect and goodwill between our two peoples.



CPAFFC Vice-President Yan Dong delivers a video speech.

I look forward to further deepening friendship and promoting mutually beneficial cooperation in the future.”

Wang Xiaolong noted that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and New Zealand. Fifty years of joint efforts have laid a solid foundation for bilateral relations.

“As long as our two sides adhere to the important consensus reached by leaders of the two countries and keep enriching the comprehensive strategic partnership in the spirit of mutual respect, mutual understanding, mutual benefit and seeking common ground while shelving differences, we will surely enjoy a brighter and broader future,” Wang said. “It will not only bring greater benefits to our two countries and peoples but also make greater contributions to international

and regional peace, stability and prosperity.”

Clare Fearnley noted that the friendship-city relationship between Guiyang and Palmerston North is conducive to enhancing mutual understanding between the two sides and making positive contributions to the building of the New Zealand-China partnership. The embassy will continue paying attention to and support friendship-city relations between the two cities and actively support people-to-people exchanges and cooperation in various fields, Fearnley said.

During the commemoration activity, leaders of the two cities signed the Reaffirmation of the Sister City Agreement Between Palmerston North, New Zealand, and Guiyang, People’s Republic of China. ■

Friendship organizations and friendly people condemn Pelosi's visit to China's Taiwan region

Nancy Pelosi, the speaker of the US House of Representatives, paid a sneaky visit to China's Taiwan region. This extremely egregious move triggered waves of sharp criticism from China-friendly organizations and individuals all over the world. As of Aug 18, 68 friendship organizations and friendly people from 58 countries and regions have made public statements or sent letters to the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries condemning Pelosi's political stunt.

The consensus was that Pelosi's unscrupulous move had gravely violated the one-China principle and the stipulations in the three Sino-US joint communiqués, brutally interfered in China's internal affairs, seriously violated China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and severely undermined peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits. They reiterated that they firmly uphold the one-China principle and strongly support the countermeasures taken by China to safeguard its state sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Korn Dabbaransi, former deputy prime minister of Thailand and president of Tai-Chinese Friendship Association, sent a letter to CPAFFC President Lin Songtian saying the Thai government and his association have always endorsed the one-China principle. There is only one China in the world, namely the People's Republic of China, which is a consensus among all the 181 countries that have established diplomatic relations with China.

Paisal Puechmongkol, vice-president of the Thai-Chinese Culture and Economy Association, wrote an article on

Facebook pointing out that Pelosi's provocative visit ran counter to the one-China principle widely recognized by the international community and undermined global peace and stability. It would never be accepted by China and the rest of the world and would only solicit sharp criticism from countries including Thailand. The Thai people firmly oppose Taiwan secession and any external interference in China's internal affairs. Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. The Thai government and the Thai people staunchly maintain the one-China policy.

Tan Keng Kang, secretary-

general of Malaysia-China Friendship Association, wrote articles in local media outlets, including Oriental Online, Nanyang Siang Pau and Sin Chew Daily. He said Pelosi's visit bore the evil intention to interfere in China's internal affairs and sow discord between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. It seriously broke the political commitments made by the US in the three China-US joint communiqués, laid bare America's evil intention and irresponsible political motivation to create chaos and divide China.

It's a clear fact and reality that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to one China. There is no room

for external interference in China's efforts to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Seeking Taiwan independence leads nowhere. Reunification suits the historical trend. The interference from the US and the misbehavior of separatists will backfire on themselves.

Md Firdaus Abd Rahman, president of the Brunei-China Friendship Association, noted that peace and security are preconditions for development. Pelosi's preposterous stunt will increase the risk of conflicts. He expressed hope that all parties concerned will value the hard-won good conditions in the region and settle conflicts in a peaceful and proper way. The Brunei-China Friendship Association will stick to the one-China policy of the Brunei government. With close cooperation with the CPAFFC, he hoped to make concerted efforts to build a peaceful and prosperous region.

Indrananda Abeysekera, chairman of the Association for Sri Lanka-China Social and Cultural Cooperation, sent a letter to Lin Songtian, president of the CPAFFC, and released statements on local media websites. He strongly opposed and condemned Pelosi's sneaky visit, saying that this provocative behavior targeting China severely breached the regulations in the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the UN, ran counter to the one-China principle, which is widely recognized and accepted by the international community, and damaged regional peace and stability. It will lead to more crises and conflicts and obstruct the improvement of Sino-US relations. The

Association for Sri Lanka-China Social and Cultural Cooperation resolutely stands with China in its efforts to defend sovereignty and territorial integrity and achieve an early national reunification.

R. Jinit De Silva, president of the Sri Lanka China Society, sent a letter to CPAFFC President Lin Songtian opposing and condemning Pelosi's Taiwan stunt. He said the wrongdoing of the US was a flagrant provocation against China, which not only went against stipulations in UN Charter and relevant resolutions of the UN and violated the one-China principle, which is widely recognized and accepted by the international community, but also undermined regional peace and stability. The Sri Lanka China Society staunchly supports the Chinese government and the Chinese people in safeguarding state sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as an early complete national reunification.

Nalin Aponso, president of the Sri Lanka-China Journalists' Forum, said that he unswervingly supports the one-China principle. The intention of Pelosi's heinous move was quite obvious — to damage global and regional peace and trade. The arrogance of power is particularly sinister and heinous when a government leader risks a large number of lives to make a provocative move on the world's geopolitical chessboard. He said that all countries should respect each other's rights and preserve world peace to keep the global supply chain running smoothly during unexpectedly challenging times.

The Sri Lanka-China Friendship

Association issued a statement stressing that Pelosi's visit was a provocative war signal that threatened China's sovereignty and world peace. The statement also pointed out that this provocative and unrighteous treachery not only disobeyed the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 of 1971, which was widely accepted by the international community, but also broke America's own promise of respecting China's full sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Sri Lanka-China Friendship Association strongly supports the countermeasures taken by China in the fields of military, diplomacy and economics. The US, its allies and the separatists pursuing Taiwan independence must realize that any attempt to obstruct China's complete reunification is doomed to fail.

Valiyara Bhaskaran, secretary-general of the India China Friendship Association and president of the India China Friendship Association (Karnataka), sent an email to the CPAFFC. On behalf of the Indian association, he said he was adamantly opposed to Pelosi's Taiwan visit and America's interference in China's domestic affairs. He said he believed the conspiracy of the US to dominate the whole world is doomed to fail.

Altaf Hossain Choudhury, president of the Bangladesh-China Cultural Economic and Mass Communication Center, said he resolutely endorses the one-China principle and supports China in its efforts to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. He hopes to contribute to everlasting world

peace and harmony together with the CPAFFC.

Saiyedul, an international student from Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics, quoted remarks by State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and forwarded them on his Facebook, Twitter, WeChat and Sino-Bangladesh News accounts. The remarks include Wang's comment on the US violation of China's sovereignty and his interviews after attending the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and wrapping up his visit to Middle Asian countries.

Mohamed Rasheed, founder and chairman of the China-Maldivian Cultural Association and former Maldivian ambassador to China, said on Twitter that Pelosi's visit was a disastrous provocation that aroused dissatisfaction among the peace-loving people of Maldives. It's necessary for Maldivian state leaders to convey to China their commitment to the one-China principle. They reiterated their willingness to collaborate with China to work for an Asia and a world of sustainable peace, and for harmony in Asia and the world at large, and condemned hegemonic behavior.

The Iran China Friendship Association said in a statement that there is no room for any suspicions about the one-China principle. Pelosi's sojourn in Taipei violated China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and interfered in China's domestic affairs. The Iran China Friendship Association strongly condemned the misconduct and thought of it as crossing a line of behavior intended to mess the world

up, exert pressure on China and sustain America's hegemony in East Asia and the Asian-Pacific region.

The US is attempting to utilize the Taiwan question to create a crisis in the region. Based on the current foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iran China Friendship Association upholds the one-China principle and supports China's stance on the Taiwan question.

The Turkey China Friendship Association voiced its condemnation of Pelosi's vicious trip to China's Taiwan region. It said that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China, and under the pretext of democracy Pelosi was actually destroying regional and global peace and stability. The misconduct was by no means acceptable. The Turkish people resolutely support the one-China principle, the statement said.

Adnan Akfrat, chairman of the Turkish-Chinese Business Development and Friendship Association, pointed out in his statement that the provocative visit infringed on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. America showed its perfidious and shameless nature again to the rest of the world. It's natural for the Chinese government to strongly oppose the brutality and provocation. Turkey and China, two countries at the two ends of Asia, need to confront the threat from the US shoulder-to-shoulder to contribute more to building a multilateral world and eradicate hooliganism.

Assane Mbengue, president of the Federation of China-Africa Friendship Associations, sent a

statement to the CPAFFC in which he strongly condemned Pelosi's visit. He took it as a severe infringement on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity which dealt a heavy blow to the political foundation of Sino-US relations and severely threatened global peace and stability. He reaffirmed Africa's commitment to the one-China principle and appealed to the US to carry out the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 of 1971.

Sooklal, ambassador at large for Asia and BRICS at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, Republic of South Africa, and honorary president of the South Africa-China People's Friendship Association, sent a video statement to the CPAFFC. He expressed condemnation of Pelosi's visit and reiterated the need for strict compliance with the one-China principle. He said that the visit was a severe violation and provocation of China and attacked China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It not only undermined the Sino-US relations but also recklessly trampled on international law and had a heavy impact on global security.

Rudolf, secretary-general of the Botswana-China Friendship Association, sent a letter to CPAFFC President Lin Songtian expressing strong opposition and condemnation of Pelosi's visit, calling it provocative. He said there is only one China in the world; Taiwan is an inseparable part of China; and the government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China. The Botswana-China Friendship Association stands

staunchly with the Chinese side and supports the Chinese government and the Chinese people in defending state sovereignty and territorial integrity and achieving an early national reunification.

Benjamin Anyagre, secretary-general of the Ghana China Friendship Association, said in his letter to the CPAFFC that Pelosi's political stunt was a blatant violation of the basic norms governing international relations. It is one of the basic rules of international law not to intervene in the internal affairs of other sovereign states. Any behavior running counter to that rule is tantamount to wrecking global peace and stability. The international community has already reached a consensus that Taiwan is an inseparable part of China. Instead of sending wrong signals to the separatists trumpeting Taiwan independence, the US should acknowledge China's core interest and care about world peace.

Dr. Fredrick Mutesa, secretary-general of the Zambia-China Friendship Association, vociferously condemned Pelosi's visit and regarded it as the intentional destruction of global peace and stability. The American side should take full blame for the escalation of tensions in the situation across the Taiwan Strait. The US should stop carrying out risky diplomatic policies and should uphold the basic norms of international relations, as all other countries do. Currently, the world, which is facing multiple challenges, is in urgent need of intensified multilateral cooperation. The behavior of the US, however,

amounts to the intentional destruction of global peace and stability.

Karim Deme, president of the Focal Point of the People's Republic of China in Burkina Faso, made a statement in which he severely criticized any conduct undermining the one-China principle and fully agreed on relevant statements issued by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The one-China principle was clearly recognized by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 of 1971.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, 181 countries have established diplomatic relations with China on the basis of this principle. The principle is sacred and inviolable. Incited by external forces, the aggressive and provocative acts of the Taiwan authorities have inflicted heavy damage on regional and even global peace and prosperity. That won't be tolerated by the international community. Deme appealed for more respect for UN resolutions from relevant countries.

Emmanuel Mba Allo, president of the Gabon-China Friendship Association and the country's former ambassador to China, said there is only one China in the world. Taiwan is an inseparable part of China. The government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China. The one-China principle was stipulated in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 and served as the foundation for 181 countries to establish diplomatic relations with China. There is a consensus in the

international community and the basic norms governing international relations should be followed. The Gabon-China Friendship Association firmly follows the one-China principle and strongly supports the Chinese side in its efforts to safeguard sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Cape Verde-China Friendship Association said in a statement that it strictly observes the one-China principle, strongly objects to and denounces America's conduct challenging the one-China principle, and firmly opposes anything said or done that violates China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It firmly supports China in safeguarding its core interests and taking necessary action to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. It appealed the international community to observe UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 of 1971. There is only one China in the world. Taiwan is an inseparable part of China. The government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legitimate government representing the whole of China.

The Arab-Chinese Friendship Societies' League stated that the Arabic people strongly support the one-China principle and regard Taiwan as an inalienable part of Chinese territory. They oppose any sinister attempts and provocative acts to utilize the Taiwan question to shatter regional security and stability and supported any necessary measures taken by China on the Taiwan question to defend state sovereignty and territorial integrity. They called on relevant parties to get

back on a reasonable track, respect international law and the one-China principle affirmed by it and establish relations, develop friendship and facilitate cooperation on the basis of relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly.

Eng. Adnan Samara, chairman of the Palestine Chinese Friendship Association, sent a letter to the CPAFFC expressing indignation at Pelosi's visit. He believed that the visit intentionally defied international law and seriously violated the one-China principle. The Palestine Chinese Friendship Association reiterated that there is only one China in the world; Taiwan is an inseparable part of China; and the government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China.

Dr. Mohamed Khalil, chairman of the Morocco-China Friendship and Exchange Association sent a letter to CPAFFC President Lin Songtian condemning Pelosi's visit, which, he said, ran counter to the one-China principle recognized by the American side when the two sides established diplomatic relations. The provocative behavior will make a serious impact on stability across the Taiwan Strait. Khalil said his association denounces this kind of misconduct and strongly supports the Chinese government and the Chinese people in their efforts to safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity. He believes the US should work together with China to contribute to the welfare of humanity, tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and

facilitate a global economic recovery rather than inflicting harm and degrading regional and global stability.

Smail Debeche, chairman of Friendship Association: Algeria-China, said that the reunification and stability of China matters a lot to the whole world, as well as to China and the Chinese people. Taiwan is part of China. The people of Taiwan are now living under the oppression of Taiwan authorities. Western countries adopted a double standard by claiming obedience to international law on one hand while disregarding UN resolutions on the other hand with continual official exchanges with Taiwan authorities to infuriate China.

Pelosi's visit was playing with fire. It's reasonable for China to take necessary countermeasures to oppose the visit. The Friendship Association: Algeria-China unswervingly supports China's endeavor to achieve complete reunification and to safeguard legitimate rights in South China Sea.

Amb. Ahmed Wali, former deputy minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt and vice-president of the Egyptian-Chinese Friendship Association, said during an interview with Phoenix TV that Egypt stands firmly with China in applying the one-China principle. Pelosi's visit was a complete farce that sent the wrong signal to separatists pursuing Taiwan independence. The visit created risks of instability and is unacceptable. The Chinese side has every right to take countermeasures.

Haider Al Rubeiy, president of the Iraqi-Chinese Friendship Association

for Cooperation and Development, issued a statement voicing indignation over Pelosi's visit. Taiwan is an inseparable part of China, and it's China's internal affair to deal with the Taiwan question. The Iraqi-Chinese Friendship Association for Cooperation and Development supports the efforts of the Chinese government and the Chinese people in defense of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Rubeiy said.

The Yemeni-Chinese Friendship Association delivered a statement emphasizing that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. Pelosi's visit was a flagrant infringement on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, a severe violation of international law and international conventions and a serious threat to regional and global peace and security. The whole world is looking to an early end to the unilateral hegemony of the US in the current global system. It is hoped that all countries stick to mutual respect, fairness, justice and mutually beneficial cooperation for global security, peace and stability.

Ezzeddine Jebali, president of the Tunisia-China Friendship Association made a statement that the Taiwan question is a matter of China's internal affairs. The one-China principle is a widespread consensus reached by the international community. It is an international rule followed by all countries to stick to the one-China principle and not to have official exchanges with Taiwan.

No country would allow other countries to wantonly trample on its

sovereignty and territorial integrity. Pelosi's visit will surely undermine the smooth going of Sino-US relations and people-to-people friendship, and will inflict harm on the basic norms of international relations. All countries should abide by the basic norms of international relations, including respecting sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

Ivan Melnikov, first vice-chairman of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, first deputy-chairman of the State Duma of Russia and chairman of Society of the Russian-Chinese Friendship, made a statement in which he reaffirmed that he unswervingly follows the one-China principle and strongly denounces Pelosi's visit. He sees it as a flagrantly provocative move to escalate tensions in the Asian-Pacific region. The Taiwan question is China's internal affair. There is only one China in the world, and the government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China. Taiwan is an inseparable part of China.

What the America did this time posed a serious challenge to international security. It was a brazen infringement on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and a blatant violation of the spirit of the three Sino-US joint communiques.

Alina Grishkevich, deputy chair of the Belarus-China Friendship Association, wrote an article criticizing Pelosi's visit. She said that Belarus en-

dorses the one-China principle. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, 181 countries have established diplomatic relations with China on the basis of the one-China principle, which enjoys widespread consensus in the international community and is a basic norm in international relations.

The China Studies Center of Kazakhstan published an article on its official website in Kazakhstan — in English and Russian — condemning the damage done by Pelosi's visit to regional security. The article also reads that the visit won't bring any good to Taiwan or change the irreversible historical course of China's national reunification. Guided by Chinese wisdom, Beijing will meet the challenge squarely. Everything China does is a responsible move.

Rashad Karimov, chairman of the Azerbaijan-China Cooperation Public Union, said that Pelosi's visit to China's Taiwan region would have huge negative impacts on the regional situation and on Sino-US relations. Peace and stability are preconditions of global prosperity. Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. It's one of the basic norms of the UN Charter to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries. As an Azerbaijan saying goes, you should respect others before expecting to be respected.

Maria Moreni, president of Italy China Link, expressed strong condemnation of Pelosi's visit. He mentioned that many countries had stressed that the visit seriously violated China's sov-

ereignty and territorial integrity, international law and basic norms governing international relations. It thus naturally drew criticism from the international community. The US is not only a troublemaker in Asia and in some other countries but also to the whole world at large. The unscrupulous move undermined regional stability and fully exposed the chaos in America's politics.

Reno Calleja, president of Malta China Friendship Society, condemned Pelosi's erroneous act to visit Taiwan and interfere in China's domestic affairs. He said that in this volatile global situation, it's irresponsible for a high-level official like Pelosi to breach agreements reached by the US and China. Her selfishness threatens the whole world. She was at her wits' end before she took the risk of the visit, and it was all for political purposes. Her move deserves condemnation. The Malta China Friendship Society strongly condemned the visit and regarded it as a threat to global peace.

George Floras, managing partner of Belt and Road Associates in Greece, made a statement in his WeChat Moments expressing indignation at Pelosi's preposterous visit and interference in China's domestic affairs. He said the visit was a violation of the norms of peaceful coexistence among people all over the world. He strongly condemned America's illegitimate conduct and campaigned for China's rights on Greek social media for wholehearted support for China and a commitment to standing together with China.

Luis González, secretary-general of the Federation of China-Latin American and Caribbean Friendship, wrote an article in the mainstream media outlet *Dominica Daily* criticizing Pelosi's provocative visit, which challenged China and damaged global peace.

Irena Cousins, president of the Jamaica China Friendship Association, said the US, which claims to be a world leader, had damaged international peace instead. With public opinion weakening by the day, it will degenerate into an unpopular country.

The Chinese House of the Dominican Republic said that it voiced its support for China to the Chinese embassy in Dominica and condemned Pelosi's provocative visit.

Noemi R. Rabaza Fernandez, first vice-chairman of the Cuban Friendship Institute with Foreign Peoples, tweeted quickly his support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China and condemned any conduct violating China's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Annie Vial Chen, president of the Panamanian Association of Friendship with China, sent a letter to Wei Qiang, Chinese ambassador to Panama, denouncing Pelosi's visit as a violation of the basic norms of international relations and expressing support for the stance of the Chinese government.

Fernández sent a letter to CPAFFC President Lin Songtian, saying that the Cuban Friendship Institute with Foreign Peoples and the Cuba-China Friendship Association strongly support China and the one-China principle. He reasserted that Taiwan is an

inseparable part of China. Pelosi's visit in disregard of warnings from China encroached on its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Bertha Mercado, president of Nicaragua-China Friendship Association, sent a letter to Chen Xi, Chinese ambassador to Nicaragua. He expressed strong support for the one-China principle and condemned Pelosi's visit, arguing that it was against the one-China principle and UN Resolution 2758, violated China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and interfered in China's domestic affairs.

The Colombia-China Friendship Association issued a statement entitled *Provocation Targeted at China Threatens Global Peace*. It denounced Pelosi's visit as an irresponsible act that endangered peace and stability in Asia and the world at large. According to principles recognized by the international community, there is only one China, and Taiwan is a part of China. Developing countries need a peaceful and stable international environment for further development. Pelosi is the speaker of the US House of Representatives, third in line to the presidency. Her visit to Taiwan is by no means negligible or a private affair, as it incited hostility against China's reunification and lent support to separatists seeking "Taiwan independence".

Juan Manuel Flores, chairman of the Salvador-China Friendship Association, made a statement entitled *Respecting the International Law and Safeguarding Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of the People's Republic of*

China. It strongly condemned and protested Pelosi's visit and regarded it as provocation against China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The visit totally ran counter to the one-China principle, regulations of the three Sino-US joint communiques and UN General Assembly Resolution 2758. It also trampled on international law and basic norms of international relations.

The statement expressed hope that relevant countries would have a clearer understanding of the historical background of the Taiwan question so as to respect China's internal affairs, show no tolerance for, or advance, any form of interference in domestic affairs of any country, including China and Salvador, and safeguard global peace and security with concerted efforts.

Anthony Leong, secretary-general of the Pacific China Friendship Association, wrote an article on a we-media platform in the US. He said that Pelosi's visit went against UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 of 1971 and added that the US, the UK and Australia are forming a security partnership to contain China in an Anglo-Saxon circle.

The Western world must realize that the era featuring hypocrisy and hegemony has ended, Leong said, adding that they can no longer extort others with the threat of military force or economic sanctions. Pelosi's visit showed clearly the ugly face of America's diplomacy and its blatant disregard of the sovereignty of other countries, he said.

The Vanuatu China Friendship Association forwarded Leong's article on the homepage of its Twitter account. ■

Hearts connect across mountains and seas

— Chinese schoolchildren donate money to Sri Lankans

Jinith De Silva

Friendship entered Sri Lanka centuries ago via the Silk Road route from ancient China. Since then, the two countries have maintained close relations in the economic and cultural fields.

In times of disaster, China has been among the first to come to Sri Lanka's aid. We are very happy to see that China has come forward to assist us in numerous ways during this time of economic hardship.

The Sri Lanka China Society contacted friends in China and appealed to them to assist Sri Lanka. It gave me great pleasure to see that several Chinese organizations came forward to assist us, particularly Hangzhou Caihe No 3 Primary School, which unexpectedly donated 100,000 yuan (Rs 5 million) to grant 200 scholarships to needy students in Sri Lanka.

Caihe means picking lotus flowers in Chinese. Hangzhou is a

beautiful city famous for lotus flowers. West Lake, an iconic scenic site in Hangzhou, is regarded as one of the most beautiful places in China. I visited in 2012. At the same time, the lotus flower is also the favorite flower of Sri Lanka, symbolizing wisdom in Buddhism.

The Chinese and Sri Lankan students' friendship started in 2020. In that year, 89 students of the school sent works of art through the Sri Lanka China Society to Sri Lanka China Children's Art Exhibition, which was organized by the Devi Balika school in Colombo.

That year, children of the Hangzhou school also organized an art exhibition to show their solidarity with Sri Lanka in their fight against COVID-19. What's more, they wrote a letter to the president of Sri Lanka to express their solidarity. Within a short period, the children received a letter of appreciation from the Sri Lankan

president.

I believe bilateral friendship has been enhanced through artwork. The Chinese students happily and cheerfully came forward to assist our children by donating their pocket money to needy Sri Lankan students.

It is a great pleasure to report that we have already taken steps to distribute their donations to our children, particularly to those living in rural areas. Each student will receive Rs 25,000 (500 yuan) in cash.

The distribution of scholarships started with a small function organized by the Sri Lanka China Society with the support of Devi Balika School in Colombo. Qi Zhenhong, ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Sri Lanka, was the chief guest and presented several scholarships to selected students in the Colombo district.

This donation will be remembered with gratitude by many people in Sri Lanka. ■

Build a more beautiful Asia with common cultural values

Fu Bo

On July 5, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met online with Kuroi Senji, president of the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association. They had in-depth exchanges through video conferencing and reached points of agreement on Sino-Japanese relations and friendly people-to-people exchanges. Also attending the meeting were CPAFFC Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the CPAFFC; Kurihara Komaki, director and vice-president of the JCCEA; and Nakano Satoshi, JCCEA's executive director.

Lin expressed respect and gratitude for the long-term devotion of Kuroi Senji, Kurihara Komaki and their association to the cause of bilateral friendship and for their consistent efforts and contributions made in advancing people-to-people friendship and cultural exchanges. He said he hope to cooperate with the Japanese side to write a new chapter



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian delivers a video speech when meeting online with Japanese friends.

of friendly people exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

Kuroi Senji said it was a great pleasure to meet with President Lin via

video link.

“Chinese culture, which we have always respected, is the foundation and source of Japanese culture. We’ve

thought deeply about the war crimes Japan committed during its invasion of China. We have a spirit of respect and introspection that has been passed down from the founding of our association until now,” Kuroi said.

“The wise elder generations of our two countries built a solid foundation for people-to-people and cultural exchanges and left valuable experience to us. We should learn from history, and consistently facilitate exchanges and collaboration without end.”

Kuroi said the aim of bilateral exchanges is to create a friendly atmosphere and develop mutual trust so as to help the two peoples develop an interest in visiting each other’s countries and communicate more.

“Therefore, we should lay emphasis on enhancing exchanges and connecting hearts. In the future, we should be more focused on forging closer heartfelt connections, be more engaged in increasing mutual amity between our peoples and build a broader platform of exchanges between young people. I believe that the cause of Sino-Japanese friendship will constantly forge ahead,” he said.

Kurihara Komaki expressed gratitude for the affection Chinese audiences have for her films, as well as their support for her efforts advancing bilateral cultural exchanges. She said she greatly values her deep friendship with her Chinese friends.

She mentioned that as a Japanese

actress engaged in film industry, she loves and respects Chinese culture. On the 50th anniversary of normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, she said she hoped to make contributions to the cause of friendship with the help of films.

She said a historic and cultural film is being co-produced by Japan and China that tells of Zen master Yinyuan’s trip by sea from Fujian province to Nagasaki, Japan, bringing Chinese cuisine, architecture, literature, music and printing techniques. She hoped for more Chinese support for the film.

Lin thanked Kuroi and Kurihara for their warm words and suggestions for friendly exchanges. He also expressed willingness to support Kurihara’s new film.

He noted that China and Japan are close neighbors with common cultural roots. Both belong to the same cultural circle of Confucianism and formed the Oriental culture together. The Chinese people admire the values of harmonious coexistence, he said.

Meanwhile, the Japanese people regard harmony as the essence of their culture. It has become the common aspiration of the two peoples to act under people-oriented thought and the philosophy of harmonious coexistence featuring peace, solidarity, universal harmony and harmony without uniformity. That philosophy has become an invaluable treasure of Sino-Japanese relations and the Oriental

values followed by both peoples.

Lin said that in the past 50 years since the normalization of diplomatic relations, China and Japan — based on their own fundamental interests and shared interests of the region — have abided by the principles stated in the four political documents signed by the two countries, stayed on the right track of peace and friendship and safeguarded the political basis of bilateral relations. By respecting each other, seeking common ground while shelving differences, learning from each other and pursuing win-win results, the two peoples have benefited from the huge bonus brought by peace and development.

He noted that bilateral trade volume had risen from less than \$1 billion to more than \$370 billion and more than 261 pairs of friendship cities have been established. In addition, more than 13 million mutual visits were made annually before the COVID-19 pandemic. China and Japan, as the world’s second- and third-largest economies, respectively, are important forces for safeguarding peace and promoting common development in Asia and the world at large.

Lin talked about China’s great achievements. It has realized the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and ushered in a new journey of building China into a great modern

socialist country in all respects, including common prosperity. He said that China has become the main driving force for global economic growth. As the main trading partner of more than 120 countries and regions in the world and the main source of outbound investment and tourism, China has contributed about 30 percent of world economic growth annually.

He said the Belt and Road Initiative initiated by President Xi Jinping has been well implemented. China has connected via railway with more than 180 cities in 23 countries in Europe. More than 1,000 China Railway Express trips are made every month. The high-speed railway network connecting Beijing and Singapore, which covers many Southeast Asian countries, is under construction as planned. Asia has become a community with shared stakes and a shared future.

Lin noted that the United States is unwilling to see peace, stability, development and prosperity in Asia. It is advancing its Indo-Pacific Strategy by championing the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, trying to win Japan and South Korea over to build an Asian-Pacific version of NATO. And it's coercing regional countries to side with it. It's the usual US practice to divide and destabilize a region. This kind of practice which turns back the wheels of history to reverse the tide of the times runs counter to the overall

interests of regional countries and their people. Consequently, it is doomed to lose support and fail.

He said the global pivot has been shifted from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. It's an irreversible trend for the East to ascend and the West to decline. It's also a reality that China enjoys good governance while the West is undergoing chaos. The 21st century is the Asian century. Developed countries, such as the United States and its European allies, are unable to solve their stubborn political, economic and social problems, including partisanship in matters of national interest, individualism and shortsightedness in national governance, the wealth gap and social populism. Unwilling and afraid to admit China's success, they choose to demonize China and hype up the alleged China threat, which misleads domestic and international opinion, incites ideological and group confrontation and creates more turbulence in the world.

Lin said Sino-Japanese ties are at a crossroads. History shows that the two countries could gain from cooperation but will lose in confrontation. He believes that the wise, diligent and kind Japanese people will make the right choice.

He said that Asia is our common home. It's our common aspiration to overcome difficulties with concerted effort, to coexist in peace and to live as one family. It's our common belief

that every civilization can enjoy and share with each other their beauty. Our common approach to coexistence is to respect one another, seek common ground while shelving differences, conduct exchanges and dialogues, learn from one another, benefit each other and strive for common development. It's our common objective to advance the building of a closer community with shared interests and a shared future, Lin said.

"The CPAFFC would like to work together more with the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association and other friendly societies of Japan and take the opportunities presented by the 50th anniversary of the normalization of bilateral diplomatic relations to innovate and carry out online and offline exchanges between friendly associations, friendship cities, friendly organizations and individuals under the new normal of the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

"When conditions permit, we need to restore as soon as possible large-scale exchanges between the young, as well as between cultural, religious and commercial groups and local governments. We need to stick to the cultural values of Asia, safeguard regional peace and prosperity, build a more beautiful Asia and write new chapters of Sino-Japanese people-to-people friendship in the new era so as to better benefit people of the two countries and in Asia at large." ■

CPAFFC President Lin Songtian meets pianist Claudia Yang

Hou Mengwei

On June 17, Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with Claudia Yang, international art director of the Silk Road International Arts Center and a well-known Malaysian Chinese pianist. Zhu Dan, director-general of the CPAFFC's Cultural Exchange Department, and Wang Longshe, secretary-general of the China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development, attended the meeting.

Lin noted that China and ASEAN countries enjoy both geographical proximity and cultural affinity. To promote integrated development, common development and people's well-being in the region, China and ASEAN have been engaged in high-quality cooperation via the Belt and Road Initiative and have jointly promoted the signing and implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, or RCEP. ASEAN countries are a priority in China's Belt and Road cooperation. The desired outcome in various fields is delivering tangible benefits to the people.

"This year marks the beginning of the China-ASEAN comprehensive

strategic partnership and the formal implementation of the RCEP," Lin said. "The CPAFFC is ready to make full use of our people-to-people diplomatic advantages to promote physical connectivity, institutional communication and people-to-people exchanges between China and ASEAN countries, and make new efforts for regional and world peace, stability, prosperity and development," Lin said.

He said he appreciated Yang's commitment to promoting friendship between China and Malaysia and between the Chinese people and the people of the world. He recognized the active role of the Silk Road International Arts Center in the Belt and Road Great Wall International Folk Culture and Arts Festival.

"Culture and art can transcend language barriers and national boundaries to bring beautiful enjoyment and express the aspiration of people of all countries for a better life," he said.

He expressed hope that Yang would play a unique role in promoting the Belt and Road Initiative and cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and

countries along the Belt and Road routes, foster an atmosphere in which ASEAN and China are seen as one family and make new contributions to building a closer China-ASEAN community with a shared future.

Yang spoke highly of the great achievements China had made in fighting COVID-19 and in economic and social development, and she praised President Xi Jinping's vision in putting forward the Belt and Road Initiative and the remarkable results it had delivered to the people of all countries.

"China and Malaysia have a long history of exchanges. The Strait of Malacca still retains Bukit China, a sacred place in the hearts of Chinese Malaysians," she said. "I am preparing an opera reflecting the earliest Chinese emigration to Southeast Asia and a concert of famous Chinese and ASEAN songs to enhance understanding and friendship between the Chinese people and the people of ASEAN countries. I want to work closely with the CPAFFC and make new contributions to enhancing friendship, understanding and trust between the people of China, ASEAN countries and the rest of the world." ■

Asia-Pacific city-to-city diplomacy activity held successfully online

Lyu Yanxia

On June 10, the UCLG ASPAC Executive Bureau Meeting was held both online and offline in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Xi'an Municipal People's Government and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific. Themed "Join hands to build robust, green and balanced cities for the future", the conference had in-depth discussions on how to build a new type of cooperative partnership for future development.

Participating in the online opening ceremony and delivering speeches were Lin Songtian, president of the CPAFFC; Li Mingyuan, UCLG co-president and mayor of Xi'an; Ashok Kumar Byanju Shrestha, president of UCLG ASPAC; and Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi, secretary-general of UCLG ASPAC. More than 300 people attended the opening ceremony via video link, including representatives of 28 Chinese member cities of UCLG, experts and scholars in relevant fields



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian attends and delivers a video speech.

and representatives of member cities and local organizations from more than 20 countries, including the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and New Zealand.

Lin said in his speech that the Asia-Pacific region is the benchmark

of global peace and stability and a promising land of cooperation and development. For decades, the region has maintained overall stability and enjoyed prosperous regional cooperation, forming a good environment featuring peaceful co-existence and win-win cooperation

and making itself the most vibrant and promising region in the world.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Lin said, injected strong momentum into regional cooperation and development and highlighted its incredibly bright future.

Lin noted that China, as an old civilization and the world's largest developing country, has fulfilled its solemn political promise to lift all its 1.4 billion people to decent lives. The Chinese government and people won't hesitate in their pursuit of peaceful, civilized and common development.

"With new philosophies, proposals and measures, including the Belt and Road Initiative, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and the initiative to build a community with a shared future for mankind proposed by President Xi Jinping, we have offered the world Chinese solutions to building a world of everlasting peace and common prosperity," Lin said.

Lin said China has demonstrated many times that it is dedicated to win-win cooperation, common development with other countries and the well-being of people all over the world, not following the old zero-sum approach that emphasizes one's own gain at the expense of others.

Lin said prosperity won't be realized without peace and stability, adding that it is the common aspiration

of the world's people to pursue peace, development and cooperation.

"The CPAFFC would like to support the member cities of UCLG ASPAC in mutual respect, equality for win-win results and common development. We will prioritize sci-tech innovation and cooperation to build smart cities, promote collaboration on city transformation to build green cities and cooperate in city governance to build secure cities. Together we can build a community with a shared future in the Asia-Pacific region and enable each and every citizen living here to gain a stronger sense of fulfillment, security and happiness."

Li said cities can serve as the basic unit to combat risks and challenges and that we can resort to nothing else but regional cooperation to tackle the challenges to our development. Advancing "robust, green and balanced" global development, as a consensus of the international community, holds the key to quick economic recovery, he said.

He also mentioned that in the past year, Xi'an and its counterparts in the UCLG cooperated in successfully hosting the Seven Keys Workshop; initiating two platforms for youth exchanges, which include online Chinese training program for ASPA and scholarship for international students along the routes of the BRI; establishing a tourism committee for this region; and launching the

Local4Action Hub program.

"We are looking forward to deepening exchanges and cooperation between members of UCLG to realize common prosperity," Li said.

Byanju said in his speech that cities in this region should contribute more wisdom and effort in promoting sustainable urban development in the spirit of mutually beneficial cooperation and common prosperity. Faced with challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, all parties concerned should strengthen their city development plans, rise to the common challenges of climate change and public health crises to build a better living environment.

CPAFFC Vice-President Yan Dong attended the general assembly of the Executive Bureau Meeting and made a work report on behalf of the CPAFFC during the work conference. He introduced the innovative measures and fruitful results made by the CPAFFC in the past year in the fields of bilateral and multilateral city-to-city diplomacy.

The representatives present at the meeting thought highly of the meeting, actively offered their suggestions and discussed possible ways in the future to facilitate friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation. With extensive consensus reached, all attendees expect to deepen exchanges and collaboration to build a better future for the Asia-Pacific region. ■

A new chapter in China-Japan friendship-city cooperation

Shen Haiting

On July 21, a video conference was held in Jinan, Shandong province, to mark the 40th anniversary of friendship-city relations between the province and Japan's Yamaguchi prefecture.

Li Ganjie, secretary of the Communist Party of China's Shandong Provincial Committee and chairman of the Standing Committee of the Shandong People's Congress; Kong Xuanyou, Chinese ambassador to Japan; Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries; Tsugumasa Muraoka, governor of Yamaguchi; Uichiro Niwa, president of the Japan China Friendship Association; and Hideo Tarumi, Japanese ambassador to China, attended the event — Shandong-Japan Friendship-City Exchange Week — and delivered video addresses.

In his speech, Li Ganjie welcomed the Chinese and Japanese participants and thanked them for their support of his province's economic and social development and opening-up. He recalled the achievements of exchanges and cooperation between Shandong and Yamaguchi over the past 40 years and detailed the key accomplishments of high-quality development in Shandong.



CPAFFC President Lin Songtian makes a video speech to mark the friendship-city relations between Shandong and Yamaguchi.

He said that friendship-city exchanges and people-to-people friendship are a fine tradition and precious wealth in China-Japan relations. Shandong province will cultivate a friendship-city demonstration field of mutual trust, build a friendship-city cooperation belt of high-quality development and forge a future-oriented alliance of friendship-city youth exchanges.

He told the Japanese friends that Shandong is willing to share development opportunities with

Yamaguchi, jointly tackle challenges, enrich cooperation, do more practical work to promote friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two places and inject vitality into the healthy and stable development of China-Japan relations.

The CPAFFC's Lin congratulated Shandong and Yamaguchi in his video speech on the 40th anniversary of friendship-city relations and acknowledged the fruitful outcomes of exchanges and cooperation between

the two sides. He noted that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the normalization of China-Japan relations. In 1972, the older generation of leaders of the two countries, with superb political wisdom and foresight, made a correct decision in line with the trend of the times and normalized China-Japan diplomatic relations.

Over the past five decades, Lin said, friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields have developed in an all-around way, bringing huge dividends of peaceful development to the two peoples. China and Japan have long been a development community with deeply intertwined interests, he said.

Lin noted that the 21st century is the century of Asia.

The “rise of the East and decline of the West” has become a major trend in the evolution of the world pattern, and global governance has entered the “Asian moment”, he said. As the second- and third-largest economies in the world, China and Japan have the ability and responsibility to jointly safeguard peace and stability and promote common development in Asia and the world at large.

Lin noted that China and Japan are geographically close and culturally connected, and both belong to the Confucian cultural circle. The thoughts of harmony, peace, pulling together for a common cause, the world being one family and putting people first are the values shared by the Chinese and Japanese people, the precious wealth of China-Japan relations and the Eastern values of both countries.

Lin put forward proposals to promote friendship-city exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries. He hoped that people of vision from all walks of life in both countries would revisit their original aspiration to normalize diplomatic ties, deepen people-to-people and cultural exchanges, explore new highlights in mutually beneficial cooperation, promote win-win cooperation for common development, carry forward the shared Eastern values and consolidate public opinion and the social foundation of both countries.

Tsugumasa Muraoka recalled that in 1982, Yamaguchi prefecture and Shandong province established friendship-city relations. Since then, he said, as close cooperative partners, the two sides have carried out exchanges and cooperation in a wide range of fields and achieved fruitful results.

“Looking to the future, Yamaguchi is willing to take the 40th anniversary as an opportunity and stay true to its original aspiration,” he said. “Yamaguchi will further deepen exchanges and cooperation in economy, environment, culture, education and human resources, and particularly enhance youth exchanges in the post-pandemic era. Yamaguchi will take local exchanges and cooperation to a new level and open up a bright future for Japan-China relations.”

Kong Xuanyou said that local exchanges are an important force boosting the development of China-Japan relations. The two countries should carry forward the fine tradition of promoting the central government’s coop-

eration through local exchanges, maintain the confidence in friendship, consolidate and strengthen the foundation of friendly cooperation and develop the cause of China-Japan friendship. He said he looked forward to continued exchanges and cooperation between Shandong and Yamaguchi and hoped to see more friends from all walks of life in China and Japan make new and greater contributions to the improvement and development of China-Japan relations.

Hideo Tarumi said local government exchanges are crucial to Japan-China relations. Both Yamaguchi prefecture and Shandong province have a long history and splendid culture, and many people of vision in Japan are deeply influenced by Confucianism.

“I am full of expectations for exchanges between the two sides and would like to actively promote local exchanges, cooperation and the continuous development of Japan-China relations,” he said.

During the exchange week, Shandong and Yamaguchi were scheduled to sign two memorandums on deepening friendship-city relations, enhancing exchanges and cooperation and strengthening exchanges with a cultural relics exhibition. A number of activities were planned, including a photo exhibition to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of China-Japan diplomatic relations, exchange meetings on friendship-city environmental protection and health industry cooperation and an online music concert for college students, among others. ■

Ianto Kaneti: Flower of love bloomed in wartime

He Yan

Jose Kaneti returned to his 1943 birthplace — Tuyunguan in Guiyang, Guizhou province, China. He was just 2 years old when he left China with them.

Seven decades later, in 2015, as a gray-haired old man, he returned again with his wife, Snezhanka Bakalova, and his two daughters, Dianna and Marina, who had traveled to join them with his grandson, Anton.

Jose's father, Dr Ianto Kaneti, was a Bulgarian who served as one of the leaders of the International Medical Team for Aid to China. His mother, Zhang Sunfen, was Chinese. She served as a medical instructor for the Chinese Red Cross medical relief corps headquartered in Tuyunguan. In the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, the two young people from different countries met in Tuyunguan and fell in love.

Jose Kaneti had the impression that his parents were kindhearted, optimistic and easygoing. However, they seldom talked with family members about their experience in China.

Meeting with Soong Ching-ling

Jose had long tried to gain a better understanding of his father, who was

born in February 1910 in Kazanlak, Bulgaria. Ianto Kaneti began working at age 7 at a dairy factory after school to help support his poor family. In 1935, he received a bachelor's degree in medicine at Sofia University under a work-study program. In 1936, he was hired as a national doctor.

That same year, Francisco Franco and his military administration of Spain betrayed the republican government, arousing anger among the people in Europe and America. In 1937, the elder Kaneti quit his high-salary job, joined the International Brigades and the Communist Party in Spain after crossing the Pyrenees from France. At the end of 1938, he and other survivors retreated to France, but he was then detained in the Gurs camp.

"Justice doesn't always have the upper hand, and violence may override the spirit of righteousness," Ianto Kaneti said.

In 1939, the Association of British Medical Aid to China came to the Gurs camp to recruit medical staff. Kaneti applied to join the International Medical Team for Aid to China and went to the United Kingdom to acquire medical equipment for China, together with Dr Herbert Baer of Germany, Dr

David Iancu of Romania and Dr Walter Freudmann of Austria. On Aug. 5, 1939, they boarded the ship Aeneas in Liverpool and headed for China.

Their first port of call was Marseille, France, where they were joined by another 10 medical personnel of the International Brigades under the leadership of Polish doctor Szymuel-Moysze Flato. After six weeks, they arrived in Hong Kong and were received by Hilda Selwyn-Clarke, secretary of the China Defense League and representative of the Association of British Medical Aid to China in Hong Kong.

The day before departing for Hanoi, Vietnam, they attended a banquet hosted by Soong Ching-ling, president of the China Defense League. Dr Walter Freudmann recalled:

"She didn't live in the rich downtown area. Across many narrow and crowded valleys, we walked a long way to arrive at her residence, a simple and narrow house.

"Her behaviors, as simple as her residence, were unsullied from the clamorous Hong Kong. Her incomparable elegance revealed to us the true greatness of humanity. Her energy, power of action and spirit of devotion were reflected in her conversations with

others and were most needed qualities in our effort to help China.

“It was a beautiful night. We were treated to Chinese cuisine. We could feel strongly Madame Sun Yat-sen’s interest in us and her vitality. Her concern with the refugees who were mired in a horrible plight could be read here and there between the lines. Her suspicions and criticism about the administration of her brother-in-law, Chiang Kai-shek, were quite obvious.

“She suggested with particular emphasis that all the foreign doctors should stay and play a better role in middle China, instead of being confined to the northwestern area. The two choices were decisively different. What she said was quite worth consideration.

“At almost the end of the banquet before our leaving, we noticed that the hostess whispered to Hilda Selwyn-Clarke, the honorary secretary of the China Defense League. Clarke seemed astonished and hesitated. She didn’t speak until the hostess repeated her wish. Clarke then told the guests: ‘Madame Sun Yat-sen would like to invite you, dear friends, to sing the Internationale to end this beautiful night.’

“We were amazed by the request. After a long while of silence, we finally began the chorus in different languages. In fact, it was the first time for us to sing this song, aimed at fighting for human liberation, after leaving the Gurs camp in France. We might have sung off-key here and there, but this outstanding female leader of China, which has the largest population in the world, listened carefully with utmost inner concern, touching us a lot.”

At parting, Soong Ching-ling presented a bouquet of flowers to the visi-

tors.

Lovers destined to unite

Tuyuguan lies in a mountainous area seven miles from Guiyang. Acacia and wild azaleas cover the mountains. At that time, rows of thatched cottages on the hillsides on both sides of the road made up the humble offices, wards and classrooms of the Red Cross Society of China.

The foreign doctors applied to work in the CPC-liberated area on their arrival at Tuyuguan. Robert Kho-Seng Lim, head of the Medical Relief Corps of the Red Cross Society of China, declined directly and clearly, but comforted them to wait for a better opportunity.

Jose Kaneti remembered that his father always talked in gentle tones about Zhou Enlai, or Chou En-lai as was known at the time. In the autumn of 1942, the elder Kaneti and Dr Szmuel-Moysze Flato met with Zhou in Chongqing. Considering the big picture of the war, Zhou hoped that they could stay in a Kuomintang-ruled area. Kaneti accepted the suggestion. He served first as instructor of health services and then as captain of the Third Squadron to lead the medical relief corps to the frontiers of Changsha and Pingjiang in Hunan province.

During their stay in Tuyuguan, they lived in a warehouse and slept on camp beds, with rats scuttling around and biting them occasionally. They ate their meals in the same canteen as the Chinese. At first, they found it difficult to eat unpolished rice since they were accustomed to eating bread. But they soon got used to the Chinese food. As for Kaneti, he acquired a particular

taste for stinky tofu.

It was then that a woman with a petite figure drew Kaneti’s attention. Her name was Zhang Sunfen. In charge of training nurses, Zhang won a lot of respect from her students. She was born into a scholarly family in Peking and majored in nursing at Yenching University. The slim, short girl had come to Guizhou via Hong Kong and Vietnam for one simple reason: “Everyone has a share of responsibility for the fate of his or her country. We don’t want to be slaves of a foreign power.”

Zhang was inducted into the Eighth Squadron as medical inspector and then left for Conghua, Guangzhou, under the leadership of Dr Yi Baolin from Hong Kong, to build field hospitals. At the end of 1940, she returned to her squadron in Tuyuguan.

Zhang, at a young age, was good at singing and dancing and could speak fluent English. One day, she led the medical staff in song and suddenly caught a male voice that was off-key. That man happened to be Kaneti. Zhang corrected him and said: “Maybe I should teach you Chinese first and then you can sing well.”

After that, Kaneti often came to Zhang to learn Chinese. Once he sang the Song of Young Communist Leaguers in Russian. When singing “Good-bye mom! Don’t be grieved! Don’t be sad!” both of them shed tears. Kaneti asked Zhang: “Where is your mom?” Zhang replied: “She is in fallen Peking. How about yours?” Kaneti answered: “Mine is in Europe, which is now under the rule of German fascists.” They then sank into silence. It was after a long while before they said, coincidentally: “We can’t reunite with our moth-

ers until we defeat fascism.”

The two hearts drew closer as time went on. They often went downtown to watch Peking Opera and enjoy Chinese cuisine. On a serene night, they strolled along a forest trail, bathed in soft moonlight, and Kaneti suddenly asked Zhang: “Would you like to come to Europe with me?” Zhang understood what the suggestion meant. Meeting his sincere and expectant eyes, she answered in the affirmative without hesitation.

In 1942, they married in Tuyunguan. In 1943, when Zhang gave birth to her first son, Jose Kaneti, Zhou Meiyu, head of the nursing department, asked someone to bring a hen to her for better nourishment after the delivery. She was deeply touched and said emotionally decades later: “Chickens were really rare in Tuyunguan at that time. I wondered from where she managed to get the hen!”

Bloody battle in Tengchong

In 1943, Kaneti was assigned to the 10th Brigade in Yunnan, serving as the medical captain of the 012 team and was assigned to the 54th Army in Anning.

In May 1944, the Yunnan-Burma counteroffensive began. The 54th Army left Anning and crossed the Nujiang River on the night of May 11, together with the 53rd Army. The 54th Army was in charge of attacking enemies north of Zhaigongfang. Kaneti followed with his team and set up a center to wrap the wounds of officers and men. The more seriously wounded would be transferred to a field hospital. It was raining heavily on Gaoligong Mountain. Kaneti was soaked and cov-

ered with soldiers’ blood.

On the morning of July 23, the 53rd and 54th armies advanced to the periphery of Tengchong and attacked Laifengshan, the main Japanese stronghold. After three days of bloody battle and great sacrifice, they finally occupied the strategic location and laid siege to Tengchong. Kaneti led the team over northern Zhaigongfang and came to the field hospital in a village at the foot of Laifengshan Mountain. After extremely tough battles, the number of injuries was great, and blood stained the ground of the hospital.

The troops pounded the city of Tengchong on Aug 2, and the Japanese defended the city wall desperately. Many soldiers on the Chinese side were killed or wounded. The Chinese troops dug tunnels, bombed the city walls and finally occupied several corners of the city. Divisions of the 54th Army rushed into the city and engaged in fierce street battles with the Japanese.

In the deafening cannon fire, Kaneti led his team to work around the clock to save the injured. Urgently needed medicines were shipped by air. When a patient arrived, the medical staff immediately poured one gram of sulfa powder into his mouth, and then injected painkillers and tetanus antitoxin. Kaneti checked the wound to see if surgery was needed. Thanks to strict medical procedures, there was not a single case of tetanus or gangrene.

After more than a month of desperate and bloody battles, the Chinese side won the Battle of Tengchong on Sept 14. The people there, having been besieged by the enemy for nearly three years, cheered when the 54th Army arrived. “It was as if prisoners in a cage

were finally freed,” Kaneti said. “Yes, we were finally there to liberate them.”

Afterward, the 54th and 53rd armies retook Longling and Mangshi and joined the India-stationed Chinese troops in Wanding. Kaneti led his team along the same route. During tense rescue maneuvers, news came of Allied forces landing in Normandy, France. Kaneti said excitedly to the wounded: “Listen, guys, victory is coming! Please try your best to recover soon!”

In August 1945, Kaneti took his wife and their eldest son, Jose, back to Bulgaria via the Soviet Union. The following year, the couple had their second child and named him Baohua in Chinese, which means safeguarding China. Jose Kaneti remembered his father saying that his name and his younger brother’s name mean, respectively, “friendship between Bulgaria and China” and “safeguarding China”. He hoped his sons would never forget that they were Bulgarian Chinese.

In the city of Sofia, Kaneti first served as head of the First Army health department. In 1953, considering the political situation, he gave up his official position and qualified as an expert in radiology. From then on, he worked as a professor in the medical school until his retirement.

Chinese teaching in Rose Kingdom

Jose’s mother, Zhang Sunfen, settled in Bulgaria with her husband and adjusted to the new country. At first, she worked in a municipal hospital in Sofia. She helped receive a Chinese delegation and translated for them often in her spare time.

Jose Kaneti recalled that his mother also participated in prepara-

tions for the establishment of the Chinese embassy in Bulgaria and served as a translator. In the 1950s, a Chinese professor came to Sofia University to teach Chinese, and Zhang Sunfen became his assistant. Before retirement, Zhang taught Chinese at the university, contributing to the spread of Chinese culture in Bulgaria. Currently, the Confucius Institute at the University of Sofia is large and active. It is run by her students.

After the establishment of diplomatic relations between Bulgaria and China, the two countries began to exchange students. In 1952, Peking University professor Zhu Dexi was dispatched by the Chinese government to teach Chinese at the University of Sofia. This was the earliest Chinese language class set up by China in Eastern Europe.

Zhang was employed as a translator for the class. On the first day of the class, it caused a sensation at the university, and the lecture hall was filled to capacity with some 200 people. The students were attracted by the charm of the Chinese language, and many chose it as an optional course. Without ready-made textbooks, the two teachers sacrificed much of their time off to compile the first Bulgarian-annotated Chinese textbook. The job was done in a short period and the book was published in 1954.

Professor Zhu returned to China after two years of teaching, leaving Zhang to take up the teaching task alone. She presented more than 20 classes a week. In the following years, influenced by the situation in Eastern Europe, Chinese language teaching in Bulgaria experienced many twists

and turns, but she persisted in teaching without interruption.

In addition to teaching, Zhang published many Chinese textbooks and readers in 1958, 1972 and 1980. The Chinese characters in the textbooks were written by her in hand-carved elegant and neat fonts on waxed paper; she also typed the Bulgarian annotations herself. She often worked at a desk late at night. When her little granddaughter woke up in the middle of night, the child would ask curiously: "Grandma, when are you going to bed? Why are you writing and typing day and night?"

In 1969, A Classified Dictionary of Bulgarian-Chinese, compiled by Zhang Sunfen, was published by Sophia University Press. The dictionary filled the gap in Bulgaria's teaching of Oriental language and became a milestone in the development of Sinology in Bulgaria. Then, in 1978, she wrote and published the reference book Chinese-Bulgarian Dictionary of Commonly Used Vocabulary.

Zhang devoted herself to teaching for 30 years, cultivating more than 400 experts of Chinese language and laying the foundation for Sinology research in Bulgaria. In 2004, she was awarded the Order of the Blue Ribbon, the highest honor in Bulgarian educational circles.

Jose Kaneti said affectionately: "Neither me nor my brother could learn Chinese well. I am only able to understand and speak simple sentences of Chinese and write simple Chinese characters such as the character da (big). However, my mother taught me to work hard, so my career was fairly successful. As a professor of chemistry, I continue working, even after retire-

ment."

In 1983, Kaneti and his wife visited China, and gathered with old friends, including Wang Bingnan, in Beijing. He donated a batch of historical photos from the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression to the National Museum of China. On his 75th birthday, the Bulgarian government awarded him the Order of the Republic. In 1989, the couple paid another visit to China. Their eldest son Jose Kaneti accompanied them on a visit to Tuyunguan. It was the first time Jose had returned to his birthplace.

At the end of August 2015, on the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, Jose Kaneti brought his family to Tuyunguan to participate in commemorative activities presented by the International Medical Team for Aid to China. His youngest daughter, Marina, could speak Chinese and lived in the United States with her elder sister, Diana. His grandson Anton was interested in Chinese culture and studied at Nanjing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Twenty-six years have passed since Jose Kaneti first returned to his birthplace. When he visited Tuyunguan again, he could still remember his mother's words before her death: "Sixty years of living overseas can't change my true character. I have always been proud of being Chinese."

Ianto Kaneti and Zhang Sunfen walked hand-in-hand through the ups and downs of life and loved each other until the end. Their flower of love, which blossomed in the midst of raging war, has yielded rich fruit. The love of China will continue in this foreign family. ■