

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

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People-to-people



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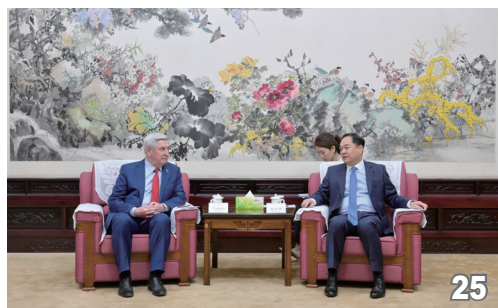
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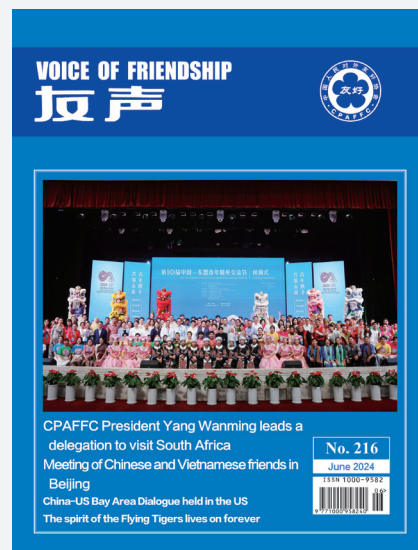
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Published in Chinese
and English

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

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ISSN 1000-9582 CN11-1234/D

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming leads a delegation to visit South Africa

Department of Asian & African Affairs

At the invitation of the Association for the South Africa-China People's Friendship Association (SACPFA), Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), led a delegation to visit South Africa from March 15 to 19.

Yang met with Nomvula Mokonyane, first deputy secretary-general of the African National Congress (ANC) and honorary president of the SACPFA; Dr. Nikosazana Dlamini-Zuma, minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities; Cedric Thomas Frolick, chairperson of the National Assembly House and honorary president of the SACPFA; Alvin Botes, deputy minister of the International Relations and Cooperation; Manne Dipico, president of the SACPFA; and Flora Maboja-Boltman, vice-president of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

Li Zhigang, charge d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in South Africa, and You Wenzhe, consul general in Cape Town, attended relevant activities.

Yang made positive comments on



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Nomvula Mokonyane, first deputy secretary-general of the African National Congress (ANC) and honorary president of the SACPFA.

China-South Africa relations, saying that since the establishment of diplomatic relations 26 years ago, bilateral relations have achieved leapfrog development and the special friendship of “comrades plus brothers” between

China and South Africa has continued to deepen.

Yang said that in August last year, President Xi Jinping paid his fourth state visit to South Africa, during which he had in-depth communication with

President Cyril Ramaphosa on bilateral relations and international and regional affairs and reached broad consensus, providing important strategic guidance for the development of China-South Africa relations.

“China and South Africa are both major developing countries and emerging economies. Our relations have gone beyond the bilateral scope and taken on global significance. We are ready to work with the South African side to implement the important consensus reached by the heads of our two countries, continue to support each other on issues of core interests and major concerns, strengthen practical cooperation in various fields, raise the common voice of the Global South on the international stage, and promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind,” said Yang.

Yang introduced the CPAFFC’s work in promoting people-to-people and local exchanges, and friendship-city cooperation between China and South Africa, and thanked the South African communities for attaching great importance to the cause of people-to-people friendship. Yang welcomed the South African National Assembly, local governments, and friendly organizations to attend the Legislators Forum for Friendly Exchanges, the China International Friendship Cities Conference, the Forum on China-Africa Local Government Cooperation, and the celebration of the CPAFFC’s 70th anniversary, in China this year.

Yang pledged that the CPAFFC is willing to work with all parties in



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Manne Dipico, president of the SACPFA.

South Africa to carry forward the traditional friendship, enrich and expand cultural and people-to-people exchanges, strengthen cooperation in various fields, including youth, women, local governments, culture, art and sports; consolidate the social and public support for friendship between the two countries; and help achieve greater development of the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and South Africa in the golden age.

The South African side spoke highly of the traditional friendship between the two countries and the achievements of bilateral cooperation. They thanked the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government for providing long-standing strong support for South Africa’s national develop-

ment, appreciated China’s contribution to safeguarding the interests of developing countries and promoting world peace, and praised the important role played by people-to-people exchanges and local cooperation in promoting the development of South Africa-China relations.

The South African friends expressed their willingness to work together with the CPAFFC to further promote personnel exchanges at all levels and friendly cooperation in various fields, enhance mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples, and ensure that the friendship between South Africa and China is passed down through generations, thus creating an even brighter future for bilateral relations. ■

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming leads a delegation to visit Ethiopia

Department of Asian & African Affairs

From March 20 to 21, Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), led a delegation to visit Ethiopia.

Yang met with Adem Farah Ibrahim, vice-president and head of the Prosperity Party Main Office; Jemalu Jember, deputy mayor of Addis Ababa; and Albert M. Muchanga, commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission (AUC).

Zhao Zhiyuan, Chinese ambassador to Ethiopia, and He Youlin, chargé d'affaires of the Mission of the People's Republic of China to the African Union, attended relevant activities.

At the meeting with Adem Farah Ibrahim, Yang said that under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, China-Ethiopia relations have maintained a strong momentum of development. In particular, the two countries have upgraded bilateral relations to an all-weather strategic partnership, opening a new chapter in China-Ethiopia traditional friendship.

Yang extended congratulations to Ethiopia on its formal accession to the BRICS cooperation mechanism,



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Adem Farah Ibrahim, vice-president and head of the Prosperity Party Main Office.

saying that the Chinese side looks forward to strengthening cooperation with Ethiopia under the BRICS mechanism so as to make greater contributions to promoting world economic growth, improving global governance, and advancing the democratization of international relations.

Yang pledged that the CPAFFC is willing to work with the Ethiopian side

to implement the important consensus reached by the heads of the two countries, continuously strengthen local and people-to-people friendly exchanges and cooperation, and enrich the connotations of the China-Ethiopia all-weather strategic partnership.

Vice-President Ibrahim commended the development of bilateral relations and the great achievements

made by the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, saying that he will continue to firmly adhere to the one-China principle and hopes to learn from China's experience in party and state governance, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields, and achieve common development and prosperity.

He recalled his successful visit to China last year, at the invitation of the CPAFFC, and appreciated the association's unremitting efforts in promoting friendly exchanges at the local and people-to-people levels. He looked forward to working with the CPAFFC to further promote people-to-people exchanges, strengthen cooperation between friendship cities, enhance mutual understanding between the two peoples, and contribute to the greater development of the China-Ethiopia all-weather strategic partnership.

When meeting with Albert M. Muchanga, Yang commended the traditional friendship between China and Africa and the practical cooperation achievements in various fields. He congratulated the African Union (AU) on becoming a member of the G20, appreciated its important role in coordinating regional hotspot issues and enhancing Africa's influence in international affairs, and thanked the AU for its contributions to promoting the construction of a high-level China-Africa community with a shared future.

Yang introduced the CPAFFC's work in promoting China-Africa people-to-people exchanges and cooperation between friendship cities, and expressed willingness to work with the AU and

African friendship organizations to promote exchanges and mutual learning, foster closer ties between our peoples, and strengthen public support for China-Africa friendship.

Commissioner Muchanga recalled the glorious development of China-Africa friendly relations, thanked the Chinese side for its valuable support in Africa's struggle for national independence, liberation, and development, and praised the fruitful achievements of China-Africa cooperation under the framework of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

He welcomed China's Initiative to Support Africa's Industrialization, China's Plan to Help Africa's Agricultural Modernization, and the China-Africa

Personnel Training Cooperation Plan. He fully recognized the CPAFFC's positive role in enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the Chinese and African peoples over the past seven decades since its establishment, and expressed willingness to strengthen cooperation with the association, carry forward the traditional friendship between China and Africa, enhance mutual understanding and amity between the two peoples, and promote the expansion of practical cooperation.

Yang also had in-depth exchanges with Jemalu Jember, deputy mayor of Addis Ababa, on strengthening practical cooperation through friendship-city channels. ■



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Albert M. Muchanga, commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission.

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming leads a delegation to visit Kenya

Department of Asian & African Affairs

At the invitation of the China-Africa Friendship Association-Kenya Chapter (CAFA-K), Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), led a delegation to visit Kenya from March 21 to 23.

Yang met with Moses Wetangula, speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya; Musalia Mudavadi, prime cabinet secretary and foreign and diaspora affairs minister; Michael Munyao, chairman of the CAFA-K; and Ahmed Abdullahi, vice-chairperson of the Council of Governors and governor of Wajir county.

Zhou Pingjian, Chinese ambassador to Kenya, attended relevant activities.

Yang made positive comments on China-Kenya relations, saying that since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have been cooperating side by side and developing hand in hand, becoming

good friends who trust each other and good partners for win-win cooperation. In recent years in particular, the two countries have witnessed frequent high-level exchanges, which have deepened political mutual trust and promoted fruitful cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative. The two countries are at the forefront of China-Africa cooperation, which has not only brought benefits to the two peoples, but also set an example for China-Africa cooperation.

Yang said that not long ago, President Xi Jinping and President William Samoei Ruto reached important consensus on jointly building an even closer China-Kenya community with a shared future in the new era, charting the course for the development of bilateral relations. China views bilateral relations from a strategic and long-term perspective and is willing to work with Kenya to implement the important consensus and promote the greater development of the

China-Kenya comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.

Yang introduced the CPAFFC's work in promoting people-to-people exchanges and local cooperation between China and Kenya, recalled the history of friendly exchanges with the Kenyan National Assembly, the Council of Governors, and the CAFA-K. He expressed willingness to give full play to the advantages of non-official circles and work with Kenyan friends from all walks of life to promote exchanges among parliamentarians and young people of the two countries.

Yang pledged that the CPAFFC will promote bilateral cooperation in areas such as local cooperation, economy and trade, cultural and people-to-people exchanges and capacity building; enhance mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples; and lay a solid foundation of public support for the deepening of the China-Kenya

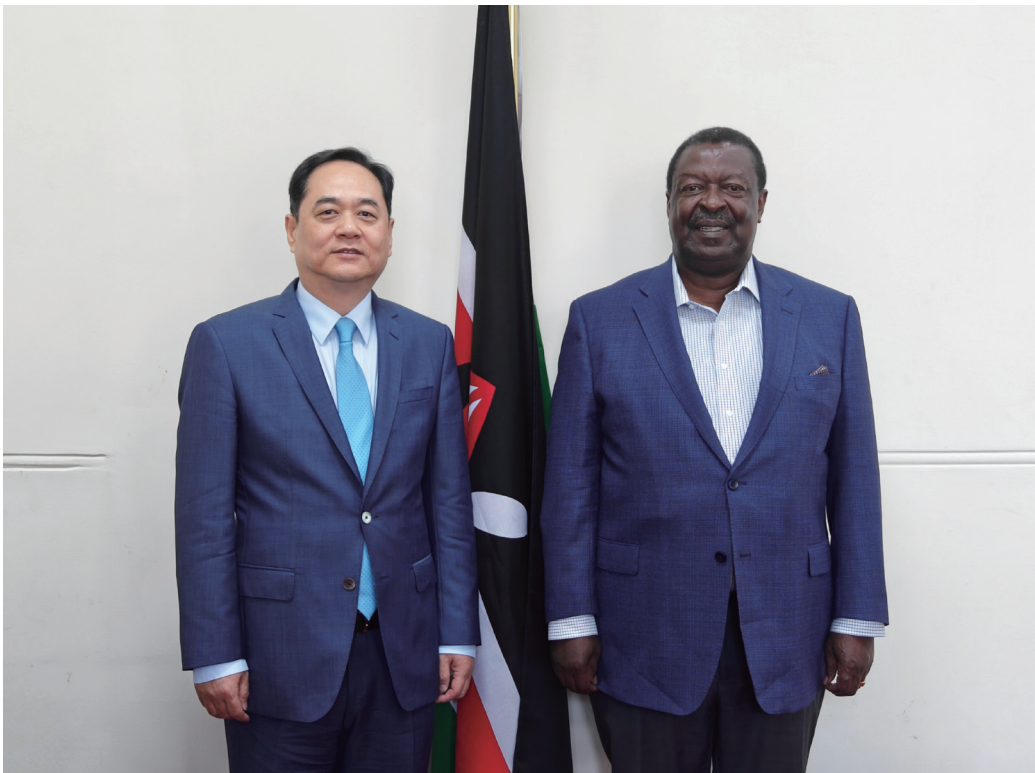
comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.

The Kenyan side highly commended the traditional friendship and achievements in the development of bilateral relations, thanking China for its valuable support and selfless assistance in Kenya's struggle for national independence and liberation, and in its pursuit of economic and social development. The hosts spoke highly of the high-quality cooperation

between the two countries under the Belt and Road Initiative, and fully recognized the important role of people-to-people and local exchanges in promoting the development of bilateral relations.

The Kenyan side said that Kenya will continue to unswervingly adhere to the one-China principle, and the country hopes to learn from China's successful development experience, and expects China to play a greater role in

supporting relevant regions in bridging differences, resolving disputes, and promoting world peace and stability. The Kenyan side will make joint efforts with the CPAFFC to further strengthen people-to-people communication and friendship-city exchanges, promote the expansion of practical cooperation and propel the steady and sustainable development of the China-Kenya comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership. ■



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Musalia Mudavadi, prime cabinet secretary and foreign and diaspora affairs minister of Kenya.

Meeting of Chinese and Vietnamese friends in Beijing

Department of East Asian Affairs

On April 9, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations (VUFO), jointly held a meeting of Chinese and Vietnamese friends in Beijing.

Vuong Dinh Hue, chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam, attended and addressed the event.

Wang Dongming, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China; Yang Wanming, president of the CPAFFC; and Phan Anh Son, president of the VUFO attended the event, together with about 200 people from all walks of life from China and Vietnam. These included family members of the Military Advisory Committee to Aid Vietnam Against France and the United States, Chinese university students in Beijing, representatives of the visiting Vietnamese delegation, diplomats from the Vietnamese Embassy in China,

Vietnamese students in China, entrepreneurs, etc.

Vuong Dinh Hue extended greetings to the comrades of the two countries attending the event, saying that the Chinese and Vietnamese people enjoy a time-honored traditional friendship, and Vietnam always remembers and appreciates China's valuable support in its revolution, struggle for national independence, and current national development.

In recent years, Vuong Dinh Hue said, bilateral relations between the two countries and two parties have been developing in a comprehensive and rapid way. Last year in particular, the top leaders of the two parties jointly announced the establishment of the Vietnam-China community with a shared future of strategic significance, which has pushed the bilateral relations into a new stage of development.

He expressed the hope that friendship organizations of the two coun-

tries will actively implement the high-level consensus, continue to strengthen people-to-people exchanges, hold traditional brand activities, tell friendship stories well, and further build a consensus between the two peoples on developing bilateral friendly relations. All this will play a positive role in promoting Vietnam-China friendship from generation to generation.

Yang Wanming said that under the strategic guidance of General Secretary Xi Jinping and General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, China-Vietnam relations have been elevated to a community with a shared future of strategic significance, which has become an important new milestone in the history of relations between the two parties and two countries. The CPAFFC is willing to work with Vietnamese friendship organizations and friends to implement the consensus reached by the top leaders of the two parties, continue the traditional friendship, consolidate the

public foundation, and be the inheritors of China-Vietnam friendship, builders of the socialist cause, and promoters of the China-Vietnam community with a shared future.

Phan Anh Son said that under the guidance of the new positioning of bilateral relations determined by the leaders of the two countries, the VUFO will continue to work with the CPAFFC to fully implement the consensus reached

by the two leaders, promote cooperation in various fields such as culture, tourism, education, local and youth exchanges, and contribute to the building of a Vietnam-China community with a shared future of strategic significance.

At the meeting, Yu Shuhui, a former member of the medical staff of Nanxishan Hospital, and Nguyen Thi Kim Hoa, a Vietnamese student in China, shared stories about their dedi-

cation to the cause of China-Vietnam friendship, saying that they will carry forward the “comrades plus brothers” friendship between China and Vietnam, and contribute to the enduring friendship between the two peoples.

Artists and youth representatives from both countries performed cultural and artistic shows with Chinese and Vietnamese characteristics in a warm and friendly atmosphere. ■



A meeting of Chinese and Vietnamese friends held in Beijing on April 9.

Japanese friendship groups welcome CPAFFC President Yang Wanming

Department of East Asian Affairs

At the invitation of seven Japan-China friendship groups, Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), began a visit to Japan on April 10.

On April 11, a welcome luncheon was jointly held in Tokyo by the Japanese friendship groups, attended by Noda Takeshi, chairman of the Japan-China Society (JCS); Yoda Tatsumi, vice-chairman of the JSC; Hashimoto Itsuo, vice-president of the Japan-China Friendship Association; Miyamoto Yuji, acting president of the Japan-China Friendship Center; Shin Yoshiaki, vice-president of the Association for the Promotion of International Trade, Japan (JAPIT); Kurihara Komaki, vice-president of the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association; and Sasaki Nobuhiko, chairman of the Japan-China Economic Association.

The two sides had in-depth

exchanges on current China-Japan relations, people-to-people exchanges and cooperation, and other topics of common interest.

Yang Wanming thanked the seven Japan-China friendship groups for inviting him to Japan. He said that he looked forward to extensive contacts and exchanges with representatives from Japan's political, economic, and cultural sectors, as well as young people, to strengthen faith in friendship, build up a friendly consensus, take friendly actions, and work together for a friendly future.

Yang expressed appreciation for the Japanese friendship groups, who have long been at the forefront of China-Japan friendship and made valuable contributions to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship, deepening friendly exchanges and cooperation in various fields, and promoting the healthy and stable

development of China-Japan relations. In particular, when bilateral relations encounter setbacks and difficulties, they always adhere to their faith in friendship, overcome difficulties, and seek to break the deadlocks to steer the bilateral relations in the right direction to meet the interests of the two peoples.

Yang said the current bilateral relations are in a critical period of improvement and development. The CPAFFC is willing to join hands with all Japanese friendship groups, and guided by the important consensus reached by President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at their meeting in San Francisco, strengthen faith and cooperation; consolidate public opinion; work as a guardian, promoter, and successor of China-Japan friendship; and contribute unofficial wisdom and strength to the development of constructive and stable China-Japan relations that meet the

requirements of the new era.

Representatives of the Japanese friendship groups warmly welcomed President Yang's delegation, saying that since the meeting between the leaders of the two countries in San Francisco last November, various kinds of exchanges between the two sides have become increasingly active and shown a new momentum of development. The delegation's visit to Japan was timely and will surely accelerate the resumption of people-to-people exchanges and cooperation in various fields.

They said that the Japanese people are willing to work with the Chinese side to inherit and carry forward the friendly faith of the older generations of the two countries, seize the opportunities, continue to deepen Japan-China cultural exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation in the new era, vigorously carry out youth exchanges, enhance mutual understanding and friendly feelings between the two peoples, and push for the continuous improvement and development of Japan-China relations.

Yang also met respectively with Harada Minoru, president of the Soka Gakkai, and Irie Kan, vice-president of the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association, for in-depth exchanges on strengthening bilateral cultural and youth exchanges, enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples, and consolidating public support for China-Japan friendship.

Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the CPAFFC, attended the above activities. ■



Chinese visitors and representatives of the Japanese friendship groups pose for a group photo.

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets JCFPU Chairman Toshihiro Nikai

Department of East Asian Affairs

On April 11, Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), met with Toshihiro Nikai, chairman of the Japan-China Friendship Parliamentarians' Union (JCFPU), in Tokyo, and had in-depth exchanges with leaders of the Union on the current state of China-Japan relations, bilateral exchanges and cooperation, and other topics of common interest.

Twenty representatives from various parties of the JCFPU attended the meeting, including Natsuo Yamaguchi, adviser of the JCFPU and chief representative of Komeito; Mizuho Fukushima, head of the Social Democratic Party; Kazuo Shii, vice-president of the JCFPU and former chairman of the Japanese Communist Party; Motohisa Furukawa, vice-president of the JCFPU and representative of the Democratic

Party for the People; Shoichi Kondo, secretary-general of the JCFPU and representative of the Constitutional Democratic Party; and Hitoshi Asada, senator of the Japan Innovation Party.

Yang Wanming said that the welcome given to the CPAFFC delegation demonstrated that Chairman Toshihiro Nikai and friends from all parties of the JCFPU attach great importance to exchanges and cooperation between the two sides and their determination to improve and develop China-Japan relations. As a Japan-China friendship organization with a long history and an important non-party organization of members of the Japanese Parliament, the JCFPU has long cared about and attached importance to bilateral relations, supported the cause of China-Japan friendship, and played a significant and unique role in promoting the continuous

improvement and development of China-Japan relations.

Yang said both China and Japan are important countries in Asia. To maintain and develop friendly cooperative relations conforms to the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples, and is also conducive to the peace, stability, and prosperity of Asia and the world at large.

At present, Yang said, China-Japan relations are at a critical stage of improvement and development. The two sides should abide by the principles set out in the four political documents between China and Japan, implement the important consensus reached between President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at their meeting in San Francisco, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, expand people-to-people and cultural exchanges, especially among the

youth who will shoulder the future of China-Japan friendship, and push forward the development of the strategic relationship which is of mutual benefit.

Toshihiro Nikai said, “To implement the important outcomes of the meeting between the leaders of the two countries, it is necessary to strengthen exchanges in various fields and solve existing problems through dialogue

and communication. Members of the JCFPU come from different political parties. Although we have different political views, we all attach importance to Japan-China relations and hold a high degree of consensus on carrying out friendly exchanges and cooperation with China. We are willing to work with the Chinese side to expand cultural and youth exchanges and contribute to the sustained improvement and development

of Japan-China relations.”

Natsuo Yamaguchi, Kazuo Shii, Motohisa Furukawa, Mizuho Fukushima, and Hitoshi Asada spoke on behalf of different political parties, and expressed their willingness to continue to promote the development of Japan-China friendly relations.

Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the CPAFFC, attended relevant activities. ■



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Toshihiro Nikai, chairman of the Japan-China Friendship Parliamentarians’ Union (JCFPU), in Tokyo.

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming visits Malaysia

Department of East Asian Affairs

At the invitation of the Malaysia-China Friendship Association (MCFA), Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), led a delegation to visit Malaysia from April 14 to 16.

Yang met with Dato' Sri Tiong King Sing, minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Malaysia and chairman of the Progressive Democratic Party; Datuk Seri Utama Ab Rauf bin Yusoh, chief minister of Malacca; and Dato. Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, president of the MCFA. He attended the China-Malaysia Friendship Forum and a welcome dinner hosted by the MCFA, had in-depth exchanges and reached positive consensus with the Malaysian political, business, and cultural circles on bilateral relations, friendship between the two peoples, and future cooperation.

Yang said that China and Malaysia,



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Dato' Sri Tiong King Sing, minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Malaysia and chairman of the Progressive Democratic Party.

facing each other across the sea, are good neighbors who help each other and good partners for common development.

President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Bin Ibrahim reached important common understandings on

building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future last year, drawing a new blueprint for the development of the China-Malaysia comprehensive strategic partnership in the new era. Under the strategic guidance of the leaders of the two countries, bilateral relations have entered the best period in history.

Yang said, “This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China-Malaysia diplomatic relations and is also the Year of China-Malaysia Friendship. The CPAFFC will take the opportunity to join hands with friends from all walks of life in Malaysia, actively build a platform for cooperation between the two countries at the local level and in fields such as economy, trade, culture, think tanks, and youth exchanges, promote the development of China-Malaysia friendship, enhance the friendly feelings between the two peoples, and consolidate public support for the China-Malaysia community with a shared future.”

When meeting with Dato. Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, Yang highly appreciated the MCFA’s long-term positive contributions to the friendship between the two peoples, saying that friendly and stable China-Malaysia relations have provided a good foundation and conditions for bilateral exchanges and cooperation, and also brought important opportunities for further expanding people-to-people friendship.



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Datuk Seri Utama Ab Rauf bin Yusoh, chief minister of Malacca.

Yang pledged that the CPAFFC is willing to strengthen cooperation with the MCFA and jointly open up a new chapter of China-Malaysia friendship that meets the requirements of the new era.

Dato. Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan said that on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Malaysia-China diplomatic ties and the Year of China-Malaysia Friendship, President Yang’s visit to Malaysia reflects the importance the Chinese side attaches to the bilateral friendship. It will enrich the connotations of people-to-people exchanges and promote the further development of friendly

exchanges and cooperation.

The two sides also reached consensus on making plans for medium- and long-term exchanges and cooperation, and building a comprehensive and institutionalized platform for people-to-people exchanges between the two countries.

At the meeting with Dato’ Sri Tiong King Sing, Yang noted that both China and Malaysia are multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Asian countries. The Chinese people have always held friendly feelings towards Malaysia and the Malaysian people. He expressed the hope that the Malaysian side will continue supporting the China-ASEAN

Year of People-to-People Exchanges. He welcomed more excellent Malaysian art troupes and artists to perform in China, so as to deepen mutual learning between the two countries.

Dato' Sri Tiong King Sing said that Malaysia will take over as the country coordinator for ASEAN-China relations in the second half of this year and the rotating chair of ASEAN next year. Malaysia will fully support China in making a success of the China-ASEAN Year of People-to-people Exchanges, promote exchanges and cooperation in culture, tourism and other fields, and further enhance

the friendly feelings between the two peoples.

When talking with Datuk Seri Utama Ab Rauf bin Yusoh, Yang pointed out that Zheng He, a Chinese navigator of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), made seven voyages to the western seas and visited the Strait of Malacca five times. Malacca is well known in China and has a long history of friendship with China. The CPAFFC is willing to actively support exchanges and cooperation between Malacca and Chinese localities, especially between friendship cities, in areas such as economy, trade, culture,

youth exchanges, and vocational training.

Datuk Seri Utama Ab Rauf bin Yusoh said that China is one of the largest sources of tourists and investment to Malacca. Malacca attaches great importance to local cooperation with China and welcomes more Chinese tourists to visit and more Chinese enterprises to invest and do business in Malacca.

Accompanied by Dato. Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, Yang visited the Zheng He Cultural Center and exchanged views on cultural exchanges between the two sides. ■



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming takes a group photo with friends in Malaysia.

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming leads a delegation to visit Türkiye

Department of Asian & African Affairs

From April 24 to 27, at the invitation of the Türkiye-China Friendship Association (TCFA), Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), led a delegation to visit Türkiye.

Yang met with Zafer Sirakaya, vice-chairman of the AK Party; Akın Çağlar, secretary-general of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality; Tan Ataç, president of the Türkiye-China Women's Association for Culture and Friendship; Hasan Çapan, president of the Türkiye-China Friendship Foundation; Kayhan Ozum, deputy secretary-general of the Union of Municipalities of Türkiye; and Şükrü Koçoğlu, president of the TCFA.

Yang said that in modern times, China and Türkiye have had similar experiences; each achieved national independence through struggle and sacrifice, and has constantly explored an independent development path that suits

its own national conditions. This has given the two countries broad consensus. At present, China and Türkiye are both major developing countries and emerging markets and share extensive common interests.

“Under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, China-Türkiye strategic cooperative relations have maintained a sound momentum of development, and practical cooperation in various fields has made positive progress. Our two sides have actively implemented the important consensus reached by the heads of the two countries, continuously enhanced political mutual trust, and supported each other on issues concerning our core interests and major concerns. The Chinese side is willing to strengthen the synergy of development strategies with the Turkish side, continue to promote practical cooperation in various fields, and expand and enrich the connotation of bi-

lateral strategic cooperative relations,” said Yang.

Yang recalled the long-term cooperation between the CPAFFC and friendship organizations in Türkiye, saying that the Turkish partners that have maintained long-term exchanges and cooperation with the CPAFFC include unofficial organizations, think tanks and local government alliances, covering all areas of people-to-people exchanges. The number of cooperation partners and the number of bilateral friendship cities are second to none in the Middle East, and together they have made positive contributions to friendship between the two peoples.

Yang welcomed Turkish friendship organizations, local governments, and political parties to China this year to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the CPAFFC, to attend the China-Türkiye People-to-people Dialogue on Friendship and Cooperation, the Legislators Forum for Friendly

Exchanges, and the China International Friendship Cities Conference to enhance mutual understanding and promote practical cooperation in various fields.

The Turkish side said that the friendship between Türkiye and China has a long history and the ancient Silk Road has closely linked the two countries. At present, the world is facing many major challenges, and maintaining dialogue and cooperation between Türkiye and China is of great signifi-

cance to regional and world prosperity, stability, and development.

At present, the Turkish participants said, the situation in the Middle East continues to be volatile, and Türkiye expects China to play a greater role in international and regional affairs. They fully recognize the important role of people-to-people and local exchanges in enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples and promoting the de-

velopment of bilateral relations, saying that they will continue to firmly adhere to the one-China principle, join hands with China to resist any deliberate attempt to undermine Türkiye-China relations, and promote bilateral practical cooperation in trade, investment, science and technology, youth exchanges, culture and tourism, so as to maintain the sustainable and sound development of Türkiye-China strategic cooperative relations. ■



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Zafer Sirakaya, vice-chairman of the AK Party.

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming leads a delegation to visit Azerbaijan

Department of European & Asian Affairs

From April 28 to May 1, at the invitation of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation (HAF), Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), led a delegation to visit Azerbaijan. He met with Ilham Heydaroglu Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, Sahiba Gafarova, speaker of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan, and Anar Alakbarov, executive director of the HAF and assistant to President of Azerbaijan.

During the meeting, Yang said that China attaches great importance to developing China-Azerbaijan friendly relations, respects and understands the development path chosen by Azerbaijan according to its national conditions, and appreciates its firm support of the one-China principle and on issues concerning China's core interests. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties 32 years ago, bilateral relations have de-

veloped in a sound and steady manner, political mutual trust has been continuously consolidated, coordination and cooperation in international and regional affairs have become closer, and cooperation in various fields has yielded fruitful results.

Yang noted that President Xi Jinping has established a deep personal friendship with President Ilham Heydaroglu Aliyev. Under the strategic guidance of the heads of state, bilateral relations have entered a more mature and substantive new stage, with parliamentary exchanges, people-to-people interactions, and local cooperation as important components.

Yang pledged that the CPAFFC will implement the important consensus reached by the heads of the two countries, continue to deepen exchanges and cooperation in various fields on the basis of the existing cooperation outcomes, consolidate public support for China-Azerbaijan friendship, and make

new contributions to the high-quality development of bilateral relations.

The Azerbaijani side warmly welcomed Yang and his delegation, unanimously stating that Azerbaijan has always highly valued the development of its relations with China, and that the sound personal friendship between the heads of the two countries has played an important guiding role in the development of bilateral relations.

It was agreed that China and Azerbaijan have been supporting each other on issues concerning core interests such as sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, and that bilateral relations are at their best in history and have reached the level of a strategic partnership. Azerbaijan was one of the first countries to respond to and actively participate in the Belt and Road Initiative. The joint efforts of the two countries in building the Belt and Road Initiative have yielded fruitful results. In particular, the continuous progress in

the construction of the Trans-Caspian international transport corridor will greatly enhance regional connectivity and promote regional economic development.

Yang thanked the HFA for inviting the CPAFFC delegation and stressed that the foundation is a trustworthy partner. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the CPAFFC and the 20th anniversary of the HAF. Over the years, the two sides have worked closely and actively in carrying out various activities, which have enhanced mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples.

In the future, Yang said, the two sides should further strengthen personnel exchanges, establish institutionalized brand projects, promote friendship-city cooperation, deepen exchanges in culture, youth friendship, media, and other fields, and enrich the connotation of bilateral relations. Azerbaijani delegations are welcome to China to attend the celebration of the CPAFFC's 70th anniversary, the Legislators Forum for Friendly Exchanges, and the China International Friendship Cities Conference.

The Azerbaijani side highly commended the important contributions made by the two organizations to the development of bilateral relations, believing that Yang's visit was conducive to the further deepening of China-Azerbaijan relations and cooperation in various fields. Azerbaijan is ready to tap



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Ilham Heydaroglu Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan.

the potential of cooperation at all levels and in all fields, and continuously upgrade bilateral friendly exchanges for more practical cooperation outcomes.

During the visit, Yang and his del-

egation also visited the Heydar Aliyev Center and the Azerbaijan National Assembly Building, and had extensive exchanges with friends from all walks of life in Azerbaijan. ■

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming leads a delegation to visit Germany

Department of European & Asian Affairs

From May 6 to 8, at the invitation of the Hanns Seidel Foundation, Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), led a delegation to visit Germany.

Yang met with Armin Laschet, member of the Bundestag, former governor of North Rhine-Westphalia, and former chairman of the Christlich-Demokratische Union (CDU); Sevim Dağdelen, member of the Bundestag and spokesperson on foreign policy of the Parliamentary Group "Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht"; Otto Schily, former minister of the Federal Ministry of the Interior; Ilse Aigner, president of the Bavarian Parliament; and Eric Beißwenger, minister of state for European and International Affairs of the Bavarian state government. He held talks with Susanne Breit-Keßler, vice-president of the Hanns Seidel Foundation; Jan Philipp Albrecht, president of

the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation; Peter Kreutzberger, president of the Allianz Deutscher China-Gesellschaften (ADCG); Michael Schumann, president of the Bundesverband für Wirtschaftsförderung und Außenwirtschaft (BWA). He also had broad exchanges with people from the German economic and cultural circles.

Zeng Yingru, minister of the Chinese Embassy in Germany, and Tong Defa, Chinese consulate-general in Munich (Germany), attended relevant activities.

During the meeting, Yang said that ten years ago, China and Germany established their all-round strategic partnership. Since then, high-level strategic guidance has become the fundamental guarantee for the development of China-Germany relations, and mutually beneficial economic and trade cooperation has brought tangible benefits to the two peoples.

He added that Chancellor Olaf Scholz had visited China twice and reached a series of important consensus with President Xi Jinping on bilateral and China-EU relations and on topics of common interest. China and Germany are both supporters and beneficiaries of economic globalization and trade liberalization. Solidarity and cooperation will benefit both countries and the two peoples.

Yang stressed that, under the current circumstances, it is all the more important for both countries to uphold the important principles of mutual respect, seeking common ground while shelving differences, and win-win cooperation, and to strengthen dialogue, exchanges, and mutual learning to inject more positive energy into the common development of the two countries and world peace and stability.

Yang praised Bavaria as a model of China-Germany local cooperation, and commended the long-standing

cooperation between German friendship associations and political foundations, and the CPAFFC. He highlighted their active role in promoting pragmatic cooperation with China, facilitating visits by politicians, and fostering local cooperation and people-to-people exchanges.

Yang pledged that the CPAFFC will work with all parties to implement the important consensuses reached by the leaders of the two countries, create more institutionalized exchange platforms, promote local and multi-sector exchanges and cooperation, consolidate the public support for bilateral relations, and continuously

enrich the connotations of the China-Germany comprehensive strategic partnership.

The German side spoke highly of President Xi's state visits to France, Serbia and Hungary, saying that the visits were of great significance to the development of EU-China relations and injected new impetus into the joint efforts of the two sides to tackle global challenges. They said that they have confidence in the overall sound and stable development of Germany-China relations and believed that the economic and trade cooperation between the two countries over the past half century has become the ballast

stone of bilateral relations.

"Germany and China should further strengthen their communication, especially among the young people, and promote cultural exchanges to enhance mutual understanding and eliminate cognitive deficits. We are willing to maintain close exchanges and dialogue with the CPAFFC, build bridges of communication in areas such as local interactions, youth exchanges, media and culture, and contribute to the friendship between the two countries."

The German side also had candid and in-depth exchanges with Yang on current international and regional hot issues. ■



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Armin Laschet, member of the Bundestag, former governor of North Rhine-Westphalia, and former chairman of the Christlich-Demokratische Union (CDU).

China-US Bay Area Dialogue held in the US

Department of American & Oceanian Affairs

On May 29, the China-US Bay Area Dialogue was held in Berkeley, California, the United States. Jointly organized by the Guangdong provincial government, the California state government, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), and the California-China Climate Institute, the dialogue aimed to implement President Xi Jinping's initiative on carrying out exchanges and dialogue between the bay areas of the two countries.

Gavin Newsom, governor of California, said in his speech that the San Francisco Bay Area and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (the Greater Bay Area), as important bay areas in the world, share broad common interests in fields such as climate change, new energy technologies and industries, and sustainable development. He said it is necessary to continue high-level exchanges and dialogues between the bay areas. He

hopes that through full communication and exchanges, the two sides will not only realize the exchange of ideas, but also put the consensus into practice and achieve positive results.

Wang Weizhong, governor of Guangdong, said that building the Greater Bay Area is a major national strategy initiated and promoted by President Xi Jinping. As a pioneer and experimental field of China's reform and opening up, Guangdong has always been at the forefront of the times, and its economic aggregate has ranked first in China for 35 consecutive years.

"This year marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of China-US diplomatic relations, and the 10th anniversary of the friendship-city/state relations between Guangdong and California. I hope the dialogue will encourage more interactions, visits and exchanges between the government agencies, enterprises, universities, chambers of commerce, and associa-

tions of Guangdong and California, and between the Greater Bay Area and the San Francisco Bay Area, and continuously strengthen cooperation in green and low-carbon development, trade and investment, and people-to-people friendship. Within the overall framework of bilateral relations, we should strengthen practical cooperation between the bay areas to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results of higher quality and a higher level," said Wang.

Yang Wanming, president of the CPAFFC, said that local governments are participants, promoters, and beneficiaries of China-US relations. The CPAFFC is ready to work with all sides to take the dialogue as a new starting point, actively encourage Chinese provinces and American states, and cities to fully demonstrate local vitality in tackling climate change, deepening economic and trade cooperation, and promoting people-to-people connectivity, and contribute more local strength

and grassroots wisdom to the implementation of the San Francisco Vision reached by the two presidents.

Zhang Jianmin, Chinese consul-general in San Francisco, offered his congratulations on the success of the dialogue and expressed his hope that the two bay areas will take it as a new starting point for more exchanges and cooperation, thereby promoting the healthy, stable, and sustainable development of China-US relations.

Paul Chan Mo-po, representative of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and financial secretary, and Ao Ieong U, representative of the Chief Executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region and secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, both said that they will give full play to the unique advantages of their respective regions and actively participate in the exchanges and cooperation between the bay areas.

Representatives of governments, enterprises, universities, and other sectors from the Greater Bay Area and the San Francisco Bay Area had in-depth exchanges on topics of common concern, such as building green and low-carbon bay areas, sharing development opportunities, and promoting people-to-people friendship. A number of concrete cooperation outcomes in climate and green development, trade and investment, and people-to-people exchange were reached. ■



The China-US Bay Area Dialogue was successfully held in Berkeley, California, the United States.

CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets Ivan Melnikov, president of the RCFA and first vice-chairman of the Russian State Duma

Department of European & Asian Affairs

On May 15, Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), met with Ivan Melnikov, president of the Russia-China Friendship Association (RCFA) and first vice-chairman of the Russian State Duma, in Beijing.

Yang welcomed Melnikov's visit to the CPAFFC and highly appreciated his contributions to the development of China-Russia relations and the cause of China-Russia friendship, saying that under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin, bilateral relations have maintained a momentum of development at a high level. The two countries have firmly supported each other on issues concerning each other's core interests, strengthened coordination in multilateral arenas such as the United Nations

(UN), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the BRICS grouping, and conducted increasingly dynamic cooperation in economy, trade, culture and other fields, setting an example of major-country relations.

Yang said that in March last year and May this year, President Xi and President Putin chose each other's country for their first overseas visits after being re-elected, which fully demonstrates the high level and particularity of China-Russia relations. Yang expressed the belief that President Putin's visit to China will be a complete success, and that close exchanges between the two heads of state will lead the smooth and steady development of bilateral relations.

"People-to-people exchanges and local cooperation are important components of the China-Russia comprehen-

sive strategic partnership of coordination in the new era," Yang said. "The CPAFFC will work with the RCFA to take the opportunity of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of China-Russia diplomatic ties, and implement the important consensus reached by the heads of our two countries. We will strengthen cooperation, explore more institutional brand projects, enrich the connotations of people-to-people exchanges, consolidate public support for bilateral friendly relations, and contribute to the continuous development of the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination in the new era."

Melnikov said that he was honored to visit China as a member of President Putin's delegation and to visit the CPAFFC for the first time. The close communication and regular exchange

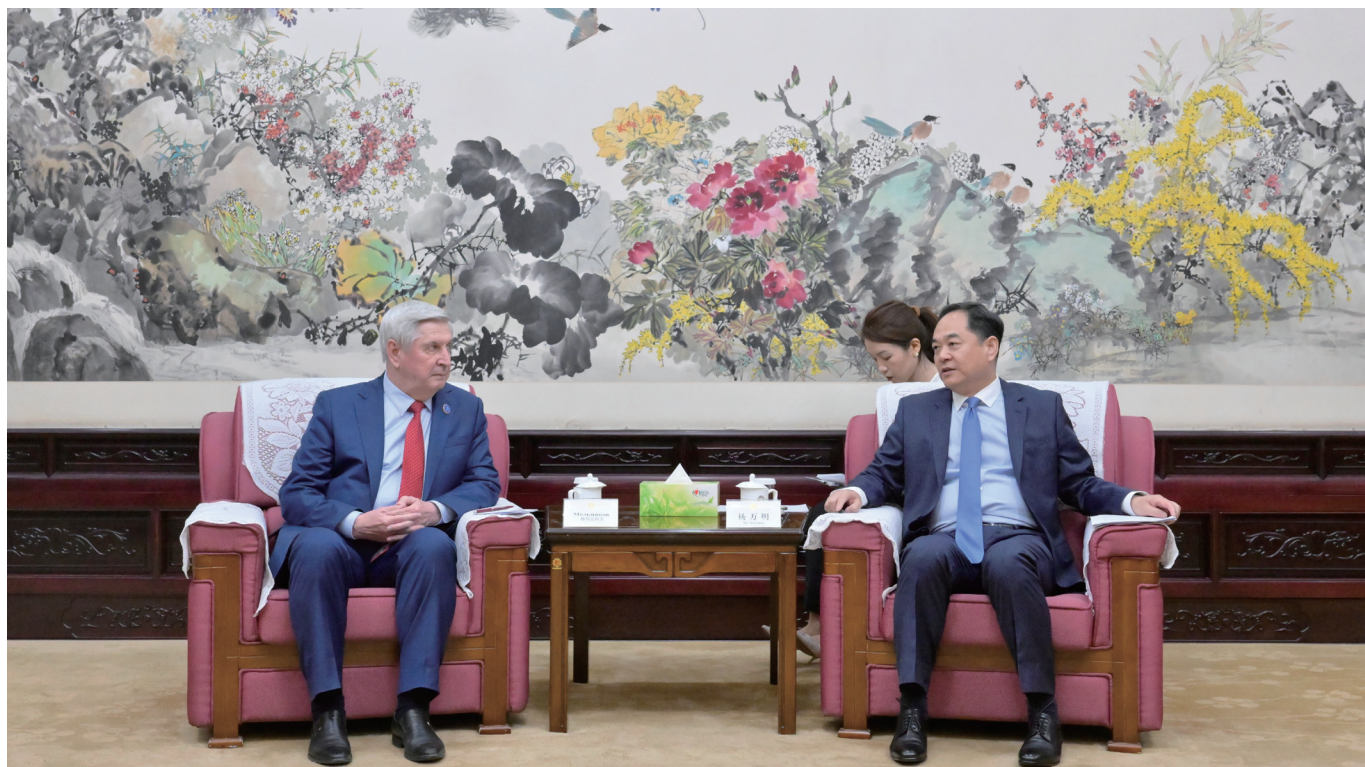
visits between the two presidents is a solid foundation and inexhaustible driving force for the development of the Russia-China comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination in the new era. He said that President Putin's visit had attracted worldwide attention and it will exert an important influence not only on Russia and China, but also on the whole world. He believed that the visit will elevate mutually beneficial cooperation in economy, trade, science, technology, culture and other fields to a higher level.

Melnikov spoke highly of the close strategic cooperation between the CPAFFC and the China-Russia Friendship Association, and the RCFA. He expressed willingness to further strengthen bilateral friendly cooperation and hold various celebration activities in the context of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Russia-China diplomatic relations, and the Russia-China Year of Culture. The two countries will continue to enhance mutual under-

standing and friendship and contribute to the continuous development of Russia-China relations.

The two sides also had in-depth communication and reached specific consensus on future exchanges between the two organizations at local levels, and in youth exchanges, culture, and sports.

Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the CPAFFC, and Babakov Alexander Mikhailovich, vice-chairman of the Russian State Duma, were present at the meeting. ■



CPAFFC President Yang Wanming meets with Ivan Melnikov, president of the Russia-China Friendship Association (RCFA) and first vice-chairman of the Russian State Duma.

CPAFFC Vice-President Li Xikui attends the awarding ceremony for “China in My Eyes—Colorful Folklore” Short Video Contest

Cultural Exchange Department

On March 29, the awarding ceremony for “China in My Eyes—Colorful Folklore” Short Video Contest and the Youth Dialogue on International Communication was held in Chongqing. The event was hosted by the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and co-organized by the Chongqing People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

Approximately 50 people attended the event, including Zhao Shiqing, deputy director of the Standing Committee of Chongqing Municipal People’s Congress and president of the Chongqing People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries; Li Xikui, vice-president of the CPAFFC; 14 winners from 12 countries, such as Liberia, the United Kingdom, and Kenya; senior media professionals; and youth representatives from Sichuan International Studies University.

Li Xikui said in his speech that the “China in My Eyes” Short Video



CPAFFC Vice-President Li Xikui attends and addresses the awarding ceremony for “China in My Eyes—Colorful Folklore” Short Video Contest.

Contest, initiated by the CPAFFC in 2021, has been successfully held for three consecutive sessions, with a total

of more than 130 million views. This year’s theme, “Colorful Folklore”, encourages foreigners in China to shoot

short videos of Chinese folklore and their in-depth experiences of traditional Chinese culture.

Li said that state-to-state relations depend on amity between people, and people are always the main body of cultural exchanges and mutual learning. China has always advocated respect among different civilizations, promoted mutual understanding and amity among the peoples of different countries, and encouraged the appreciation of the unique beauty of different civilizations while fostering harmonious coexistence.

Li hoped that the foreign contestants would continuously tap their potential, enhance interaction, embrace new ideas, use new technologies, create new content, and become a shining new force in communicating Chinese cul-

ture and promoting cultural exchanges between China and other countries.

During the dialogue, the participants spoke freely and exchanged in-depth views. They all said that through this trip, they have gained a deeper feeling of the overall development of Chongqing and the great progress of western China in the new era. They pledged that they would continue to study and work hard in China in the future, promote the communication of Chinese culture overseas, and become envoys in facilitating exchanges and mutual learning between Chinese and foreign civilizations.

During their stay in Chongqing, the award winners visited the SERES Liangjiang Smart Factory and the Inland International Logistics Hub Exhibition Center for a close look of the

great changes brought by scientific and technological innovation to social development; visited the China Three Gorges Museum and Stilwell Museum to learn about Bayu (Chongqing) culture, the city's urban development history, and the history of Chinese and American troops and people fighting side by side in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression; visited the Dazu Stone Carvings and Dazu Stone Carvings Museum to appreciate the world cultural heritage site; went to Huaxi village in Zhongyi township, Shizhu county to deeply experience the achievements of China's poverty alleviation and rural revitalization efforts. Along the way, they recorded what they saw and heard and posted the videos on social media, generating a warm response from the public. ■



The award winners pose for a group photo together with the Chinese hosts.

Second China-Türkiye People-to-People Dialogue on Friendship and Cooperation held in Xianyang

Department of Asian & African Affairs

On May 17, the Second China-Türkiye People-to-People Dialogue on Friendship and Cooperation was held in Xianyang, Shaanxi province, with the theme “Working Together for a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind”.

Xu Xinrong, chairman of the Shaanxi Provincial People’s Political Consultative Conference; Jiang Jiang, vice-president of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC); Xia Xiaozhong, secretary of the Xianyang Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China; and Ali Oğuzhan Yüksel, director of the Beijing Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center, addressed the opening ceremony.

About 100 people attended the dialogue, including leaders of friendship associations and relevant institutions from seven Chinese provinces and cit-

ies, as well as the heads of five Turkish friendship organizations and institutions, including the Türkiye-China Friendship Association.

Xu Xinrong welcomed the guests from both countries to the dialogue, saying that Xianyang, as the first stop on the ancient Silk Road to the West, witnessed the time-honored historical ties between the Chinese and Turkish people and the important contributions made by both sides to communication between Eastern and Western civilizations.

In the new era, Xu said, Shaanxi has continued to deepen exchanges and cooperation with Türkiye, and the friendship between the two sides has been renewed. “We will take the dialogue as an opportunity to deepen economic and trade cooperation and provide a better environment and services for entrepreneurs of both sides;

we will continue to expand cultural exchanges to lay a solid social foundation for deeper cooperation; we will keep strengthening youth exchanges and help the tree of friendship and cooperation between the two peoples to continue flourishing.”

Jiang Jiang said that since the establishment of diplomatic relations more than half a century ago, China-Türkiye relations have developed steadily. Especially in recent years, under the strategic guidance of the heads of the two countries, China-Türkiye strategic cooperative relations have maintained a sound momentum of development.

He pledged that the CPAFFC is willing to work with Turkish friendship organizations to give full play to their respective advantages, jointly promote people-to-people exchanges, deepen local cooperation, promote mutual learn-

ing among civilizations, strengthen youth exchanges, and constantly contribute the wisdom and strength of unofficial sectors to China-Türkiye strategic cooperative relations.

Xia Xiaozhong said that the successful holding of the dialogue provides a precious opportunity for Xianyang to deepen cooperation and exchanges with Turkish cities and deeply integrate into the overall paradigm of the Belt and Road Initiative. Xianyang will uphold the Eastern wisdom of harmony in diversity and mutual appreciation, give full play to the advantages of unofficial organizations, carry out friendship-city cooperation with the Turkish side, build a bridge of friendship and mutual benefit between the two peoples, and set up a new model of China-Türkiye people-to-people cooperation.

Ali Oğuzhan Yüksel said, “Türkiye and China are ancient civilizations with a long history and both have a splendid culture. In history, the people of our two countries carried out economic, trade, and cultural exchanges through the ancient Silk Road. Today, we are deeply integrating the Belt and Road Initiative and the Middle Corridor Initiative. The Turkish side is willing to work with the Chinese side under the guidance of the important consensus reached by the heads of our two countries. We will continuously expand cooperation areas, strengthen people-to-people exchanges, and push bilateral strategic cooperative relations to a higher level.”



CPAFFC Vice-President Jiang Jiang attended and addressed the Second China-Türkiye People-to-People Dialogue on Friendship and Cooperation held in Xianyang on May 17.

The participants had in-depth discussions on topics such as enhancing people-to-people exchanges and jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative. They spoke highly of China-Türkiye relations and the positive outcomes achieved by the two countries through the Belt and Road Initiative, and agreed that closer coordination should be carried out to further strengthen people-to-people exchanges, improve the dialogue mechanism, enhance mutual understanding and friendship, deepen exchanges and cooperation at the local level and in areas such as culture, education, tourism and youth, and help

China-Türkiye relations achieve greater development.

The dialogue was initiated by the CPAFFC. The first session was held via video link in August 2021 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China-Türkiye diplomatic relations. The second session was hosted by the Shaanxi Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Xianyang municipal government.

During their stay in Shaanxi, the Turkish guests also visited local high-tech enterprises and historical and cultural sites. ■

China-Russia Youth Friendship (Micro Video) Creative Contest and Painting Exhibition open in Beijing

Department of European & Asian Affairs

On April 15, the launch ceremony for the China-Russia Youth Friendship (Micro Video) Creative Contest and the China-Russia Youth Friendship Painting Exhibition was held in Beijing. It was co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and the China-Russia Friendship Association (CRFA), to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of China-Russia diplomatic relations and the 75th birthday of the CRFA.

Yuan Mindao, vice-president of the CPAFFC; Cao Yunlong, counselor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Geng Tao; vice-mayor of Qingdao; Jia Dezhong, vice-president of Beijing Foreign Studies University; Huang Yinan, director of the Russian Department of CGTN; Galina Kulikova, first deputy chairperson of

the RCFA; and Maxim Chernyshev, counselor of the Russian Embassy in China, attended and addressed the event.

Hao Zhongwei, director general of the CPAFFC's Department of European and Asian Affairs, presided over the event.

Yuan Mindao said in his speech that the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination in the new era is currently at its best level in history. Exchanges between the two countries at all levels, in all fields, and at all localities are showing a more vigorous development momentum. The foundation of bilateral relations lies in the people and the future lies in the youth. The youth of the two countries determine the future of China-Russia relations and the friendship between the two peoples, and the story of China-Russia friendship needs to be passed

down by the young generation.

Yuan said, the creative contest and painting exhibition aim to use micro videos and paintings to open wider the door of friendship between the two peoples, a friendship of heartfelt connections and mutual affection, and to plant the seeds of friendship and win-win cooperation between China and Russia in the minds of young people.

Yuan pledged that the CPAFFC will work together with the RCFA to take the 75th anniversary of the establishment of China-Russia diplomatic ties and the China-Russia Culture Year as an opportunity, to actively implement the important consensus reached by the heads of the two countries, build more platforms for interactive exchanges and emotional integration for the youth of the two countries, continuously strengthen

the spiritual bonds between the two peoples, and join hands to write a new chapter in China-Russia relations.

Galina Kulikova said that young people are the future of their country and the future of Russia-China friendly relations. At present, bilateral relations are at the best level in history, and the solid public foundation provides a strong guarantee for both sides to better implement the important consensus reached by the heads of the two countries and to deepen the Russia-China comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination.

“Today’s event is timely and significant. The youth of our two countries have built a bridge of friendship with their paintbrushes. The creative micro video contest will record the long-standing profound friendship between the two nations through the lens of the youth, showing a new look of bilateral relations in the new era,” said Kulikova.

Kulikova pledged that as an important channel of friendship between the two peoples, the RCFA will work with its Chinese partners to steadfastly promote youth exchanges and local cooperation between the two countries, organize more activities that young people are interested in, and continuously enhance mutual understanding and trust.

Geng Tao said that in line with the theme of the painting exhibition, “Friendship in Color”, Chinese and Russian youth have used their brushes



CPAFFC Vice-President Yuan Mindao addressed the China-Russia Youth Friendship (Micro Video) Creative Contest on April 15.

to depict their yearning for and pursuit of a beautiful world, which conveys their good wishes that China-Russia friendship will be passed down from generation to generation. He hoped that through such cultural activities, the friendship between the youth of the two countries will be deepened and that they will write a new chapter of China-Russia friendly exchanges together.

A total of 75 outstanding artworks by Chinese and Russian youth were displayed at the event, symbolizing the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties. During the event, a promotional video for the painting exhibition was played, and an AI animation, the most popular of the moment, officially kicked off the

creative contest.

Before the event, Yuan met with Kulikova and her delegation, expressing a warm welcome to their visit to China. He also asked Kulikova to convey President Yang Wanming’s sincere greetings to Ivan Melnikov, president of the RCFA and first vice -chairman of the Russian State Duma.

More than 100 friends from various sectors in China and Russia, as well as youth and media representatives, attended the event.

The event was widely covered by Chinese and Russian mainstream media, including Xinhua News Agency, People’s Daily, China News Service, Russia Today, and Russia’s Channel 1. ■

Monk Jianzhen: Pioneer of China-Japan Friendship

Yang Yang

Yangzhou, the starting point for China-Japan friendship thanks to Monk Jianzhen

An eminent monk in China's Tang dynasty (618-916) and a great pioneer in friendly exchanges between China and Japan, Jianzhen enjoys high prestige in the history of friendship between the two countries.

Born in Jiangyang county (today's Yangzhou city in Jiangsu province), Jianzhen (original family name Chunyu, 688-763) became a monk at the age of 14 (701) at Dayun Temple, Yangzhou, and was given the Buddhist name Jianzhen. In 707, he traveled to Chang'an (today's Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi province) and Luoyang (in today's Henan province) for studies, and returned to Yangzhou in 713, where he taught Buddhist doctrines as the abbot of Daming Temple. In the second year of Tianbao (743), Jianzhen, at the invitation of the Japanese Buddhist community, started

his first journey eastward to Japan. In the following ten years, he endured many difficulties, including losing his sight on his fifth attempt. Despite the hardships, Jianzhen finally crossed the sea and arrived in Japan in the 12th year of Tianbao (753) on his sixth attempt. As noted by Mr. Zhao Puchu (1907-2000), chairman of the Buddhist Association of China, Monk Jianzhen's sailing eastward was a once-in-a-thousand-year event in the history of friendly exchanges between China and Japan.

During his ten-year stay in Japan, Monk Jianzhen tirelessly spread Buddhism, architecture, sculpture, literature, and medicine from China, greatly promoting the development of Japanese culture. He has since been recognized as a cultural benefactor of Japan. Toshodaiji Temple, built under Jianzhen's guidance, refreshed Japan's architecture. As the initiator of the discipline sect of Japanese Buddhism, he

is renowned as the "Ancestor of the Discipline Sect". Known as the "Father of Japanese medicine", Jianzhen cured Emperor Seimu's empress of a strange disease. He also left behind *Secret Prescriptions of Master Jianzhen*. Japanese writer and playwright Inoue Yasushi wrote a book based on the story of Monk Jianzhen, entitled *Rooftop of Tempyo*, praising his contributions to Japanese culture during the Tempyo period. Mr. Chu Tunan (1899-1994), former vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and former president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), wrote a poem to remember Jianzhen's deeds:

Jianzhen crossed the East Sea to spread Buddhism in Japan,

Abeno Nakamaro* served as an official in the heyday of Tang.

China and Japan share one cultural root,

Friendship between the two peoples will last long.

*Abeno Nakamaro (698-770), known as Chao Heng in Chinese, was one of the Japanese students sent to study in the Tang dynasty during the Nara period. He was an outstanding envoy of China-Japan cultural exchange.

In 1963, the 1,200th anniversary of Monk Jianzhen's death, the Japanese government named May 1963—May 1964 as the Year of Jianzhen and organized a series of events in memory of his achievements. At that time, Yangzhou's Daming Temple, deemed the original court of the Japanese discipline sect, was not yet open to the public. Mr. Zhao Puchu, then chairman of the Buddhist Association of China, presented an earnest request to Premier Zhou Enlai (1898-1976): "Normalization of Sino-Japanese relations may be attained by starting from the people, who can then help promote official relations. Buddhism is an excellent vehicle. The story of Monk Jianzhen can ideally facilitate people-to-people exchanges." The suggestion was well received by the Premier and approved by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. Mr. Zhao was appointed chairman of the 1,200th anniversary memorial committee, which organized a commemorative celebration by Chinese and Japanese religious and cultural circles at Daming Temple



Daming Temple, Yangzhou, home of Monk Jianzhen

in Yangzhou, and was in charge of the construction of the Jianzhen Memorial Hall at the temple.

On October 13-15, 1963, a Japanese Buddhist cultural delegation visited Yangzhou, where they attended a Buddhist ceremony to commemorate the 1,200th anniversary of Monk Jianzhen's passing and laid the foundation of the Jianzhen Memorial Hall. The participants from both countries recalled the deeds and contributions made by Monk Jianzhen. Mr. Zhao Puchu and Mr. Kongo Shuichi, head of the Japanese delegation, signed the Agreement on Buddhist Culture Ex-

changes Between China and Japan. The memorial event exerted a great influence on the people of the two countries and greatly promoted China-Japan friendship. In the article dedicated to the occasion, which was entitled "In Memory of Monk Jianzhen and Look Forward to a Brighter Future of Friendship Between Chinese and Japanese Peoples," Mr. Zhao Puchu wrote with deep emotion: "In the history of our two countries' cultural kinship, Monk Jianzhen of the eighth century will continue to shine thanks to his devotion to cultural exchanges and his spirit to overcome all difficulties."

Monk Jianzhen's hometown visit – an event of lasting significance

Upon the death of Monk Jianzhen, his followers erected a lacquer-coated and ramie-inlaid sitting statue of the master. It was later enshrined and worshiped at Toshodaiji Temple, and is considered a national treasure of Japan. Upon the normalization of China-Japan diplomatic relations in 1972, Abbot Morimoto Kyojun of Toshodaiji Temple proposed to China the wish for Monk Jianzhen's statue to go back home and be worshiped by his fellow citizens. In August 1978, the Treaty of Peace and Friendship Between Japan and the People's Republic of China was signed. In October the same year, when Mr. Deng Xiaoping, then vice-premier of the State Council, visited Toshodaiji Temple during his state visit, Abbot Morimoto Kyojun again proposed: "It's been more than 1,000 years since Monk Jianzhen's landing in Japan. Would it be a good idea for him to return to China for a look at his homeland of today?" Mr. Deng immediately understood his intention and replied without hesitation: "The Chinese people welcome Monk Jianzhen and Abbot Morimoto to China."

On April 14, 1980, escorted by Abbot Morimoto Kyojun, the statue of Monk Jianzhen arrived in Yangzhou. After a week's preparation, public wor-

ship of the statue was held on April 19-25. As many as 180,000 visitors paid homage to the statue, or 25,000 each day on average. Observing this, Abbot Morimoto was deeply moved. With tears in his eyes, he constantly murmured, "Look, look in Jianzhen's eyes. He is smiling. Such touching tenderness, and calm smile!" Mr. Zhao Puchu, who was accompanying the abbot, also exclaimed, "Monk Jianzhen's homesick tears are wiped away now." On April 19, Mr. Deng Xiaoping spoke highly of the event in his essay published in People's Daily, titled "A Grand Occasion of Profound Significance." He wrote: "Jianzhen has made major contributions in the long history of people-to-people and cultural exchanges between China and Japan. He is worthy of our memory forever." "With the support of the Japanese government, Japanese cultural and Buddhist circles have brought Jianzhen's statue back to his hometown for worshipping. This is a feat of far-reaching significance. It should encourage us today to carry on the spirit of devotion of Jianzhen and his followers Yoei and Husyo, and to make continuous efforts in promoting friendship between Chinese and Japanese peoples generation after generation."

Thirty years later, the statue of Jianzhen at Todaiji Temple, Nara city, also embarked on a home visit. The wooden statue has been enshrined in

Senju-do of Kaidan-do on the west side of Daibutsu-Den at Todaiji Temple. Like the statue of Jianzhen at Toshodaiji Temple, it is also a national treasure of Japan. The home trip was jointly sponsored by the CPAFFC, the China-Japan Friendship Association, the Japan-China Friendship Association, the Nara county government, and the Yangzhou municipal government.

In the morning of November 26, 2010, the unveiling ceremony for Jianzhen's statue was held at Jianzhen Library of Daming Temple in Yangzhou. Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, a former member of China's State Council and chief representative of the 21st Century Committee for China-Japan Friendship; CPAFFC Vice-President Jing Dunquan; Mr. Fuyushiba Tetsuzo, former Japanese Minister of Transportation; Governor Arai Shogo of Nara county; and Mayor Nakagawa Gen of Nara city attended the ceremony. When he saw the residents of Yangzhou crowding the streets to celebrate the home visit of the eminent monk, Mr. Fuyushiba was deeply touched, saying, "Both Yangzhou and Nara are the origins of Sino-Japanese friendship. As I accompany Monk Jianzhen's statue back to his hometown, I feel strongly the long historical bonds of the two countries, and the importance and necessity for us to sustain our mutual relationship."

In the afternoon of the 27th, Mr.

Tang Jiaxuan was invited to the Yangzhou Forum to give a lecture titled “Monk Jianzhen and Friendship Between China and Japan”. He proposed: “In this new historical period, we must carry on the spirit of Jianzhen and dedicate ourselves to promoting the enduring friendship between China and Japan, so as to benefit future generations of our two countries, and contribute to world peace and development.”

In recognition of the successful organization of the home trip of Monk Jianzhen’s statue, the CPAFFC and the China-Japan Friendship Association respectively presented to Yangzhou a Special Contribution Award, and an Award for Honoring the Spirit of Jianzhen and Promoting China-Japan Friendship.

Yangzhou delegation visits Japan, Boat of Friendship sails in warm spring

On May 5-10, 2008, at the invitation of the Japanese government, President Hu Jintao paid a state visit to Japan. The five-day warm-spring state tour has helped promote the overall strategic and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries. During the trip, President Hu met with Emperor Akihito, held fruitful talks with Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, and engaged in discussions with leaders of

the Houses of Councillors and Representatives as well as major political parties. He also had extensive communication with members of the economic sector, youth groups, friendship organizations, and local communities. To complement the state tour, a goodwill mission from Jianzhen’s hometown Yangzhou, which was approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited Japan at the same time. Meanwhile, Yangzhou was commissioned to craft the national gift “Boat of Friendship”.

Yangzhou and Japan have maintained a long history of exchanges by sea. Documents record that Japan dispatched 19 trade/cultural missions during the Sui (581-618) and Tang (618-907) dynasties, 13 of them landed in Yangzhou. Just as in Toshodaiji Temple, Daming Temple in Yangzhou preserves an ever-bright lantern. There is also a model vessel donated by an offspring of Japanese envoys during the Tang dynasty. The “Boat of Friendship” is a miniature wooden structure modeled on Tang-dynasty vessels raised from the seabed. Both realistic and artistic in design, the “Boat of Friendship” is a remembrance of Jianzhen’s voyages of Buddhism, culture, friendship, and strong will. It also symbolizes the long-lasting friendship between Chinese and Japanese peoples, and their aspirations for world peace and a brighter future of the two countries.

At 11 a.m. on May 10, Tokyo time, visiting President Hu Jintao arrived at Toshodaiji Temple. Hu recalled the history of friendly exchanges between Chinese and Japanese peoples, his childhood memories of listening to the story of Monk Jianzhen’s journeys to the east. He asked about Jianzhen’s experiences at Toshodaiji Temple and expressed appreciation for the excellent preservation of the temple for more than 1,200 years. He commented, “Despite drastic changes in both China and Japan over the past 1,200 years, friendship between the two peoples remains as always.” After the visit, President Hu attended the unveiling ceremony for the “Boat of Friendship”. The curtain was lifted to reveal a wooden model vessel with high-rise prow, standing masts, elegant cabins, and four Chinese characters inscribed on the boat, *You Yi Zhi Zhou*, meaning “Boat of Friendship”. After careful observation of the boat, President Hu commended the craftsmanship and Yangzhou’s arrangements of the fellow-townsmen trip, and took pictures with members of the mission. He encouraged Yangzhou to follow the spirit of Jianzhen and contribute to China-Japan friendship.

Mr. Yang Jiechi, then Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, commented that the boat is one of the best and most meaningful national gifts. It has since been berthed at Toshodaiji Temple, as

an important testament to China-Japan friendship.

**With Monk Jianzhen as the linkage,
Yangzhou bonds with three Japanese
sister cities**

Karatsu was the first foreign city that Yangzhou built ties with, setting a new milestone in Yangzhou's history of international exchanges. Upon his first visit to Yangzhou in 1978, Seto Nao, then mayor of Karatsu, was very impressed by the hometown of Monk Jianzhen. He thereby proposed to Zhu Zhifu, then mayor of Yangzhou, his wish to build sister-city ties. On February 22, 1982, the signing ceremony for the sister-city bonding was held in the city hall of Yangzhou. Mayor Zhu Zhifu and Mayor Seto Nao signed both the Chinese and Japanese versions of the agreement. Mr. Seto was brought to tears on the scene, saying, "The weather is cold, but at the hometown of Monk Jianzhen, I feel warm at heart."

Atsugi was the second foreign city with which Yangzhou set up a sister-city relationship. As early as the late 1970s, Atsugi, located across the neighboring waters, started friendly visits to Yangzhou. In 1979, as soon as Mr. Adachihara Sigenori was elected mayor, he raised the proposal to forge ties with Yangzhou. On October 23, 1984, Yangzhou mayor Huang Shuxiang and

Atsugi mayor Adachihara signed the sister-city relationship in Atsugi. Both pledged to uphold the spirit of Jianzhen to promote friendly ties for the two countries and peoples.

Nara, where Monk Jianzhen finally landed in 753, has the closest connection with the eminent monk. At that moment, "The moon of Yangzhou lit up the sky of Nara", as a poem goes. Scholar Guo Moruo (1892-1978) dedicated a poem to the relationship: "Jianzhen sailed east in blindness, / So earnest was his mind that it lit up the heavens. / For the sake of spreading Buddhism he made many sacrifices, / The Tang culture became widespread in the city of Nara." These poems testify to the merits of Monk Jianzhen in those days. The two cities began their exchanges in the 1990s. On February 20, 2010, when the newly-elected Mayor Nakagawa Gen visited Yangzhou for the first time, he signed a memorandum of understanding to build a sister-city relationship with Mayor Xie Zhengyi of Yangzhou. On May 23 that year, he signed the formal agreement with visiting Executive Vice-Mayor Zhang Aijun at the Century Hall in Nara, thus Nara became Yangzhou's third sister city in Japan.

With different mountains and different waterways, we breathe the same air and appreciate the same moon. Up till now, Yangzhou has maintained 42

years of sister-city relationship with Karatsu, 40 years with Atsugi, and 15 with Nara. With the spirit of Monk Jianzhen as their guide, the sister cities join hands and support each other, and seek common development and prosperity. The relationships are taken as model examples among all Chinese and Japanese sister cities.

**Lasting spirit of Jianzhen enlivens
Yangzhou's friendly exchanges
with Japan**

Study of the spirit of Jianzhen has proved to be a new way of Sino-Japanese cultural exchanges. The year 1998 marked the 1,310th anniversary of Jianzhen's birth. On April 30, Yangzhou held a seminar on Jianzhen studies. As many as 160 delegates from Atsugi, the Bellpo Organization, Saga, and Toshodaiji Temple headed by its 82nd Abbot Endu Syoen, and Chinese scholars, including Li Yanxian, Bian Xiaoxuan, and Xu Fengyi, held discussions on Jianzhen's philosophical thought, Buddhist attainments, and endeavors in traveling to Japan. On May 10, 2008, during the state visit by President Hu Jintao, the Forum on the Spirit of Jianzhen was held at Toshodaiji Temple, jointly sponsored by the governments of Yangzhou and Nara, Daming Temple of Yangzhou, and Toshodaiji Temple. More than 50

members from academic and Buddhist circles of China and Japan attended the event. In 2016, Yangzhou joined her sister cities in Japan again to organize a lecture themed on the spirit of Jianzhen and lasting friendship between Chinese and Japanese peoples. The participants expressed the wish that “the friendship between the two countries, with the spirit of Jianzhen as a basis, will stay as firm as Mount Tai and Mount Fuji.”

Narano, a performing art troupe considered to be a national treasure of Japan, collectively created a theatrical show *The Eminent Monk Jianzhen*. On October 9, 2002, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Japan, and Jianzhen’s contributions to Sino-Japanese friendship, Narano and a Goodwill Delegation of Toshodaiji Temple headed by Abbot Masuda Kaihan visited Yangzhou and presented the show. The history of Nohgaku can be traced back to China’s Tang-dynasty *sanyue*, which was introduced to Japan during the Nara Period. Nohgaku was included in the first batch of Oral and Intangible Legacies recognized by UNESCO. Narano is one of the oldest theatrical art troupes in Japan. More than 20 Narano artists created the show to commemorate Jianzhen’s contributions to Japanese culture. Before the performance, Abbot Nengxiu of Daming Temple and Abbot

Masuda Kaihan hosted a Buddhist ritual praying for world peace. An old bell was struck to express prayers for long-lasting prosperity and China-Japan friendship.

Thousands of worshipers gathered to celebrate the return of Buddhist relics. On November 2, 2003, the Commemoration of the 1,250th Anniversary of Monk Jianzhen’s Successful Landing and Return of Buddhist Relics was held at Daming Temple, Yangzhou. Attending the celebration were over 1,000 people, including leaders from Chinese central, provincial, and municipal governments; abbots of the temples where Monk Jianzhen once studied, stayed, or taught; people from China’s Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions and Taiwan; and visitors from Japan, Europe and America. They recalled the historic contributions and the great spirit of the eminent monk. On the occasion, three Buddhist relics, which were brought to Japan by Monk Jianzhen 1,250 years ago, were escorted home by Abbot Masuda Kaihan and Director Nishiyama Akihiko of Toshodaiji Temple and enshrined in the Qiling Tower of Daming Temple. As Abbot Masuda explained: Monk Jianzhen brought with him some 1,000 Buddhist relics, but the whereabouts of most of them are unknown. Only these three pieces have been well preserved, first in the East Tower and

later in the Ancient Hall at Toshodaiji Temple. It was to express the good wishes for world peace by promoting the spirit of Jianzhen and China-Japan friendship that the Buddhist relics were brought back to China.

In the name of Jianzhen, Yangzhou and Japan jointly sponsor sports events. In December 2005, the Japanese Marathon Promotion Committee, headed by Mr. Yamada Masao, president of Seibu Holdings Co., forwarded an application to the Yangzhou municipal government to hold a Jianzhen-themed marathon in Yangzhou. Mayor Wang Yanwen recognized it as a great idea for “building a bridge through marathon and promoting friendship through sports”. On May 27, 2006, the First China Yangzhou Jianzhen International Half-marathon 2006, jointly sponsored by the Yangzhou municipal government and Seidu Holdings Co., was launched. Japanese Consul General Kumamaru Yuji and Mayor Sakai Toshiyuki of Karatsu attended the opening ceremony. More than 50 athletes traveled from Japan to take part in the race. In September 2014, the permanent starting-point park for Jianzhen International Half-marathon was inaugurated. The design of the park has drawn inspiration from the popular Hiroshige painting *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*, embodying the spirit of Jianzhen in his journeys eastward. Up to

2024, Yangzhou has successfully hosted 16 half-marathons, attaining worldwide acclaim.

Sailing to the east again by following Jianzhen's route. Wenfeng Temple in Yangzhou is one of the initiators for Sino-Japanese Buddhist exchanges. Of the six expeditions by Monk Jianzhen, three times he started from Wenfeng Temple. To commemorate the great contributions Jianzhen has made to Sino-Japanese exchanges, Wenfeng's sister temple in Japan, Mibu-dera, sponsored the building of two sitting statues of the eminent monk in China, modeled after the lacquer-coated and ramie-inlaid statue enshrined at Toshodaiji Temple. One replica was donated to Wenfeng Temple, while the other went on an expedition along the course blazed by Jianzhen all the way to Japan. On May 12, 2016, the replica statue, escorted by Abbot Matsuura Toshimi of Midu-dera and Abbot Neng Du of Wenfeng Temple embarked on the Grand Canal by Wenfeng Temple, sailing along the canal, the Yangtze River, then the East China Sea, all the way to Japan. On May 16, the new statue arrived at Toshodaiji Temple, Nara city, where the original statue has been enshrined. After the meeting of the two statues, the new one was escorted to Mibu-dera, its permanent site. On December 11, 2017, more than 20 Japanese students embarked the Jianzhen

cruise ship and sailed to Yangzhou along the same route. Their journey laid a solid foundation for youth exchanges between the two countries.

Thanks to Monk Jianzhen's contributions, Yangzhou was included in the East Asia Cultural Capital Cities Club. The club is a world-class cultural brand jointly created under the China-Japan-ROK Trilateral Leaders' Mechanism. Due to its position as the starting point of Monk Jianzhen's once-in-a-thousand-year journey, Yangzhou was approved as an East Asia Cultural Capital City on August 30, 2019 at the 11th China-Japan-ROK Cultural Ministers' Meeting. On April 27, 2023, Yangzhou hosted a Mayoral Dialogue between Yangzhou, Nara, and Gyeongju, with the theme "amplifying the advantages of East Asia cultural cities and jointly building regional cooperation". Party Secretary Wang Jinjian of Yangzhou, Mayor Nakagawa Gen of Nara, and Mayor Joo Nak-yeong of Gyeongju, held discussions on the tri-city relationship and cooperation with each other. At the end of the meeting, the three cities signed a memorandum of cooperation and, together with the China-Japan-ROK Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat, issued the Yangzhou Proposal for Jointly Building East Asia Cultural Capital Cities.

Yangzhou's successful hosting of a high-level meeting signifies the

historic significance of Monk Jianzhen in China-Japan exchanges. On October 12-13, 2023, the 16th meeting of the China-Japan High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs Mechanism was held in Yangzhou. Mr. Hong Liang, director-general of Border and Ocean Affairs of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Namazu Hiroyuki, director of Asia and Oceania Affairs of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attended the meeting. On the evening of the 12th, Party Secretary Wang Jinjian of Yangzhou met with all the participants of the meeting. He said: During the Tang dynasty, Abbot Jianzhen of Daming Temple made six attempts and eventually succeeded in reaching Japan to pass on culture and friendship. He has thereby been recognized a pioneer and Yangzhou as the starting point for Sino-Japanese exchanges. Today's Yangzhou, with sister-city relationships with several Japanese cities, is deepening exchanges with Japan. Hong Liang emphasized: This year (2023) marks the 45th anniversary of the signing of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship; hence it is of special significance that our meeting takes place in Yangzhou, the starting place of Sino-Japanese friendly exchanges. Mr. Namazu Hiroyuki said: Yangzhou has been an important city in the long history of China's exchanges with Japan. The potential for cooperation between

the two countries are extensive. We look forward to strengthening mutual exchanges and interactions, and promoting new achievements in cooperation. In the afternoon of the 13th, all members from the Chinese and Japanese delegations paid homage to Monk Jianzhen at the Jianzhen Memorial Hall of Daming Temple, pledging to carry on his spirit and promote China-Japan

friendship. A group photo was taken at the scene.

For more than 1,200 years, following the course blazed by Monk Jianzhen, exchanges between Yangzhou and Japan are being constantly enriched. Inspired and guided by the spirit of Jianzhen, the history of Yangzhou's friendly exchanges with Japan continues to develop. Mutual learning and common

development have become the shared aspiration of the people in both China and Japan. In-depth exchanges in multiple fields have born rich fruit. As the morning bell of Daming Temple rings over Shugang Hill, and in the mist that half conceals the clear water of the Grand Canal, we see with much delight Jianzhen's vessel sailing from history toward the future... ■



Sitting Statue of Monk Jianzhen

Exhibition in Wuhan to tell stories of international friends during China's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression

Zhou Jing & Chen Quan

In 1938, many international friends from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, New Zealand, the Soviet Union, Korea, and Japan, extended a helping hand to the Chinese people, who were struggling hard in the main battlefield of the Eastern Front of the World Anti-Fascist War. In the spirit of internationalism, they came across the oceans from afar to Wuhan, the eye of the storm, where they supported and publicized the Chinese people's resistance against Japanese aggression in different ways, even at the cost of their lives.

On March 5, 2024, an exhibition themed "For Peace and Justice—Special Exhibition on International Friends in the Defense of Wuhan", opened in the Memorial Museum of the

Eighth Route Army's Office in Wuhan, to tell stories about the relevant history.

The exhibition showcases the heroic deeds of 21 international friends during the battle and their important influence. The exhibition comprises four parts: Truthful Reports, Save the Dying and Heal the Wounded, Fight Side by Side, and Just Actions, which faithfully depict their major contributions to the Chinese people's resistance against Japanese aggression. More than 200 valuable historical photos and video clips together with over 50 material objects help create vivid images of these heroes and their actions.

Edgar Snow (from the US): In July 1938, during the most critical stage of the Wuhan Battle, Edgar Snow

flew to the city via Hong Kong and had in-depth discussions with Zhou Enlai, Deng Yingchao, Ye Ting, and Guo Moruo, among others. He interviewed some military leaders of the Communist Party of China and presented truthful reports. He also established the Chinese Industrial Cooperative Association along with his wife Helen Snow, Rewi Alley, and others.

Anna Louise Strong (from the US): As early as 1927, she worked as a news reporter in Wuhan. During the Battle of Wuhan, Strong delivered a speech titled "How Madrid Was Defended" on the radio, rallying the Chinese army and people to rise up in resistance against the Japanese invasion.

Agnes Smedley (from the US):

Smedley came to Wuhan in January 1938. Through publicity work, she called for more sympathy and material support from other countries for China's resistance against Japanese aggression. She spent much time sending letters to the US, Canada, and the UK to seek overseas financial aid, human resources, and material assistance, and actively promoted the development of Red Cross societies in China.

Israel Epstein (from Poland): Epstein settled in China with his parents in his childhood. A journalist with United Press International, he served as a war correspondent during the battle of Taierzhuang in April 1938. In 1939, he joined the China Defense League launched by Soong Ching-ling and published *The People's War* that year. Epstein became a Chinese citizen in 1957 and joined the Communist Party of China in 1964.

James Bertram (from the UK): Bertram came to Wuhan in February 1938. He took part in activities hosted by the China Defense League and spread the rallying cry of "the United Front" advocated by the Communist Party of China to the rest of the world.

George Hogg (from the UK): Hogg consistently contributed articles to United Press International of the US and the *Manchester Guardian* of the UK, reporting on the situation of the Chinese people's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. He was



The exhibition “For Peace and Justice—Special Exhibition on International Friends in the Defense of Wuhan” opened in the Memorial Museum of the Eighth Route Army’s Office in Wuhan, on march 5, 2024.

one of the few foreign journalists who remained in Wuhan and personally witnessed the fall of the city, winning the title as Hankou’s Last Warrior. He joined Rewi Alley in the cause of developing industrial cooperatives in China and served as the headmaster of the Bailie School. Unfortunately, he passed away at the age of only 30.

Roman Karmen (from the Soviet Union): Karmen came to Wuhan in October 1938 as the accredited journalist for *Izvestia*. He captured images of enemy planes bombing the residential areas of workers and the Chinese army withdrawing from Wuhan. He retold his personal

experiences in the book titled *One Year in China*.

Dr. Henry Norman Bethune (from Canada): Bethune led a medical team to Wuhan in January 1938. During his time in Wuhan, he procured surgical equipment and medical supplies for the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army. Under the special arrangement of Zhou Enlai, he left for Yan’an in February 1938 with his medical team, escorted by the guards of the office of the Eighth Route Army in Wuhan. Unfortunately, Bethune died of tetanus in November 1939, after he was infected while performing surgery on an injured soldier on the front line

in Hebei province.

Jean Ewen (from Canada): In January 1938, Ewen came to Wuhan as the interpreter and nurse in the medical team led by Dr. Norman Bethune. In March 1938, she arrived in Yan'an and helped develop the hospitals in boarder areas. She also delivered reports on the world situation to the young students at the Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Military and Political University.

Dwarkanath Kotnis (from India): Kotnis came to Wuhan as a member of the Indian medical team to assist China in September 1938. The team brought 50 boxes of medicines,

a bullet-proof steel ambulance and a truck to China as gifts from the Indian people. They were warmly welcomed by the leaders of the Eighth Route Army's office in Wuhan, including Zhou Enlai, Dong Biwu, and Ye Jianying. Some group photos were taken at the rooftop garden of the office on the occasion.

Ayi Pushkin (from the Soviet Union): In May 1938, Pushkin, a 23-year-old newlywed, volunteered to enlist in the Soviet Union air force team to assist China and came to Hankou. Pushkin completed 20 flight missions within 3 months and was

awarded a medal for his first air battle over Hankou.

Arthur Chin (from the US): Chin was a Chinese American who was one of the first ace pilots in the US. He participated in the air battles over Wuhan in 1938. His legendary feats were depicted in *China's War-hawk*, a comic book published in the US.

Kim Rok-san (from Korea): In 1916, Kim came to China and studied at Jinling University in Nanjing and Whampoa Military Academy in Guangzhou. He founded the Korean Volunteer Army in Wuhan on October 10, 1938 and served as its captain.



Part of the exhibition.

Claire Lee Chennault (from the US): In 1937, Chennault came to China at the request of the Chinese government. He then formed the 14th Bomber Aviation Brigade of the National Revolutionary Army Air Force. In August 1938, Chennault secretly trained the Chinese Air Force at an aviation school in the suburbs of Kunming.

Evans Fordyce Carlson (from the US): In April 1938, Carlson came to Yan'an as an American observer. He was the first American official to visit Yan'an and was received by Mao Zedong. In early August of 1938, he returned to Hankou and met with leaders of the Eighth Route Army's office in Wuhan, including Zhou Enlai and Ye Jianying. His book *Twin Stars of China* was published in 1940.

Rewi Alley (from New Zealand): In early 1938, Rewi Alley and Edgar Snow officially established the Chinese Industrial Cooperative Association in Wuhan under the support and encouragement of Zhou Enlai. After that, the industrial cooperation campaign got underway. The association eventually covered 18 provinces and proved to be an important driving force in the wartime economy of China.

Joris Ivens (from the Netherlands): Joris Ivens was a world-renowned master in documentary filmmaking. He came to Wuhan via

Hong Kong and Guangzhou, and produced a documentary film titled *The 400 Million* (also known as *China in 1938*). He filmed many valuable scenes of the Wuhan Donation Movement, the street speeches by Guo Moruo, and meetings of the leaders of the Communist Party of China in the Eighth Route Army's office in Wuhan.

Robert Capa (from the US): In 1938, Capa arrived in Wuhan with Joris Ivens to film the documentary *The 400 Million*. He took iconic photos such as *The Chinese Soldiers*, *Children Playing in Snow in Hankou*, and *Wuhan After Being Bombed by Japanese Planes*. The photos were published in the American magazine *Life* and aroused extensive international attention.

Eiko Midorikawa (from Japan): In June 1938, Midorikawa came to Wuhan with the assistance of Guo Moruo and was in charge of publicity work towards Japan in the International Publication Division of the Third Department of the Political Bureau of the Military Committee of the National Government.

Takashi Kado (from Japan): In March 1938, with the help of Guo Moruo, Takashi Kado and his wife came to Wuhan to work with the art circles of China. He organized and led the Anti-War Alliance of Japanese Residents in China.

Logan Herbert Roots (from the US): Roots always sympathized

with and supported the Chinese since the Revolution of 1911. During the battle of Wuhan, his residence in Hankou became a gathering place for journalists, diplomats, students, and social workers. On April 11, 1938, Zhou Enlai and other leaders held a farewell banquet on the rooftop garden of the Eighth Route Army's Wuhan office for the Roots before their departure from Wuhan for their homeland.

A virtuous person won't be left to stand alone. During China's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, these international friends gave up their comfortable life in their own countries and traveled to support the Chinese people in dire straits. Their spirit of internationalism featuring boundless love and righteousness is worth our eternal memory and gratitude. This spirit is still relevant today for the promotion of peace and development, friendship and cooperation between different countries, and the development of a community with a shared future for mankind.

(Zhou Jing is a researcher and the director of the Memorial Museum of the Eighth Route Army's Office in Wuhan; Chen Quan is a staff member and library assistant of the museum.) ■

Indian youth delegation visits Sichuan

Sichuan Friendship Association

From May 11 to 15, a 10-member Indian youth delegation visited Beijing, Shijiazhuang, and Sichuan at the invitation of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC). During their stay in Sichuan, the delegates visited Chengdu and Meishan to experience the achievements in China's development and people's lives. A creative Sichuan province presented them with a true, multi-dimensional, and panoramic view of China. The visit has helped to consolidate traditional Sino-Indian friendship and friendly feelings between the two peoples. Abhishek Kumarsen Nadkarni, a neurosurgeon and the head of the delegation, is a descendant of Dwarkanath Kotnis, a famous Indian doctor and an international fighter and friend dedicated to the Chinese people's liberation cause. Members

of the delegation came from the fields of medicine and health, science and technology, education, information technology, software, innovation and entrepreneurship, who were recommended by the India-China Friendship Association and the Friends of China Society (India).

In Pengzhou, the delegation visited the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Hospital, the Innovation Center of Tianfu Traditional Chinese Medicine City, and the Tianfu Aromatherapy Traditional Chinese Medicine Experience and Cultural Center. They experienced the amazing effectiveness of acupuncture, massage, cupping, and skin scraping, savored the medical values of authentic TCM, and gained a better understanding of the profound culture of TCM and its prosperous development. The delegates also learned about the local achievements in eco-

logical and environmental protection, rural revitalization, and integration of urban and rural areas through visits to Baoshan village in Longmenshan town and Bailu Music Town. Nadkarni spoke highly of the agricultural, cultural, and tourist industries in Pengzhou. Amritpal Singh, a volunteer at Dr. Kotnis Acupuncture Hospital, joined the local people in a joyful dance.

In Chengdu Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone, the service platform of the digital economy for innovation and entrepreneurship showcased the abundant fruits and future trends of the integration of the digital economy and the real economy. In Tianfu New District, the delegation came to the Hall of District Planning to have a bird's-eye-view of Xinglong Lake and to appreciate the vitality of Chengdu, a park city under the snow-capped Xiling Mountain, and the creativity and

vitality of Chengdu Science City. During their visit to the Tsinghua Sichuan Energy Internet Research Institute, the delegates were amazed by the cutting-edge research achievements and their application in relevant industries aimed at developing an energy system that is clean, low-carbon, safe, and highly efficient. Khushagra Taunk, a media practitioner in the scientific and technological field, and Garima Arora, a software engineer, expressed their confidence in the promising future cooperation between Sichuan and India in the information industry and software services. They said that young people from both sides are keen on innovation, entrepreneurship, and research and development in artificial intelligence. They expressed their expectation of further scientific and technological innovation in India and China and more exchanges between the youth of the two countries, which will better benefit the two peoples.

In Meishan, the delegation visited Meishan Sansu Shrine Museum and Tongwei Solar (Meishan) Co., Ltd. They experienced not only the cultural heritage of the city famous for its thousand-year history and its rich legacy of poems and other literary works, but also the production of crystalline silicon solar cells, an example of the development of new quality productive forces. Their harmonious coexistence and perfect complementarity deeply impressed the delegates. During their stay in Sich-

uan, the delegates also visited Sichuan University, where they had intensive and in-depth exchanges with the teachers and students of its China Center for South Asian Studies. The topics discussed included further study, academic research, admission and employment, online training, scientific and technological innovation, among others that young people are interested in. Some senior scholars in South Asian studies shared their academic achievements with the delegates. Bikah Kali Das, an Indian student studying at Sichuan University, talked about his achievements and reflected on his time at the university, and expressed his intention to carry out cultural exchanges in India on behalf of the university.

On May 14, Liu Quansheng, president of the Sichuan Friendship Association (SIFA) met with the delegation in Chengdu. He recalled the unforgettable moments of the Sixth Sino-Indian Joint Medical Team in Sichuan in 2018 and briefed them on the economic and social development of Sichuan in recent years. Liu said that the SIFA always attaches great importance to cultural exchanges and pragmatic cooperation with India and South Asia at large. He expressed readiness to build on the past achievements of Sino-Indian friendship together with the Indian friendship associations and India's young generation. He called for their concerted efforts to carry forward the spirit of Kotnis, relentlessly deepen cultural ex-

changes, advance medical and health cooperation, and facilitate the bilateral complementarity of industries. He believed these efforts will improve the wellbeing of the two peoples, realize win-win cooperation, and contribute to building a community with a shared future for mankind and a more beautiful world.

Nadkarni agreed with what Liu said. He expressed his gratitude for the hospitality and considerate arrangements of the CPAFFC and the SIFA. He said that the visit had given the delegates an opportunity to visit cities, villages, plains, and mountainous areas as well as hospitals, universities, enterprises, farmers' homes, and exhibition halls in Sichuan. During their visit, they experienced the natural scenery, history, culture, and development opportunities firsthand and saw the achievements of Chinese modernization. He expressed his willingness to work together with the SIFA to carry forward the spirit of Kotnis and facilitate cooperation in multiple fields and people-to-people exchanges. He believed these activities will constantly push forward understanding and friendship between the Indian and Chinese people.

Tang Jilan, vice-president of the SIFA, attended relevant activities. ■

The spirit of the Flying Tigers lives on forever

He Yan

With his hands on his hips, Harry Moyer, a Flying Tigers veteran, who had just turned 103 years old the day before, looked like a triumphant warrior returning home.

It was on the morning of October 31, 2023, that Moyer, accompanied by his son-in-law Peter Pepper, walked with brisk and vigorous steps into the meeting room on the 17th floor of the Regent Hotel in Beijing, and accepted a joint interview with five media organizations.

Promoting US-China relations

Moyer said, “I had several birthday parties last night. And it’s kind of interesting that I got to be in China at 103 years of age, and to have a birthday here. And last year, I had a birthday party at the Chinese Consulate General in San Francisco. I guess I’m getting in the habit of having Chinese birthdays. And I felt very nice about it. Big cakes, a lot of people, a lot of friendship, a lot of good feelings all the way around.”

At noon on October 29, a delegation from the Sino-American Aviation Heritage Foundation (SAAHF), which consisted of more than 30 members, including Flying Tigers veterans such as Moyer and Melvin D. McMullen and their families, departed from San Francisco and arrived in Beijing via Shanghai.

After disembarking the plane, Moyer immediately headed to the Badaling Great Wall. Wearing an army green Flying Tigers jacket, chewing gum, he walked all the way up the stairs to the stone monument “He who does not reach the Great Wall is not a true man”. There, he gave a thumbs-up, drawing a chorus of cheers.

To this day, Moyer is the oldest licensed pilot in the world. Three years ago, he flew a small civilian plane to celebrate his 100th birthday.

“I don’t have a secret,” he said. “The only thing I can say is that I was born on October 30, 1920. And then the days and the months and the years have just kept rolling on until today. I

guess I’ve been very fortunate in how I’ve been living in the past. I’ve always been kind of active in my life, and I’m not overweight. I have no idea. Otherwise, I’d put it in a book and give it away.”

In August 1941, with the approval of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Claire Lee Chennault, then an adviser to the Chinese Aviation Commission, recruited reserve officers and retired personnel of the US army, navy, and air force, and established the American Volunteer Group with Kunming as its base to support the Chinese people’s War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. On the afternoon of December 20 the same year, the first battle in Kunming resulted in a 9-0 victory. The Chinese people cheered in unison, bestowing the nickname “Flying Tigers” on the group.

On July 4 of the following year, the Flying Tigers were incorporated into the United States army and renamed the China Air Task Force of the US Army 10th Air Force. In March

1943, it was expanded to become the US Army 14th Air Force, and Chennault was promoted to Major General and appointed as the commander. After Chennault took office, he strongly urged President Roosevelt to strengthen the air force in China, regain air superiority over the Chinese battlefield, and wait for the opportunity to attack the Japanese mainland. Later Chennault served as the chief of staff of the Chinese Air Force.

On December 7, 1941, the day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Moyer, who was studying engineering at the University of Akron, Ohio, signed up to join the US Army Air Corps as a P-40 fighter pilot, primarily in the Mediterranean theater.

In January 1944, Moyer completed his service in the army and could have returned to the US, but he told his commanders that he did not want to be sent home and was determined to fight alongside General Chennault. He was convinced that it was the right choice because the Chinese people had suffered too much and made too many sacrifices in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression.

In February of that year, Moyer followed the 59th Fighter Squadron and joined the US 14th Air Force, stationed in Chengdu, Sichuan province.

"I'd just come to China and met its people. It's like I'd been here forever. It was very welcoming, and very comfortable. And it was very easy to be

with them. I have admired the Chinese people ever since I came over in 1944. This feeling has flown into me and never changed. I flew fighter jets against the Japanese army, which is the best expression of my feelings for China and the Chinese people," said Moyer.

In the fall of 1943, the US made the Operation Matterhorn, which in-

involved using B-29 bombers and airports built near Chengdu and in India to conduct strategic bombings of Japanese industrial bases in Japan, China's Taiwan and the northeast of the mainland.

Chengdu was the only base from which the Allies bombed Japan. To carry out the operation, large quantities of fuel, bombs, and spare parts were to be



Harry Moyer (right) and his son-in-law Peter Pepper had their photo taken in Beijing on October 31, 2023.

deposited at the forward base in Chengdu. The B-29s, which would carry out the bombing, had to first perform transport missions carrying supplies from India over the Hump Route to Chengdu. Moyer was one of the pilots flying fighters to cover them. Each flight carried 7 tons of fuel. In preparation for one bombing raid on Japan, they had to fly over the Hump Route six times.

In September 1944, Moyer was transferred back to the US and served as a P-40 fighter flight instructor in New Mexico until the end of the war. He returned to China about a half century later in 1995. This 2023 trip was the third time he came to China. Seven members of his family, from three generations, accompanied him. He said with emotion that compared with the past, China has changed surprisingly. However, one thing hasn't changed, that is, the diligence of the Chinese people.

On the morning of October 30, 2023, Moyer, together with other members of the SAAHF delegation, attended the 80th Anniversary of the US 14th Air Force's Support for China's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression at the Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, in Beijing.

Starting from November 1, the delegation visited Chongqing, Kunming in Yunnan province, Liuzhou in Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region,

and Zhijiang in Hunan province, to remember the past when they fought bravely alongside the Chinese army and people.

"I'd like to revisit Kunming, because that's where I first landed when I came to China from India, and where I met General Chennault. Because of him, I came to China. I wanted to come and fight for the Chinese people under the command of General Chennault at that time. That was a big thing for me, and you might say it was on my bucket list. Two years ago, when we were in Washington, D.C., General Chennault's daughter Cynthia, whom I had previously met in Las Vegas, Nevada, invited ten of us Flying Tigers veterans to go to General Chennault's monument in Arlington National Cemetery. It was a very emotional period for me to do that, because I know how much General Chennault did for China at that time," said Moyer.

By the end of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, the US 14th Air Force had shot down 2,600 Japanese aircraft and killed 66,700 Japanese officers and soldiers at the cost of 500 aircraft.

"The Flying Tigers are a bond of friendship between the American and Chinese people, and this bond and connection should be well maintained. As the Chinese say, the tiger symbolizes things such as strength and courage. The most important thing, I think, is

that the soul of the tiger never dies, and that bodes well for the continuing friendship between the American and Chinese people," said Moyer.

"I think it's just the young Chinese generation who knows about the story of the Flying Tigers and the message it presents. It's not known in America because we don't have history education in this area." Moyer is pleased to see that the SAAHF's Flying Tigers Friendship Schools and Youth Leadership Program has been implemented, and more and more American youth are participating in it.

Moyer told a story: "I have a friend who has a nine-year-old boy. At the age of three or four, the boy was excited about the Flying Tigers. We've talked about this. Just about two weeks ago, the boy came up in front of his class and said, 'I want to talk about my friend Harry, and he's a Flying Tiger.' His teacher did not know what a Flying Tiger was. So he kind of told her a little bit, and then she searched it on the internet. The boy said, 'I'm not going to disgrace you for this.' So the teacher asked, 'Well, can your friend come back to visit the school?' The boy answered, 'Well, I will ask my mother if it's okay to ask him.' I thought that was just great to have the young generation. And so that's what I did one time. I hope the Flying Tigers' spirit spreads."

In August 2023, Moyer, together with another veteran, Melvin D. Mc-

Mullen, and Jeffrey Green, chairman of the SAAHF, wrote a letter to Chinese President Xi Jinping, to introduce the foundation's efforts in promoting friendly exchanges between the US and China. On September 12, President Xi replied to the letter. Moyer's excitement was palpable: "It's such an exceptional letter to have him announce the acceptance of the Flying Tigers concept and also endorse it, and also the new program that we have, and the legacy that we're starting with the new generation. And of course I'm sure this letter means more."

"That is my only hope," said Moyer. "That is my primary purpose of being here at this age, which is to come to China and spread the story of the Flying Tigers and about the US and China. So I think it's important that I, as one of the last of the Flying Tigers, put myself out to be anything that can help the situation. And I think it's up to the new generation to do so, but Melvin and I are the last ones, so to speak, who are going to visit China. And I hope that we can use our impact, if any, to continue the important relationship established 80 years ago."

Peace, the desire of the people

Melvin D. McMullen, another Flying Tigers veteran, entered the living room, accompanied by his wife, Jennifer McMullen. He was 98 years

old and wore a brooch with the design of national flags of the US and China on his gray suit. His shirt was light blue, and his Bolo tie featured the arm-band symbol of the China-Burma-India war zone, which was very conspicuous against each other.

"My wife and I have been to China many times over the last 40 years. We've observed and admire that China has developed so much. Little cities and little villages are now big cities. Big cities are now bigger cities. I'm 98 years old, so it may be one of the last times I can ever do this although Harry Moyer, who's with us, had a birthday yesterday, 103. Ha!" McMullen let out a happy laugh.

McMullen was born on June 5, 1925, in Los Angeles, California. He joined the army in 1943 and was posted to Chenggong Airport near Kunming as a technical sergeant in December 1944. Before this, he had never been to a place more than 300 miles away from home.

"I was 18 years old. I had an older brother that was already just about to become a pilot. So I wanted to be a pilot too. I was then still in high school. I went down to the recruiting office and they accepted me in the aviation cadet program. They actually took me in the army, but then because I was only 17, they gave me several months to turn 18 and finish high school. By the time I finished high school, we were already

at war, and it was everyone's duty to take part at some point. I was ordered to report to a shooting school, not a flight school. I was a nose turret gunner on a B-24J bomber and assistant flight mechanic, and our targets were factory units, railroad marshaling yards, and military installations around a city, but generally not bombing cities. It's a great experience for a young man," said McMullen.

McMullen and his comrades took off from Kunming to attack Japanese targets throughout China and to bomb Japanese ships in the South China Sea.

"We were on the outskirts of Kunming and we could see rice fields. I found that people in different countries are the same, whether it is China or the US. Parents give their children love and care, and children play in the yard. When countries change for one reason or another, the aspirations of the people always remain the same. They want to live in peace, and raise their children according to the customs of their ancestors. As someone who has been there, I have seen this. I traveled halfway around the world to China, and although I did not speak the language and could not sit and chat with Chinese people, I could observe their daily lives. The Chinese people welcomed our support, which was my first experience of China."

A few months after arriving in Kunming, McMullen was transferred to

Chengdu, about 400 miles to the north, to participate in Operation Hump. McMullen's plane was called "Dragon Lady", and all the missions, whether bombing operations, aerial reconnaissance, or deliveries of fuel, began with the mission briefing. At the briefing, the pilots learned about enemy movements, weather conditions, sometimes made a few jokes, and finally said a prayer.

After coming out of the briefing room, the pilots went to the tarmac in jeeps or trucks. There, the captain and co-pilot conducted pre-flight checks, and McMullen, as a mechanic, together with other crew members, also had to walk around the plane to visually inspect its exterior. The planes lined up for takeoff, and as the first plane sprinted to the end of the runway, the second plane began to taxi.

McMullen's position was below the cockpit deck, behind the pilot. At each takeoff, the pilot and co-pilot would first crank up the engines and hit the brakes, and the plane would behave like a wild horse, trying to break free and surge forward. Then, the pilot would shout over the sound of the engines, "Release the brakes, lower the deceleration plate," and so on, and the plane would accelerate on the runway and soar into the sky.

"When our airmen were on a bombing mission, they realized that they had the best chance of survival if they flew over the target area. In fact,

maybe in some cases, the only chance for survival was to fly far enough away from the target area so that they could be rescued by a brave villager or farmer. If the enemy found that the villagers were helping the Americans, they would be punished. And the stories I've heard many times are that they would hide the airmen by day, and then by night, they would move them from village to village until they could be picked up by the Americans. We have never forgotten that over 2,000 American pilots gave their lives, and also that more than 200 pilots survived because of the help of the Chinese people," said McMullen.

"I want to mention this man Jeffrey Greene, who did something very insightful. He called us together and wrote a letter to President Xi Jinping, and President Xi personally replied. I totally agree with the content of the letter. We know there're differences between nations and their policies. Some issues should be resolved through negotiations between the parties. We should never need a war, because the methods of war that we have today mean the destruction of everything. It's not like in the past, you could bomb here, you could bomb there, but now they have developed nuclear weapons. Their only purpose is to destroy everything. So what we are doing is keeping the peace, not waging war."

Jennifer, with her hair completely

white, sat quietly nearby, listening attentively. During World War II, American women stepped forward and rallied around the slogan, "We can do it!" In the summer of 1944, Jennifer became a riveter at Lockheed's large aircraft factory, making her contribution to victory in the war. Her two brothers, who served in the army, returned home safely after the war. Melvin D. McMullen and Jennifer married after the war. The couple has since accompanied each other to this day.

Carrying forward the legacy of US-China cooperation

Jeffrey Greene, chairman of the SAAHF, spoke as fast as a machine gun. He was a pilot and served in the US Marine Corps. His father was a World War II veteran. Since he was 5 or 6 years old, his father has told him many World War II stories, and his favorite was the Flying Tigers.

In 1995, Greene was lucky to meet more than 60 Flying Tigers veterans and became closest friends with his childhood heroes. When the veterans were invited to China to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the victory of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, Greene, who was working on a documentary about the Flying Tigers, accompanied them and set foot on Chinese soil for the first time. He saw the excitement on the faces of the

Chinese people when they met these heroes. He thought to himself, “What could we do to bring more Flying Tigers veterans back to China?” So he decided to establish the SAAHF.

Greene said, “When we started the foundation in 1998, we had over 500 veterans. And this was a very small number, because there were millions of American soldiers in the US. So very few people knew about the war in China. It’s surprising, and it’s just frustrating for me, when I came to China, everybody knew who the Flying Tigers were. It’s probably because we don’t study history or our own history the way you do. So what we’ve done since then, we’ve brought over 500 veterans to China, to 25 cities of 13 provinces.”

“Harry and Melvin are in all likelihood the last Flying Tigers to return to China. Yesterday, we were very honored to be received by Vice-President Han Zheng in the Great Hall of the People, including General Chennault’s daughter Cynthia and granddaughter Nell Calloway. Harry yesterday turned 103 years old. He’s very healthy, healthier than I am, for heaven’s sake. It’s timely because as I said, we’ve lost 98 percent of our board members due to old age. Again, we lost 12 to COVID-19. So to keep the foundation going, we’re involving young family members. And it’s a pool of several thousand people that are now joining the foundation.”

Greene says that the US-China relationship is nowhere near as good as it was when he first came to China 30 years ago. If the US and China do not cooperate, there is no future for either or the world. We must get back to the basics, back to the deep friendship that was established between the American and Chinese people when the Flying Tigers helped the Chinese people fight against the Japanese aggression.

“When Doolittle Air Force bombed Japan in April 1942, villagers in southeastern China risked their lives to help 64 American pilots who had abandoned their aircraft to bail out of danger. The Japanese were furious and retaliated wildly against villages that might have helped the American pilots. We now know that the Japanese army even used bacteriological weapons to destroy the Quzhou area in Zhejiang province, where at least 250,000 civilians were slaughtered. It has left me a deep impression,” said Greene.

“It is worth noting that if they were lucky enough to get out of a burning airplane, land by parachute, if they weren’t immediately grabbed by the Japanese, they had more than a 95 percent chance of getting back to their base. Three members of our foundation were rescued by the Chinese New Fourth Army. For example, Glen Beneda parachuted out on his way back from a bombing mission in Wuhan in 1944, and was escorted by local vil-

lagers to the Fifth Division of the New Fourth Army and received by the Division Commander Li Xiannian. During the war, every Chinese would risk their lives and even their families to save Americans, without any hesitation.”

“There’s another example of it going unnoticed. In order to build the airport, the Chinese people broke stones, mixed yellow mud, and made huge stone rollers. Sometimes hundreds of people were needed to pull these heavy stone rollers to build the runway. More than two million people, young and old, worked to build the airfield. The Chinese believed that as long as the airfield could be built as soon as possible, American pilots could come here and stop the Japanese planes from bombing. The Chinese people showed extraordinary courage.”

Speaking about President Xi’s letter of reply, Greene said, “It was a very emotional thing to receive it. In it, President Xi warmly welcomed our group. He spoke very positively of our fine-timed apprenticeship school program, and he welcomed our photo exhibit. I can’t tell you how touched I was. President Xi very properly said, ‘China will never forget its old friends.’”

On September 1, 2022, the SAAHF and the Chinese Consulate General in San Francisco launched the Flying Tigers Friendship Schools and Youth Leadership Program at the Jack Lund Schofield Middle School in Las Vegas,

Nevada, the first Flying Tigers Friendship School in the US. At present, the foundation has invited three schools in the US and three schools in China to participate in the program, through online courses and summer camps, to promote student exchanges between the two countries, covering about 15,000 students in both countries.

“The first group of the Chinese children attending our program will come to the US at the end of January 2024, and they will spend about 10 days with American students of the same age, sharing Flying Tigers stories, shopping together, drinking soda, and playing basketball. When American kids come to China and visit Zhijiang, Kunming, Liuzhou, they’re going to take wonderful stories back with them to the US. And they’re going to tell their friends the cool things they did in China that summer.”

Margaret Mills Kincannon, vice-chairwoman of the SAAHF, exuded an air of competence wearing a black leather jacket. She is the director of the Flying Tigers Friendship Schools Program. She added, “As Jeffery said to you, we look forward to teaching more and more American and Chinese youth about the Flying Tigers and the legacy of cooperation between America and China as it existed during World War II in the very near future. The younger generation is the key to what we’re go-

ing to be trying to accomplish. We hope to establish friendships between them. We can learn more about each other and establish groups so that we can discuss important issues as they develop in our world today.”

**The bond of friendship is strong
as ever**

Margaret Mills Kincannon is the daughter of Flying Tigers veteran James Mills.

Kincannon said, “When my father was in China, he was a corporal and by the time he went home at the end of the war, he was a technical sergeant. He came to China to work on the American airplanes, the B-25 bombers, and to teach the Chinese members of his squadron how to work on the American planes and to fly them, and how to keep those ready for missions. But then later on, he found his name on a list of the people who were supposed to be flying missions the next day. He was never trained as a gunner, but they gave him machine guns and put him in the air. So all his training was on the job.”

“My father used to talk about the Chinese people, ‘They were industrious. They were friendly. They were cooperative and helpful.’ He said that they thought the Americans were the greatest thing on earth, and he had a similar feeling about the Chinese. He

liked to walk down the street and say hello to the kids.” Kincannon said “hello” in Chinese and smiled heartily.

In early April 1944, 22-year-old James Mills arrived in China. Three weeks later, Kincannon was born in Arkansas. “When my father came home after the war, it was in November 1945.”

As a child, Kincannon had seen her father’s Air Force badge that has the orange tiger with wings. She heard two thrilling stories from her father. One is about a tiger that walked in front of the supply-loaded jeep that her father was driving when he was in India. The other happened in China. On a mission when her father served as a gunner, a bullet that should have shot his leg lost its momentum as it approached. So it didn’t cause any injury at all. It only made a dent in his boot. When he completed his mission and returned, he found the bullet on the cabin deck.

“I’ve heard the Flying Tigers stories my whole life, so I thought everyone knew about them. But now, there aren’t a lot of Americans who know about the stories that we have heard. I need to change that. My father said he really couldn’t remember much about the war. But I was eager to learn more and wanted to learn as much as I could about his squadron and write a book in his memory as a gift. In the process of writing, I found that it was not only

about that, but also about the past co-operation between the US and China during the war.”

Kincannon spent about ten years writing a book based on her father’s oral accounts. She reviewed the official records of her father’s squadron, and reached out to about 70 veterans and their families who had served with her father. Using their stories, photos, and documents, she crafted the book, which is scheduled to be published in the US in April 2024.

After the media meeting, the delegation visited the China Aviation Museum in the afternoon. In front of a C-47 transport plane, David Goodrich posed for a photo. Goodrich, 68, a white-haired man with a Santa Claus look, was visiting China for the first time. His father, Jack Goodrich, was a pilot on the Hump Route. The main aircraft of this route was the C-47 transport aircraft.

After the fall of Burma in April 1942, the Japanese army cut off the Burma Road, the only land route connecting China to the outside world. In response, China and the US jointly opened an air transport line stretching from India’s Assam Valley to China’s Yunnan province, a distance of about 525 miles. Because the route passed over the southern foothills of the Himalayas, where the rolling peaks look like the humps of a camel, it was named the

“Hump Route”.

The harsh and changeable weather in this region, coupled with the extreme lack of navigation facilities and accurate weather forecasts, put aircraft at risk of crash at any time. More than 700,000 tons of supplies were transported over the course of three years of arduous flights.

Jack Goodrich arrived in China in May 1944 and carried out 88 transport missions, making 176 round trips on the Hump Route. He now lives in Pennsylvania, and often tells the story of the Flying Tigers to his grandchildren. Due to physical conditions, he cannot fly long distance to visit China. He hopes his son can pass his words to the Chinese people: He is proud of the friendship forged between the two peoples in the fierce battle! He celebrated his 100th birthday in January 2024.

In the delegation, Paul Friday’s father Joseph Friday was also a pilot on the Hump Route.

Fifteen-year-old Jackson Long, a cute boy with curly chestnut hair, is the youngest member of the delegation and currently attends high school in Pennsylvania. This was his first visit to China, and he stood for a long time in front of a bomber.

Jackson’s great-grandfather, Flying Tigers veteran Clifford R. Long Sr., was born in Atuna, Pennsylvania, on March 1, 1925. Before becoming a Fly-

ing Tiger, he had never been on a plane or left his hometown. In the Battle of Tengchong in 1944, he and his comrades repeatedly dive-bombed at very low altitudes. On August 16, he hit the Japanese regiment headquarters located at the East Gate with a single shot, killing more than 30 senior Japanese officers in an underground bunker beneath the city wall. The Chinese troops on the ground rushed into the city and eventually achieved victory.

Clifford R. Long Sr. was shot down in two air battles and was rescued by local villagers. By the time he finished his military service, he had just turned 19 and was a flight captain with 104 combat flights under his belt. He flew so well that when he was flying at low altitudes, Chinese people would see his round face through the cockpit and so gave him the nickname “Moon Face”. He carved the name of his girlfriend “Shirley” on the fuselage of the plane. After the war, he married his girlfriend.

A Chinese man wearing a Flying Tigers jacket, holding a selfie stick, walked and talked. His name is Gao Demin, a writer and research fellow of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. He is the son of Huang Huanxiao, a nurse of the US military hospital in Yunnan province during the war. In 2003, he wrote and published a full-length biographical novel *A Nurse*

with the American Flying Tigers, based on his mother's experiences.

Robin Olney, 70 years old, is the daughter of Flying Tigers veteran Richard Olney. Richard Olney came to China at the age of 25, returned to the US after the war in 1945. He never had the opportunity to return to China, and he passed away in 2018. He kept a videotape of his life in China, which he often played for his children.

Jane Bonner Scott, the daughter of Flying Tigers veteran Steve J. Bonner, last visited China in 2005 with her

father, who died two years ago. Steve J. Bonner, born on January 16, 1918 in Oklahoma, was posted to China in early 1943 as chief machinist of the 76th Fighter Squadron of the 23rd Fighter Group under the 14th Air Force. During his time in China, he carried out a total of 86 flight missions, shooting down five and possibly another eight enemy aircraft.

The visit of the Flying Tigers veterans and their families to China has enhanced the understanding and friendship between the two peoples.

As Moyer wrote in May 2022 in San Luis Obispo, California: "The US and China were allies and great friends, and together they drove the aggressors out of China's territory and airspace. I believe that the 'Flying Tigers' will not die like other animals; their spirit will live on forever. So let's look at the Flying Tigers as an example of how our two countries can overcome great challenges together. Let's continue to work to ensure that this unique bond formed so many years ago remains as strong as ever." ■



The Flying Tigers veterans and their family members took a group photo at the China Aviation Museum on October 31, 2023.