



Artists perform during a gala held at the 12th National Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities of China in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, November 26, 2024. *(Xinhua/Zhang Liyun)*

CHINA TODAY |

Democracy

China: Democracy That Works

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Seated in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Chinese national lawmaker Wang Yongcheng ran his fingers along raised dots of the Braille government work report as he listened to the document delivered by the premier.

Wang, who is visually impaired, was reviewing the report during the annual session of China's people's congress, which together with the political advisory body meeting is known as "two sessions." For this year's session, he submitted suggestions regarding retirement services for the disabled people.

The "two sessions" offer the world an important window to observe China's democracy. Thousands of deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC) and members of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) gathered in Beijing to discuss and plan for future development.

In a country with about one-fifth of the world's population, people are actively participating in democratic practices, ranging from state legislation to local matters.

Scenarios of democracy manifest in diverse ways. In tea lounges in east China's Fujian Province, people engage with lawmakers, expressing their opinions and contributing to decision-making processes. In another instance, thanks to a political advisor's diligent investigation, more than 230,000 ancient trees in central China's Hunan Province were granted legal protection.

"Whole-process people's democracy is the defining feature of socialist democracy," said Chinese President Xi Jinping. "It is democracy in its broadest, most genuine, and most effective form."

The thoughts and aspirations of over 1.4 billion people have been incorporated into the top-level design of national development through China's unique and distinctive whole-process people's democracy.

Broadest Representation

Wang Yongcheng, 57, is the first visually impaired deputy to the NPC since the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Fulfilling his duties as a national lawmaker since last year, Wang has been approached by many visually impaired people requesting him to voice their concerns.

Last year, Wang submitted four suggestions, one of which suggested publishing textbooks with large font sizes for low-vision students attending regular classes. He received Braille responses to the suggestions from the relevant government departments. "The blind community is 'seen' by more people," Wang said.

Mandated with state power by the Constitution, NPC deputies include Chinese leaders, entrepreneurs, scientists and university presidents as well as couriers, farmers and welders, etc.

As the fundamental political system in China, the people's congress system entails that individuals can be elected as NPC deputies regardless of ethnic group, occupation, gender, or financial status. At no point has the "democracy for the few," as seen in some countries—"democracy of the 1 percent, by the 1 percent, for the 1 percent"—been seen in China.

In 1954, the people's congress system was officially established in China. Over the past 70 years, democracy in China has become even more vigorous.

By last year, China had over 2.77 million deputies to people's congresses at all levels nationwide. Every ethnic group in the country has its own deputies to the NPC and members of the CPPCC National Committee.

Liu Lei, a 40-year-old NPC deputy, has been championing the cause of the Hezhe ethnic group, which boasts a population of over 5,000 in China and mostly resides in the northernmost province of Heilongjiang.

This ethnic group previously relied on fishing and hunting but has now transitioned to selling traditional Hezhe fish-skin paintings on e-commerce platforms. During this year's "two sessions," Liu called for increasing support for industries in remote regions to provide better development opportunities for the group.

In Western countries such as the United States, it is rare to see a high representation of rural people, blue-collar workers and ethnic minority individuals at the highest level of state power, said columnist Iara Vidal of the Brazilian magazine *Revista Forum*, adding that diverse voices are heard and respected in China's annual "two sessions."

Chinese Democracy Not a Show

In the ancient town of Wufu, Liu Jizhang, a deputy to the municipal people's congress of Nanping in Fujian, regularly gathers suggestions from neighborhood residents. Following suggestions to improve the local landscape, flowers were promptly planted along footpaths.

"I push for immediate action on matters I can address. For those requiring further coordination, I direct them to relevant authorities and follow through," Liu said.

The town is well-acquainted with China's ancient people-centered philosophy. Confucian scholar Zhu Xi from the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279) lived and studied in Wufu for many years. He championed the philosophy that a nation is based on its people, and society is established for the benefit of its people.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) has elevated the people-oriented philosophy to the core principle of "putting the people at the center" in national governance.

Liu Ting, an NPC deputy, has been focusing on issues related to an aging society over the past years. He has traveled to over 20 cities in China to explore how to use intelligent services to serve the aged population.

The environment and resource sector of the CPPCC National Committee, established last year, put forth over 160 proposals in 2023. Huang Miansong, a political advisor of this sector, surveyed multiple places focusing on rural development, and suggested orderly construction of rural environmental facilities during this year's session.

China has fostered a democratic framework that ensures the orderly and effective participation of its people in political affairs.

Venues and channels for consultation and discussion are available in various forms within neighborhoods. Online platforms ranging from forums to polls and surveys empower the people to contribute to policy discussions and the decision-making process.

At a legislation outreach in Shanghai's Hongqiao Subdistrict, boards are used to display the number of legislative discussions, but numbers are marked with magnets so they can be replaced easily, said Sheng Hong, an NPC deputy and a local community Party official. Over the past six months, nearly 100 suggestions submitted from the outreach have been adopted in national legislation including China's charity law and law on barrier-free environment creation.

Across the nation, the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee has established 45 such grassroots outreaches. Provincial and municipal legislative commissions have also set up over 6,500 grassroots outreaches across China, ensuring that the voices of the people are heard.

Simon Lichtenberg, a Danish entrepreneur who has lived in Shanghai for over three decades, has participated in multiple legislative consultations. He said that improving the laws by making suggestions gives people a sense of fulfillment and achievement.

Chinese democracy is not a formality, nor a "one-time" show. Deputies to various levels of people's congresses are accountable to the public.

When taking a barrage of questions from voters several months ago, Wang Lihong, a deputy to a district congress in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, was sweating in the palms of his hands even in winter chill.

In response to the problem of chaotic parking in the community, he promised to run it over with the property management and seek solutions. That day, among the 100 voters who participated in the evaluation, 99 expressed satisfaction with his performance.

Carlos Martinez, a British author and political commentator, believes that in the Chinese system, the people always enjoy democratic rights in all stages, not just during elections.

Driving Modernization

During a trip to the countryside in Hunan Province, Lai Mingyong, a member of the CPPCC National Committee, found an ancient tree pummeled with iron nails serving as hangers for various items. Feeling the need to protect ages-old trees, Lai promptly submitted a proposal through the CPPCC Hunan Provincial Committee online platform.

Not long after, relevant trial schemes followed by regulations for ancient and renowned tree protection were implemented. Damaging such trees could now incur fines of up to 5,000 yuan (about 705 US dollars).

"Chinese democracy has never been an ornament," Lai said.

Chinese people believe that the efficacy of democracy holds greater significance than its form. In

China, democracy aims at pooling of wisdom to promote growth and prosperity.

At the “two sessions” in 2019, Dong Caiyun, an NPC deputy from the rural area of Jishishan County, highlighted the need for a local highway linking surrounding areas. Her voice was well heard.

Construction of a highway began later that year after the discussions. When a 6.2-magnitude earthquake struck Jishishan last December, the road that had just opened to traffic emerged as a lifeline linking the affected regions, facilitating the transportation of rescue forces and supplies.

During the “two sessions” last year, all proposals and suggestions submitted by NPC deputies were later reviewed, processed and given replies.

Every year, the government work report undergoes thorough deliberation by deputies before approval at the NPC annual session. Subsequently, the State Council will specify key tasks based on the report, assign responsibilities and establish deadlines for implementation.

Jose Luis Centella, president of the Communist Party of Spain, said that China has always fostered a democracy that sees wide participation from the people, involving them in national governance.

Democracy serves as a solid foundation for China’s governance. A survey report released last year by the Academy of Contemporary China and World Studies revealed that respondents from 23 countries expressed an average approval rating of nearly 90 percent for China’s governance capabilities.

The report to the 20th CPC National Congress emphasized that developing a whole-process people’s democracy is one of the essential requirements of Chinese modernization.

“When Chinese modernization offers a new option for human modernization, its unique perspective on democracy also becomes a new form of democracy,” said Zhou Hanmin, a member of the Standing Committee of the National Committee of the CPPCC and president of the Shanghai Public Diplomacy Association. “This is a significant contribution of China to the political civilization of humanity.”

China Focus: People’s Congress System a Proven Cornerstone of Chinese Democracy

Source: Xinhua
September 2024

Zhou Hongyu, who had served as a national lawmaker for 20 years, saw many of his 200-plus proposals adopted and implemented. Among these proposals was free compulsory education in all urban and rural areas in China.

Such input in shaping national policies and laws is made possible by China’s foundational political system—the system of people’s congresses.

This system, established in 1954, has evolved over 70 years into a more functional and efficient institution, underpinning China’s rapid economic development and long-term stability.

Observers note that the political order existing in China stands in stark contrast with the political disorder found in the West, as it integrates the diverse interests of over 1.4 billion people into national decision-making, governance and oversight, ensuring that power remains with the people through China’s unique democratic practices.

Representation: from 8:1 to 1:1

Zhou, a professor in the field of education, was elected as a deputy to China’s National People’s Congress (NPC) in 2002. In 2003, after conducting research in rural schools, he proposed a fully free compulsory education system for rural areas, outlining its necessity and a detailed implementation plan.

During his first decade as an NPC deputy, Zhou submitted numerous proposals, primarily focusing on education, including free vocational education, schooling for migrant children, and school bus safety, with around 70 percent of his suggestions adopted.

By 2012, China had extended free compulsory education nationwide.

Zhou attributes his success to passion, perseverance, rationality, a people-centered perspective and his professional expertise. “Unlike full-time Western lawmakers, China’s part-time NPC deputies are deeply connected to their fields, offering authentic insights into key issues.”

In September 1954, the first session of the first NPC convened, marking the formal establishment of China’s people’s congress system. The system features a multitiered structure, with the NPC at the top and congresses at provincial, municipal, county and township levels. Deputies are elected at each level every five years to represent the people’s interests.

Of the 2.77 million deputies in service now, 94.7 percent are from the county and township levels, and they are elected on a one-person-one-vote basis. China’s election of people’s congress deputies, the world’s largest democratic election involves over a billion voters.

The election system has evolved over the decades, moving from an 8:1 rural-to-urban population ratio in 1953 to equal representation in 2010.

Women and grassroots workers, including migrant workers, are increasingly represented in the NPC. In 2007, a minimum threshold of 22-percent women deputies was introduced and the proportion exceeded 26 percent in 2023. The number of migrant worker deputies had grown from three in 2008 to 56 in 2023.

“Chinese democracy is not a formality, nor a ‘one-time’ show. Deputies to various levels of people’s congresses are accountable to the public,” said Zhang Shuhua, head of the Institute of Political Science, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Legislation: from “Exist or Not” to “Good or Not”

In Weidong Village, Guangdong Province, accessible facilities like ramps, toilet handrails and blind-friendly pathways can be easily found, largely due to suggestions from Wu Tengxin, a village shopkeeper with leg disability. His proposal to enhance barrier-free facilities in rural areas was incorporated into a national law governing the development of barrier-free environments.

At the entrances to multiple special schools in Shanghai, new devices with crossing prompts have been installed to help students safely navigate the pedestrian crossings. This initiative stemmed from a teacher’s contribution during a legislative consultation meeting last year, with the teacher suggesting the standardizing of crossing prompt sounds and Braille available on traffic signal facilities near special schools.

Over the past 70 years, China’s legislation has shifted from addressing basic and urgent needs to creating a more holistic legal system that includes laws catering to the specific needs of disadvantaged groups.

As China’s highest state organ of power, the NPC and its Standing Committee exercise legislative authority.

On July 1, 1979, the second session of the fifth NPC adopted seven laws, including the criminal law and the law on Chinese-foreign equity joint ventures, putting the country back on the track of effective legislation. Over the next 30-plus years, China developed a socialist legal system with unique characteristics.

China has since accelerated its legislative processes and enhanced the quality of its laws, most notably with the enactment of its inaugural Civil Code in 2020. In 2024, a significant milestone is expected with the development of an environmental code.

This year, the top legislature plans to advance this environmental code, integrating and revising existing laws and regulations pertaining to the environment. The aim is the creation of a high-quality draft for deliberation by year-end, reflecting the theories, systems and practices of ecological civilization.

China has more than 300 laws in effect, 35 of which specifically address environmental issues, making the compilation of the environmental code a mature endeavor.

A key reform resolution adopted at the third plenary session of the 20th Communist Party of China Central Committee in July has set clear guidelines for legislative reforms, specifying key objectives including the formulation of laws to support private sector development, finance, ethnic solidarity and progress, and combating transnational corruption, alongside amendments to existing oversight laws.

“The focus of these reforms is on the effectiveness and quality of legislation, not merely its existence,” said Shen Chunyao, director of the top legislature’s Legislative Affairs Commission. He compared this pursuit to leading an Olympic race, where higher standards and greater responsibilities are paramount.

To enhance national development and support major reforms, Shen underlines better alignment between legislative decision-making and reform efforts to ensure that the rule of law facilitates development and innovation across all sectors.

Pooling Wisdom: from Stools to Great Hall

Every Saturday morning, residents in Mengyuan Community in the eastern Chinese city of Jining gather around Wu Hansen, a local district people’s congress deputy, for their weekly “meeting on stools.”

“A streetlight is out.” “Some residents walk their dogs without leashes.” “Cooking fumes of a restaurant often seep into residential buildings.” Seated on stools, they discuss pressing community issues such as these.

Wu records these concerns and promptly advocates for solutions, often inviting local authorities, including police, law enforcers, community workers and property managers to join in discussing more complex matters. Over the past year, more than 140 issues have been resolved through these meetings.

This grassroots initiative exemplifies how China’s people’s congresses engage with the public. Across the country, residents voice concerns to deputies through various platforms, ranging from in-person gatherings like those in tea-houses and under banyan trees to online forums.

As an important institutional vehicle for realizing whole-process people’s democracy, people’s congresses provide platforms for the people to amplify their voices and participate in decision-making processes concerning both everyday matters and state affairs.

At the national level, thousands of NPC deputies meet every year at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing to review laws, shape development plans, and oversee the country’s administrative, supervisory,

adjudicatory and procuratorial organs.

On this platform of China's highest state power, key laws like the Civil Code and the Foreign Investment Law were introduced.

Over the past decade, the creation and expansion of legislation outreach offices have brought ordinary people closer to the top legislature.

Iranian trader Hamid Dehghani, operating a company in the bustling city of Yiwu in eastern China, has been actively engaged in the legislative process of the country, contributing suggestions for law drafts alongside other foreign residents.

During a community meeting held by a legislation outreach initiative, he suggested that restaurants should provide free packaging services to their customers, when discussing the draft law on combating food wastage.

"I find it incredible that they allow foreigners to give suggestions on a Chinese law draft," Hamid said. "Chinese democracy is highly authentic. Even the smallest voices are heard and conveyed to the top legislative body."

Since 2015, outreach offices have expanded nationwide, reaching out from major cities to remote areas, snow-covered plateaus, and ethnic communities, allowing individuals, including foreign residents like Hamid, to contribute to law drafts.

Currently, China has 45 national and over 7,300 provincial and municipal outreach offices, while more than 3,200 ideas collected via national legislation outreach have been incorporated into over 180 law drafts and revisions.

Proposals from NPC deputies and national advisors at last year's annual sessions have led to in excess of 2,000 government policies, such as recruiting more graduates in rural health centers and building electric vehicle charging stations.

The Chinese people value the effectiveness of democracy more than the form it takes, believing true democracy leads to good governance.

According to the 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer, China has the highest trust index among all surveyed countries.

Stephen Perry, president emeritus of Britain's 48 Group Club, noted that China has a sound system for hearing and responding to its people, calling it simpler than what is prevalent in the West.

"The people's congress system provides a convenient channel for the public to participate in decision-making on public affairs, ensuring that the people are the masters of their own country," said lawyer Fang Yan, an NPC deputy.

China's Legal Framework and Measures for Counterterrorism

Source: Xinhua
January 23, 2024

Preface

Terrorism is the common enemy of humanity, posing a grave threat to international peace and security, and representing a challenge to all countries and all of humanity. All members of the international community share the responsibility to fight it.

Over the decades, the United Nations has led the creation of relevant conventions and other instruments, coordinating member states in their joint efforts to combat terrorism, and bringing such efforts under the rule of law. In response to its call, many countries have actively fulfilled their international obligations by making and enforcing domestic counterterrorism laws and strengthening international cooperation against terrorism. Through unremitting efforts, the international community has gradually established a multitiered framework of legal instruments against terrorism, including international and regional conventions, multilateral and bilateral treaties and agreements, and domestic laws.

As a victim of terrorism, China has long faced its real threat, and has always attached great importance to law-based counterterrorism efforts. It has accumulated experience by concluding or joining international conventions and treaties and amending and improving criminal laws. In the face of new developments in international and domestic terrorism, China has first endeavored to gain a deeper understanding of law-based counterterrorism, summarize its underlying dynamics, and identify appropriate countermeasures. Drawing on foreign experience, China has formulated counterterrorism laws, improved the legal framework, and made consistent application of these laws. These have provided legal safeguards for China's ramped up efforts in combating terrorism.

China has found a path of law-based counterterrorism that conforms to its realities by establishing a sound legal framework, promoting strict, impartial, procedure-based law enforcement, and ensuring impartial administration of justice and effective protection of human rights. It has safeguarded national and public security, protected people's lives and property, and contributed to global and regional security and stability.

I. An Improving Legal Framework for Counterterrorism

Headed by the UN, its specialized agencies, and some other international organizations, the international community has formulated 13 global counterterrorism conventions since the 1960s, demonstrating its position and attitude on counterterrorism.

To strengthen international cooperation and effectively prevent and combat terrorist activities, China has joined or ratified a number of conventions since the late 1970s, including the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, and Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air. In light of its national conditions, and following constitutional principles, China has drawn on useful experience from the international community and accelerated its efforts to build a domestic counterterrorism legal framework since the 1990s.

Amending and Improving the Criminal Laws

Terrorism is viewed by the international community as a serious criminal offense, and is therefore a highlighted target of criminal laws in all countries.

In March 1997, China's National People's Congress (NPC) amended the Criminal Law, adding the crimes of forming, leading, or participating in a terrorist organization, and tightening sanctions for crimes of terrorism.

After the September 11 attacks in the United States in 2001, many countries took prompt and effective measures to combat terrorism. In December the same year, China's NPC Standing Committee adopted Amendment III to the Criminal Law, which consists of eight revisions and additions for improving and clarifying provisions on terrorist activities. One of the additions relates to the crime of financing terrorism. This was part of China's effort to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

At the same time, to sanction money laundering for terrorist activities, China prescribed terrorism as a

predicate crime of money laundering. In June 2006, the NPC Standing Committee adopted Amendment VI to the Criminal Law, which further clarifies penalties on money laundering for terrorist activities. In response to new developments and issues in the crime of terrorism, in August 2015 the NPC Standing Committee adopted Amendment IX to the Criminal Law, adding to it the crimes of preparing for terrorist activities, advocating terrorism and extremism, inciting terrorism, and using extremism to undermine law enforcement, while also clarifying relevant charges and penalties.

In 2012 and 2018, the NPC and its Standing Committee amended the Criminal Procedure Law to add provisions on the investigation, prosecution, and trial procedures for crimes of terrorism. The Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate have independently or jointly formulated and issued a series of judicial interpretations to further standardize the application of law and prosecution procedures for combating crimes of terrorism.

Making a Counterterrorism Law

Since the beginning of the 21st century, a series of horrendous terrorist attacks have occurred around the world. In response, many countries have made their own counterterrorism law, or amended existing laws. In October 2011, to strengthen counterterrorism, safeguard national security, maintain social stability, and protect people's lives and property, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Decision on Issues Related to Strengthening Counterterrorism Work, which defines the concept of terrorism, the leading state counterterrorism body and its duties, the determination of terrorist organizations and individuals, the publication of lists of these organizations and individuals, and the principles for international cooperation. This laid a solid foundation for subsequent legislation.

Between 2011 and 2014, terrorist attacks hit multiple countries, signaling a resurgence of terrorism worldwide. Forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism, both within and outside China, carried out violent terrorist acts in Xinjiang, Beijing, Yunnan, and other places.

From April 2014, to summarize the experience against crimes of terrorism, improve the counterterrorism mechanism, and curb frequent and widespread acts of violence and terrorism, the leading state counterterrorism body led several other departments in conducting field investigations, research and argumentation, soliciting opinions and suggestions from all parties, and drafting a counterterrorism law. In October 2014, the NPC Standing Committee held the first deliberations on the draft law, published it in full to the public for suggestions, and made revisions. In February and December 2015, it deliberated on the draft law for the second and third rounds to improve it. On December 27, 2015, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Counterterrorism Law. It is a comprehensive counterterrorism law that defines China's basic principles and stance on counterterrorism. By specifying provisions on the determination of terrorist organizations and individuals, security protection, intelligence information, investigation, response and handling, international cooperation, safeguard measures, and legal liability, it provides a strong legal guarantee for preventing and punishing terrorist activities. In April 2018, the NPC Standing Committee amended the law to further clarify the responsibilities of competent departments and facilitate effective counterterrorism work.

Example 1 Draft Counterterrorism Law Open for Public Comment

Following the first deliberations on the draft counterterrorism law, the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee, in accordance with the Legislation Law, published the draft on the NPC website for public comment and distributed it to provincial-level administrative units, relevant central departments, some universities, and legal research institutions for suggestions. Based on the opinions and suggestions solicited, the NPC Standing Committee revised and improved the draft.

Improving Other Relevant Laws

China has made consistent efforts to upgrade the counterterrorism provisions of relevant laws to strengthen systematic coordination among different laws, close legal loopholes, improve areas of weakness, and form synergy in counterterrorism practice:

The Anti-Money Laundering Law, adopted in 2006, provides for the prevention and suppression of terrorist financing and related illegal and criminal activities. The National Security Law, adopted in 2015, provides for the fight against terrorism and extremism. The Cybersecurity Law, adopted in 2016, prohibits the use of the internet to advocate terrorism and extremism. The National Defense Law, amended in 2020, provides for the lawful use of armed forces in combating terrorism. The Law on the People's Armed Police, amended in 2020, provides for the People's Armed Police Force to perform the tasks of preventing and responding to terrorist activities. The Law on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region enacted in 2020 contains provisions on combating crimes of terrorism in the region and defined the relevant penalties.

Improving Relevant Administrative Regulations

The Chinese government has continued to improve counterterrorism provisions of relevant administrative regulations to meet practical counterterrorism needs, strengthen coordination and cooperation among relevant administrative bodies, and define the responsibilities of all parties:

The Administrative Measures for Internet Information Services, adopted in 2000, ban the production, reproduction, publication and distribution of content that spreads terror. The Regulations on Religious Affairs, amended in 2017, stipulate that no organization or individual may use religion to carry out

terrorist activities. Regulations on the Protection of Minors in Cyberspace adopted in 2023 ban the production, reproduction, publication and distribution of information online containing content of terrorism and extremism that will damage the physical and mental health of minors.

Making New Local Regulations

After the Counterterrorism Law came into force in 2016, Xinjiang, Zhejiang, Hunan, Shanghai, Sichuan, Fujian, Beijing, and some other localities developed measures on the enforcement of the law within their respective administrative regions in light of local realities and in accordance with the local legislative authority conferred by the Constitution and the Legislation Law. Xinjiang formulated the Regulations of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Deradicalization, with detailed work measures and means to make the law more practicable. In addition, some localities added content on strengthening counterterrorism work when formulating local regulations on religious affairs and public security.

Formulating Departmental and Local Government Rules

To better implement counterterrorism-related laws and regulations and improve counterterrorism work in respective sectors or localities, central departments and local governments have formulated counterterrorism rules that meet their specific needs in accordance with statutory authority and procedures:

In 2014, the People's Bank of China, Ministry of Public Security, and Ministry of State Security formulated the Administrative Measures for the Freezing of Assets Relating to Terrorist Activities, with provisions on the procedures and actions for freezing terrorism-related assets. In 2021, the Qinghai provincial government adopted the Administrative Measures of Qinghai Province for Railway Safety, with provisions on establishing a counterterrorism command and coordination mechanism and building the capacity to guard against possible terrorist attacks.

Relying on more than 40 years of experience, China has gradually formed a counterterrorism legal framework based on the Constitution. With the Counterterrorism Law as the centerpiece and the criminal laws and National Security Law playing major roles and other laws as supplements, it also covers administrative regulations, judicial interpretations, local regulations, and departmental and local government rules.

II. Clear Provisions for the Determination and Punishment of Terrorist Activities

Chinese law has clear provisions for the determination and punishment of terrorist activities. It distinguishes between administrative violations and criminal acts based on the degree of harm they cause, and affixes different legal liabilities accordingly. The criteria for the determination of terrorism-related violations and penalties are stipulated in the Counterterrorism Law, and the criteria for the determination and punishment of terrorist crimes are stipulated in the Criminal Law.

—The concepts of terrorism and terrorist activities are clearly defined. China's Counterterrorism Law provides concrete and precise definitions of terrorism, terrorist activities, and related concepts, consistent with the principles championed by the international conventions it has entered and concluded, and in agreement with the practices of other countries.

In the Counterterrorism Law, the concept of terrorism encompasses the means, ends and forms, and is defined as propositions or acts that by means of violence, sabotage or intimidation, create social panic, undermine public security, violate personal and property rights, or coerce state agencies and international organizations, to realize political, ideological or other purposes. The Counterterrorism Law defines the nature of terrorist activities and their specific forms, including organizing, planning, preparing for, or conducting acts that cause serious social harm.

The Counterterrorism Law and the Regulations of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Deradicalization define the concept of extremism and specific forms of extremist activity, and highlight the link between extremist thought and terrorism.

—The criteria for determining law-breaking terrorist activities are accurately defined. China's Criminal Law assigns criminal liability only for terrorist activities that inflict grave harm on society. Minor violations of the law that do not constitute crimes instead receive administrative penalties in accordance with the Counterterrorism Law and other relevant laws. The Counterterrorism Law lists terrorist activities that are punishable by administrative penalties issued by public security agencies, including advocating terrorism and extremism or inciting the commission of terrorist and extremist acts. Whether the violations are minor or not is subject to the judgment of judicial and law enforcement agencies, based on whether the activities involve the essential condition of crime. Judicial and law enforcement agencies take into account the motive of the offender, their role in the activities, and the harm caused to society.

Example 2 Determination of Law-Breaking Terrorist Activities

A suspect surnamed Wan posted on his social media account a video with scenes of bloodshed and violence. The video was forwarded numerous times and generated harmful social impact. It was determined that the video contained illegal elements advocating terrorism, and should be banned from dissemination. Based on the Counterterrorism Law, a public security agency in Sichuan Province determined that Wan's act constituted a violation of the law by spreading items advocating terrorism.

—The criteria for determining criminal terrorist activities are accurately defined. The criteria are laid out in China's Criminal Law, judicial interpretations, and standards for filing and prosecuting cases. The Criminal Law has clear and specific provisions on the constitutive elements of terrorist crimes in terms of the object and the objective circumstances, and the subject and the subjective circumstances. It strictly distinguishes between crimes and non-crimes, between different crimes, and between punishment for a single crime and for multiple crimes.

Under the principle of legality, no one should be convicted of a terrorist crime for any reason if there are no explicit provisions in law. Judicial agencies have outlined the criteria for determining criminal terrorist activities in detail by issuing judicial interpretations and documents and setting standards for filing and prosecuting criminal cases. The Opinions on Certain Issues Concerning the Application of Law in Handling Criminal Cases Involving Terrorism and Extremism, jointly issued by the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and other authorities in 2018, specify the quantitative criteria that constitute the crime of illegally possessing materials propagating terrorism or extremism.

Example 3 Determination of Criminal Terrorist Activities

Between 2004 and 2010, a suspect surnamed Bai provided transfer, accommodation, and false identity certification for persons trying to leave China to conduct terrorist activities abroad, with full knowledge of their intentions. Bai's actions had serious consequences. The case was tried in a court in Henan Province, which ruled that Bai's actions constituted the crime of sponsoring terrorist activities, in accordance with the Criminal Law.

—The punishment for law-breaking terrorist activities follows statutory principles. China's law enforcement agencies adhere to the principle of legality in applying administrative penalties in accordance with the Counterterrorism Law, Public Security Administrative Punishment Law, Law on Administrative Penalty, and other relevant laws.

Law enforcement agencies pursue the principle of proportionality to ensure that punishment is appropriate to the facts, nature and circumstances of the offense, and the degree of harm it caused to society.

Law enforcement agencies execute the principle against double punishment to ensure that no person can be subject to more than one administrative fine for the same offense. Should an offense violate several legal provisions that are punishable by multiple fines, the highest of the fines applies.

Law enforcement agencies implement a system of benchmarks for administrative discretion, working out quantitative indexes on the scope, type and extent of discretion in acts of law enforcement and making the information available to the general public. Since 2018, public security agencies in Anhui, Zhejiang, Beijing and Heilongjiang have established and implemented administrative discretion benchmarks to regulate administrative law enforcement against terrorism.

Example 4 Administrative Penalty for Law-Breaking Terrorist Activities

A suspect surnamed Zhan posted videos containing scenes of violence and bloodshed on the internet. A public security agency in Fujian Province issued Zhan an administrative penalty in accordance with the Counterterrorism Law.

—Discretionary power in the punishment of criminal terrorist activities is well regulated. In trials of criminal cases involving terrorist activities, people's courts follow the principle that punishment should be proportionate to the gravity of the crime and the criminal liability involved, and apply the Criminal Law to determine the appropriate punishment for offenders, taking into consideration the facts, nature and circumstances of the offense, and the harm it caused to society.

China's judiciary has undergone reform to improve and standardize the consistency of sentencing. It has formulated normative documents that provide a complete set of standards for the principles and conditions of exercising discretion and the correct exercise of measures governing applicable law, legal interpretations, and sentencing procedures. These normative documents include the Guiding Opinions of the Supreme People's Court on Effectively Regulating the Exercise of Discretion in Trials and Enforcement to Ensure the Consistent Application of Law, the Guiding Opinions of the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate on the Sentencing of Common Crimes (Trial), and the Opinions of the Supreme People's Court, Supreme People's Procuratorate, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of State Security, and Ministry of Justice on Issues Concerning the Standardization of Sentencing Procedures. In the adjudication of criminal cases involving terrorist activities, judicial agencies made consistent efforts to standardize the exercise of discretionary power, striking the right balance between leniency and severity while ensuring that offenses receive due punishment.

Example 5 Punishment for Criminal Terrorist Activities

A defendant surnamed Liu was prosecuted for advocating terrorism. A court in Chongqing found Liu guilty. Taking account of the facts, nature and circumstances of the offense, and the degree of harm it caused to society, the court sentenced Liu to a suspended fixed-term imprisonment and a fine in accordance with the Criminal Law.

III. Standardized Exercise of Power in Fighting Terrorism

Chinese law distinguishes between administrative and criminal offenses that constitute terrorist activity, and stipulates different procedures for their handling. Administrative penalty procedures apply in cases of unlawful terrorist activities, while criminal procedures apply in cases of criminal terrorist activities. The procedures have been regulated in accordance with the law, case management responsibility has been implemented, and external oversight has been strengthened to ensure the standardized and orderly exercise of power in handling terrorist cases.

—Regulating the procedures. Chinese law prescribes the powers and responsibilities of law enforcement and judicial agencies in handling cases. Cases of unlawful terrorist activities are investigated and handled by public security agencies, while cases of criminal terrorist activities are investigated by public security agencies, examined and prosecuted by people's procuratorates, and tried by people's courts.

When handling terrorism cases, law enforcement and judicial agencies must exercise their statutory authority and powers to ensure the accurate and effective enforcement of the law. In managing cases, public security agencies should withdraw cases that should not have been filed, and people's procuratorates have the power to supervise the withdrawal.

When collecting and obtaining evidence, public security agencies should collect evidence both in favor of and against the suspect. Torture and other illegal means are prohibited in collecting evidence, and evidence obtained by illegal means should be excluded in accordance with the law.

When approving arrests and examining cases for prosecution, people's procuratorates should not warrant an arrest or initiate prosecution if the required conditions are not met.

At the trial stage, people's courts should render a verdict of not guilty if the evidence is insufficient or the act does not constitute a crime.

—Implementing the responsibility for case management. To ensure strict law enforcement, judicial justice, and accountability of the competent authorities, China's law enforcement and judicial agencies have promoted reform of the responsibility system.

With effective trial management and supervision, people's courts have advanced substantive reform in trials, further clarifying their organizational authority and the duties of judges to unify the responsibility for conducting trials and rendering verdicts, and ensure the lawful, independent and impartial exercise of judicial power.

People's procuratorates have built a fair and efficient mechanism for exercising procuratorial power by improving the organization of case management, defining the internal division of authority, and strengthening the judicial responsibility system to ensure the accountability of those who handle cases and make decisions.

Public security agencies have established a case review and approval mechanism that defines the powers of those who handle, review, and approve cases. Information technology is now applied to track and trace the entire process, and to keep these activities within bounds.

With their responsibilities clarified, law enforcement and judicial agencies have put in place a strict accountability system, under which judicial officials who are found to have violated the law in case management will be held accountable and given due punishment; if their acts constitute a crime, they shall be prosecuted for their criminal responsibility. To fully regulate the exercise of power, the reform to standardize the consistency of sentencing has been introduced, a case handling quality assessment system and a performance evaluation and review mechanism have been initiated, case management and guidance have been reinforced, and training has been improved.

—Strengthening external oversight. The powers of law enforcement and judicial agencies are subject to external oversight from people's congresses, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), and the public, as well as to statutory and internal oversight.

People's congresses, as bodies of state power, oversee the work of people's courts and people's procuratorates by hearing their work reports and conducting special inquiries. The CPPCC exercises democratic oversight over law enforcement and judicial agencies. People's courts, people's procuratorates, and public security agencies invite supervision from people's congresses and the CPPCC, while the public can supervise the work of these agencies in the capacity of people's assessors and people's supervisors and by attending hearings.

Example 6 Public Scrutiny over People's Procuratorates in Case Management

A suspect surnamed Zhang was investigated on suspicion of illegally possessing items advocating terrorism. When examining the case for prosecution, a procuratorate in Anhui Province conducted public hearings to extensively solicit opinions and invite scrutiny.

—Expanding channels of oversight. To prevent abuse of power in law enforcement and judicial matters, channels of oversight have been expanded and public scrutiny has been strengthened through various means, increasing the transparency of law enforcement and justice.

For greater openness, people's courts have established platforms for the timely release of information on judicial process, judgments, the execution of judgments, and trials. People's procuratorates have

increased transparency by releasing information on their procuratorial activities and affairs and have used information technology to establish platforms for this purpose, including setting up electronic displays and inquiry devices and opening websites and webpages for inquiry. Public security agencies have made their policing and administrative penalty enforcement activities more open and accept scrutiny from citizens and the wider society over law enforcement processes and outcomes. Judicial administrative agencies have ensured transparency in prison affairs, released information on the conditions, procedures and results of law enforcement in prisons, regulated acts of law enforcement by prison officers, and made prison management more standardized and institutionalized under the rule of law.

Example 7 Greater Transparency in Prison Affairs

China's prison authority has issued a handbook on prison affairs disclosure to promote differentiated release of information to different groups on the basis of protecting privacy for convicts. General information is released to the public for their knowledge, more detailed information is shared with the family of convicts, and complete information is disclosed to law enforcement supervisory agencies.

IV. Protection of Human Rights in Counterterrorism Practices

China respects and protects human rights as an underlying principle in improving its legal framework and practices in the field of counterterrorism. It integrates the punishment of terrorist activities with the protection of human rights. In handling cases involving terrorist offenses and crimes, it gives equal weight to safeguarding the basic rights of citizens, preserving social order, and protecting the rights of victims and interested persons as well as suspects, defendants and convicts.

—Maintaining a safe environment and social order where human rights are guaranteed. Terrorism poses a significant threat to national and public security, and to people's lives and property. Strengthening counterterrorism measures to prevent and punish terrorist activities in strict accordance with the law is essential in safeguarding human rights. The government has succeeded in curbing the spread of terrorism, protecting citizens' rights to life, health and property, and maintaining social stability, while taking firm actions to protect the lawful rights and interests of citizens and organizations, and guard against discrimination based on geographical area, ethnic group, or religion.

Example 8 Greater Sense of Public Security

According to the results of the annual national survey on the sense of public security, the proportion of positive answers rose from 87.55 percent in 2012 to 98.62 percent in 2021, sustaining the high level and receiving widespread public acclaim.

—Protecting the rights of victims and interested persons. In responding to terrorist incidents, China prioritizes the personal safety of those who are subject to direct harm and threat, organizes relief and provides medical treatment for victims, and evacuates and relocates potential victims. Following initial response operations, relevant government departments take measures to help individuals and organizations resume normal life and work, restore social order, and relieve public concern in affected areas. These departments offer timely help, provide psychological and medical assistance to victims and their close relatives as appropriate, and guarantee the basic living needs of victims and their close relatives who have lost basic means of life.

Example 9 Assistance for Victims of Terrorism

Following a terrorist incident in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, relevant departments provided medical aid and psychological evaluation and intervention for victims and organized rehabilitation activities, including psychological counseling and physical exercises, for those impacted. These endeavors aimed to help the victims recover both physical and mental health.

—Protecting personal freedom and dignity. China's Constitution and laws specify that citizens' personal freedom and dignity shall not be violated.

When taking compulsory measures that restrain personal freedom, such as detention and arrest, agencies handling cases of terrorism strictly follow the criteria, procedures and time limits prescribed by the law. Public security agencies cannot make arrests without prior approval by people's procuratorates or decisions by people's courts. People's procuratorates have strengthened examination of the need for custody, proposed release or alternative compulsory measures when custody is deemed unnecessary, and precisely implemented the statutory criteria in approving any extension of custody for investigation.

Agencies handling cases of terrorism have abided by the provisions of the Constitution and the law that personal dignity shall not be violated. They have ensured that suspects and defendants are provided with necessary food and rest time and are safe from physical abuse and insults. Interrogations that utilize violence, threats or intimidation, obtainment of evidence through torture, threat, enticement, deceit and other illegal means, and forced self-incrimination are all prohibited. Confessions extorted by torture or other illegal means shall be excluded.

Example 10 Lawful and Prudent Use of Criminal Compulsory Measures

Separate investigations were conducted into five suspects from Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region for involvement in a terrorist organization. When examining their case for prosecution, local procuratorates, in accordance with the law, approved the arrest of one suspect who was accused of organizing crimes. The four other suspects were found not to have posed actual harm, and their arrests were rejected.

—Safeguarding the right to defense. Suspects and defendants of terrorist crimes are entitled to a defender from the first interrogation or the day of the enforcement of compulsory measures by investigation agencies. Those eligible for legal aid services are entitled to an appointed attorney as their defender. Judicial and judicial administrative agencies pilot programs for full coverage of attorneys' defense throughout the stage of examining criminal cases for prosecution, assign defense attorneys to suspects who have no defenders, and expand the scope of criminal legal aid.

To ensure that suspects' and defendants' right to defense is fully realized, judicial agencies have strengthened attorneys' rights to information, application, and petition during proceedings, and their rights to meet with suspects and defendants, consult case files, collect evidence, and take part in inquiry, cross-examination, debate and defense.

Example 11 Protection of Defendants' Right to Defense

During court sessions for a terrorism case in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, defense attorneys were assigned, in accordance with the law, to three defendants who were accused of organizing, leading and participating in terrorist organizations and had no defenders, with the aim of guaranteeing their right to defense.

—Ensuring the rights to information and participation. Prior to announcing any decisions surrounding administrative penalties for terrorist activities, administrative agencies have a duty to inform the accused of the specifics of punishment, the facts of violations, and the reasons for and basis of punishment, as well as their rights to statement, defense, and a hearing. The facts, explanations and evidence provided by the accused, once verified, must be admitted by administrative agencies.

During investigations of cases involving terrorist crimes, the family of the suspects and defendants must be notified of the enforcement of compulsory measures. In cases where this may hinder an investigation, notification must be issued immediately after the potential risk has passed.

During criminal proceedings involving terrorist crimes, suspects and defendants must be informed of the charges, the specifics of their case, and their rights to apply for a withdrawal, appear before the court, participate in court investigations and debates, and deliver a final statement.

—Protecting the right to legal relief. China's laws protect the right of the accused to comprehensive and multichannel legal relief.

Those who have received administrative penalties for terrorism and who disagree with the decision have the right to apply for administrative reconsideration or to bring an administrative lawsuit and entrust attorneys with the legal proceedings.

Those found guilty of terrorist crimes, their authorized defenders, and close relatives have the right to appeal should they disagree with first instance judgments by local people's courts, and this right shall not be withheld under any pretext. Those convicted have the right to appeal against judgments and rulings that are already legally effective. Should an appeal comply with statutory conditions, people's courts and people's procuratorates must institute trial supervision procedures and remand the case for retrial by the original people's court.

Those whose rights and interests have been damaged through wrongful administrative penalties or criminal penalties have the right to claim state compensation as provided by law.

—Safeguarding the right to court proceedings in ethnic spoken and written languages. China's Constitution and laws grant citizens of all ethnic groups the right to use their own language in court proceedings.

Judicial agencies are required to provide interpreting and translation services in terrorism cases for any party to court proceedings who has little knowledge of the spoken and written languages commonly used in the locality.

In areas where people of one ethnic group live in compact communities or multiple ethnic groups live together, court hearings must be conducted in the spoken language commonly used in the locality, while judgments, notices and other documents shall be issued in the written language commonly used in the locality. In ethnic autonomous areas, people's courts and people's procuratorates shall handle cases in the commonly used local language and be reasonably equipped with personnel proficient in local ethnic spoken and written languages, while legal documents shall be written in the commonly used local language or languages as appropriate.

Example 12 Protection of the Right to Court Proceedings in Ethnic Languages

In a violent terrorism case in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the suspects, defendants, and victims and their immediate relatives were from multiple ethnic groups and used multiple ethnic languages. Throughout court proceedings, interpreters and translators were assigned to interpret for parties concerned during court sessions and translate legal documents, thereby guaranteeing the right to proceedings in ethnic spoken and written languages for those involved in the case.

—Ensuring the legitimate rights and interests of convicts. China's laws specify that convicts' personal dignity, personal safety, lawful properties, and the right to defense and appeal, and the right to submit complaints and accusations, along with other rights that have not been deprived or restricted by law, shall not be violated.

Enforcement agencies respect the personal dignity of those convicted of terrorism and defend their legitimate rights and interests. People's procuratorates exercise supervision over the execution of criminal punishments. Convicts who disagree with legally effective verdicts have the right to petition, and enforcement agencies must handle convicts' complaints and accusations without delay or transfer these materials to the relevant agencies, and inform the complainants and accusers of the results.

During incarceration, convicts are entitled to correspondence and meetings with their relatives, attorneys and others. To ensure prisoners receive timely medical treatment, prisons are equipped with medical facilities to provide in-prison treatment, and prisoners are permitted to be transferred outside prison for medical treatment or be released on medical parole if necessary.

Following the principle of combining punishment and reform, with emphasis on the latter, prisons provide cultural, legal and technical education to increase offenders' knowledge, skills and employability, while special efforts are made to prevent offenders of terrorist crimes from reoffending.

In handling cases of commutation and parole, enforcement agencies and people's courts strictly follow statutory procedures and criteria. Enforcement agencies make recommendations to the people's courts, which can grant commutation or parole where eligible. People's procuratorates exercise supervision over these decisions.

V. Effective Protection of People's Safety and National Security

China carries out counterterrorism work in accordance with the law. By balancing security and stability with social development, it continues to increase its capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and eradicate its ideological foundation. China has thus heightened the people's sense of security, defended national security, and contributed to regional and global security and stability.

—Increasing capacity to prevent and combat terrorism. On an increasingly sound legal base, China continues to improve its security management systems in relevant fields, including transport, logistics, and hazardous goods. It actively promotes improved terrorism prevention standards in key sectors and localities, formulates or revises counterterrorism contingency plans, and strengthens drills accordingly, thereby improving prevention and control to maintain public security. By encouraging and supporting scientific research and technological innovation, developing and popularizing new technical devices, and applying them to training and actual work, China continues to increase its scientific and technological capacity to counter terrorism and effectively tackles the challenges posed by new technologies and business forms, including artificial intelligence, encrypted communication, and virtual currency.

Apart from specialized efforts, China also relies on the public in working to counter terrorism. It conducts extensive public education on campuses and in workplaces and residential communities, and has distributed counterterrorism booklets such as *A Citizen's Handbook on Counterterrorism* to the general public. It incentivizes people to report terrorism-related activities to the authorities, and continues to improve societal awareness of public security and the public's ability to respond to emergent incidents of violence and terrorism.

Example 13 Building a System of Terrorism Prevention Standards

China is engaged in establishing standards for the prevention of terrorism in key sectors, including transport, water, electricity, oil, gas, heating, nuclear facilities, nuclear technology, media facilities, hazardous chemicals, biosecurity, and national strategic reserves. To date, the Ministry of Public Security has released 37 terrorism prevention standards for the public security sector and local authorities have issued hundreds of standards. These standards serve as the basis for establishing personnel, physical and electronic protection systems, and facilitate the synchronous design, development and operation of corresponding equipment and facilities for key targets.

—Balancing security and stability with social development. Since 2014, China has continued to take tough action against violent terrorism and punish criminals who have plotted terrorist activities. It has foiled most terrorist schemes in the making, effectively safeguarding national security and social stability, and markedly improving people's sense of security.

Counterterrorism efforts are the anchor of security and stability. Security and stability enable development, which in turn further consolidates security and stability. In Xinjiang, a key focal point for China's counterterrorism efforts, urban residents' per capita disposable income increased from 19,019 yuan in 2012 to 38,410 yuan in 2022, while the per capita disposable income of rural residents rose from 6,876 yuan to 16,550 yuan. By the end of 2020, all 3.06 million individuals living in rural areas below the poverty line had emerged from poverty, and poverty had been eradicated from all 3,666 villages and 35 counties that were previously impoverished. In 2023, Xinjiang received 265.44 million tourists,

representing a year-on-year increase of 117 percent and setting a new record for the number of visiting tourists. Xinjiang's total income from tourism in 2023 was 296.7 billion yuan, a growth of 227 percent on the previous year. The autonomous region is now a leading tourist destination, with tourism acting as a pillar industry that boosts employment opportunities and enriches the lives of local people.

—Eradicating the ideological foundation of terrorism. While striking hard at unlawful and criminal terrorist activities, China attaches greater importance to the education and rehabilitation of victims of extremist teachings who have committed only minor offenses. For people falling under different levels of extremist influence, relevant government departments, women's associations and other social organizations, religious groups, schools, and families collaborate to offer targeted intervention measures, in order to protect them from further harmful impact.

Religious extremism is not religion. It distorts religious doctrines to spread violent and radical ideas and cause serious disruption to normal religious activities. Influenced and controlled by religious extremism, some people have engaged in, or have been instigated, coerced, or enticed to engage in terrorist activities.

Following the principles of protecting the lawful, banning the unlawful, containing extremism, resisting infiltration, and combating crimes, China protects citizens' freedom of religious belief, ensures the normal practice of religious activities, and makes consistent law-based efforts in deradicalization. It has succeeded in containing the influence and spread of religious extremism.

The public has developed a stronger awareness of the rule of law and realized the harm that religious extremism causes, while their abilities to distinguish between right and wrong, and to resist the penetration of religious extremism have greatly strengthened.

—Contributing to global and regional security and stability. By combating domestic terrorist activities, strengthening border and port of entry control, and stopping the cross-border movement of terrorists, China has effectively curbed the spread of terrorism. In accordance with its own laws and the international conventions it has entered or concluded, China actively cooperates in international counterterrorism on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. It is committed to the vision of a global community with a shared future, supports the UN's leading and coordinating role in international cooperation on counterterrorism, abides by the UN Charter and other well-recognized international laws, and backs the counterterrorism resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council. It has joined 12 global counterterrorism conventions and actively fulfills its obligations in fighting terrorism.

China advocates regional cooperation to counter terrorism. Under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), it has facilitated the formulation of documents such as the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism and the SCO Member States Agreement on Border Defense Cooperation, and participated in judicial cooperation and joint counterterrorism exercises, playing an important role in maintaining international and regional security and stability. By establishing cooperation mechanisms with dozens of countries and between law-enforcement departments to combat terrorism in border areas, it has engaged in pragmatic exchanges and cooperation in intelligence, border control, and investigation and handling of cases, and cut off funds for terrorism.

Conclusion

Different paths can lead to the same end, and consensus can be reached despite varied concerns. Counterterrorism must be on the right side of the rule of law, a principle widely acknowledged by the international community. Due to different political systems, legal institutions, and cultural traditions, different countries are confronted with different forms and manifestations of terrorism, and are thus applying different legal practices in combating terrorism.

China's counterterrorism legal framework has improved over the past four decades, aligning China's rule of law essentials with international counterterrorism principles. The legal framework in place works well both in preventing and punishing terrorist activities, and in respecting and protecting human rights. It conforms to China's realities and international norms, and has yielded satisfactory and practical results.

Regrettably, some countries often disregard others' right to choose their own path of counterterrorism under the rule of law. These countries impose their own will upon others and pass judgment on them. They even interfere in others' internal affairs, and infringe on their national sovereignty under the pretext of defending the rule of law and human rights. These actions have severely hampered the global effort to fight against terrorism under the rule of law, weakened the foundations of cooperation, and reduced operational effectiveness.

Counterterrorism approaches by individual countries that champion the common values of humanity, comply with the norms and principles of the United Nations, and conform to their own national conditions and legal institutions, are all part of the global effort to combat terrorism under the rule of law. In fighting terrorism, the international community should support diverse law-based actions, reject double standards, and oppose the politicization of related issues.

Upholding the vision of a global community with a shared future, China is willing to work closely with other countries to push forward counterterrorism cause as part of global governance. On the basis of equality and respect, China will engage in extensive exchanges, cooperation, and mutual learning to facilitate the global effort to counter terrorism.

Advancing the Human Rights Cause of China in the Process of Chinese Modernization

Introductory Statement by Head of the Chinese Delegation
Ambassador Chen Xu on the Adoption of the UPR Outcome Report on
China at the 56th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China
July 2024

Mr. President,
Fellow Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In January, China attended the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in an open and candid manner, and conducted constructive dialogue with all member states. Over 120 countries commended the progress in China's human rights cause, and fully recognized China's tireless efforts and historic achievements in the promotion and protection of human rights, which was objectively recorded in the Working Group's report. On behalf of the Chinese government, I wish to once again express our thanks to all member states who constructively participated in the review process, to Mr. President for chairing the meeting, and to the troika—United Arab Emirates, Albania and Malawi—and the Secretariat for your hard work.

The Chinese side attaches high importance to the 428 recommendations raised by the delegates during the review, and has established an inter-agency mechanism to look at them one by one. China has decided to accept 290 constructive recommendations that are suited to China's conditions and conducive to its human rights development, including consolidating the achievements in poverty alleviation, improving people's well-being, ensuring people's running of the country, improving legal safeguards for human rights, promoting science, education, culture and public health, advancing the cause of women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly, implementing the national human rights action plan, and actively engaging in international human rights cooperation. The number and proportion of recommendations accepted by China are among the highest in major countries, covering various rights such as civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; and the right to development. This is a clear testimony to China's resolve to respect and protect human rights.

That said, among the recommendations that China did not accept, some are in general consistent with what China needs to work on in the future, yet the conditions for implementation are not ripe. Regarding these recommendations, China has taken the positions of "noted" or "partially accepted." Regarding some recommendations that are politically motivated, based on disinformation, ideologically biased, or interfering in China's judicial sovereignty, China firmly rejects them.

The Chinese side wishes to reiterate that the UPR is an important platform for countries to conduct equal-footed and candid exchanges on human rights issues and engage in constructive dialogue and cooperation within the UN framework. The purpose of the UPR is to increase exchanges and mutual learning and promote common progress. The Chinese side is willing to work with all parties for a constructive review and for maintaining the dialogue-oriented and cooperative nature of the UPR while upholding the principles of objectivity, fairness, non-selectivity, non-confrontation and non-politicization.

Mr. President,

At the review in January, I announced 30 new measures of human rights protection by the Chinese government. Some of the efforts have witnessed initial progress. Let me give you some brief updates:

We continue to improve legal safeguards for human rights. In June, the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress deliberated on the draft of a preschool education law for the second time. The law underscores the direction of public-interest and inclusiveness of preschool education, and has incorporated provisions on ensuring access to inclusive preschool education for children in rural areas. The law strengthens the protection of the rights and interests of preschool children.

We strengthen the protection of the rights of workers in new forms of employment. In February, the Chinese government published guidelines on the protection of the rights of workers in new forms of employment. The document guides the exploration and innovation of mechanisms for rights protection and services that suit the feature of new employment forms, with a view to effectively protecting the rights and interests of workers in new employment forms.

We endeavor to implement the Outline for Women's Development in China and the Outline on the Development of Chinese Children. The latest figures published in March show that China's infant mortality rate has further dropped to 4.5‰, the mortality rate of children under the age of five has dropped to 6.2‰, and the maternal mortality rate has fallen to 15.1 per 100,000. China's main health indicators are

among the top in middle and high-income countries.

We continue to improve rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. On June 22, the world's first university of rehabilitation opened in Qingdao, Shandong Province. The university will start enrolling undergraduate students in 2024. This new research university will make positive contributions to the research of rehabilitation science and cultivation of high-caliber rehabilitation talents.

We invited the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights of the Human Rights Council to visit China in May. She visited Beijing, Xinjiang and Shenzhen, and conducted exchanges with relevant Chinese government departments, companies, industrial associations and social organizations. The Special Rapporteur pointed out that the unilateral sanctions imposed on China by relevant countries are against the international law, and cause negative impact on human rights. She called on these countries to remove or suspend all unilateral sanctions on China.

We have strengthened exchanges and cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). We invited OHCHR officials to visit China in May, and had in-depth exchanges with them on "counter-terrorism and human rights" and "human rights protection in the criminal justice system." OHCHR officials visited China's legislative and judicial departments and relevant human rights protection projects, and increased their understanding of China's human rights concepts, practices and achievements. We are staying in touch with the OHCHR on furthering the cooperation.

We have conducted human rights dialogues and consultations with multiple countries and regional organizations. In June, during the China-EU Human Rights Dialogue held in China, the EU delegation visited the Xizang Autonomous Region, where they visited projects in areas such as economic and social development, ethnicity, religion, education, culture and legal safeguards for human rights. Both sides view this dialogue as candid, in-depth and conducive to enhancing mutual understanding.

We advocate dialogue and cooperation in the Human Rights Council, and make strong voices against politicization of human rights and double standards. We led joint statements on advancing the development of artificial intelligence to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, children and women, and have worked to steer global human rights governance toward greater fairness, justice, equity and inclusiveness.

Mr. President,

Progress and development in human rights is achieved in China with each passing day. The above new developments are only an epitome of the rapidly developing human rights cause in China. As ancient Chinese philosopher Xunzi put it, "A long journey can be completed only by taking one step at a time; an ocean can be filled only by embracing one stream at a time." This year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. It is the every bit of achievement made in every single day in the past 75 years by the Chinese people, rallied behind and led by the Communist Party of China, that has converged into the enormous achievements of China's human rights cause.

We have eradicated absolute poverty once and for all, bringing moderate prosperity in all respects to the 1.4 billion-plus Chinese people; we have made sustained efforts to advance whole-process people's democracy, providing more robust guarantee for ensuring our people's right to run the country; we have deepened the reform of our judicial system, advanced the Peaceful China Initiative and the rule of law in China, making China widely acknowledged as one of the safest countries in the world; we have put in place the world's largest education, social security and health care systems, giving our people a great sense of accomplishment, happiness and security; we uphold equality for all ethnic groups, respect our people's religious belief and protect the lawful rights and interests of all ethnic groups; we have worked to improve the environment for the people, ensuring that we have more blue skies, lush mountains and lucid waters in China. We are committed to building a community with a shared future for humankind. While realizing our own development, we have also been doing what we can to provide assistance to over 160 countries and international organizations, to help improve the well-being of the people in relevant countries and striving for the goal of common development. The historic achievements in China's human rights cause prove that the path of human rights development chosen by China suits its national conditions and reflects the aspiration of its people. It is a path that will be firmly committed to. China's door will only open wider. We welcome more foreign friends to travel around China, and get a deeper understanding of the real China.

As President Xi Jinping stated, "Our goal is both big and simple. It is essentially about delivering a better life to all Chinese." At the moment, we are working to build China into a modern socialist country in all respects and advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through Chinese modernization. The essence of modernization is the modernization of the people. Chinese modernization is the cause of hundreds of millions of Chinese people. We will adhere to a people-centered approach, promote high-quality development with new quality productive forces, and deliver the fruits of modernization to our people in a more substantive and equitable way. We will steadfastly improve the protection of human rights in the process of Chinese modernization, and continue to make new contributions to the sound development of the global human rights cause.

Thank you.

Reunification of the Motherland · “One Country, Two Systems”

The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era

Source: Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council and
State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
August 2022

Preamble

Resolving the Taiwan question and realizing China's complete reunification is a shared aspiration of all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation. It is indispensable for the realization of China's rejuvenation. It is also a historic mission of the Communist Party of China (CPC). The CPC, the Chinese government, and the Chinese people have striven for decades to achieve this goal.

The 18th National Congress of the CPC in 2012 heralded a new era in building socialism with Chinese characteristics. Under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Xi Jinping at the core, the CPC and the Chinese government have adopted new and innovative measures in relation to Taiwan. They have continued to chart the course of cross-strait relations, safeguard peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits, and promote progress towards national reunification. However, in recent years the Taiwan authorities, led by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), have redoubled their efforts to divide the country, and some external forces have tried to exploit Taiwan to contain China, prevent the Chinese nation from achieving complete reunification, and halt the process of national rejuvenation.

The CPC has united the Chinese people and led them in fulfilling the First Centenary Goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects as scheduled, and in embarking on a new journey towards the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a modern socialist country.

The Chinese nation has achieved a historic transformation from standing upright to becoming prosperous and growing in strength, and national rejuvenation is driven by an unstoppable force. This marks a new starting point for reunification.

The Chinese government has published two previous white papers on Taiwan. One was the Taiwan Question and Reunification of China in August 1993, and the other was the One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue in February 2000. These two white papers provided a comprehensive and systematic elaboration of the basic principles and policies regarding the resolution of the Taiwan question. This new white paper is being released to reiterate the fact that Taiwan is part of China, to demonstrate the resolve of the CPC and the Chinese people and their commitment to national reunification, and to emphasize the position and policies of the CPC and the Chinese government in the new era.

Taiwan Is Part of China—This Is an Indisputable Fact

Taiwan has belonged to China since ancient times. This statement has a sound basis in history and jurisprudence. New archeological discoveries and research findings regularly attest to the profound historical and cultural ties between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits. A large number of historical records and annals document the development of Taiwan by the Chinese people in earlier periods.

The earliest references to this effect are to be found, among others, in *Seaboard Geographic Gazetteer* compiled in the year 230 by Shen Ying of the State of Wu during the Three Kingdoms Period. The royal court of the Sui Dynasty had on three occasions sent troops to Taiwan, called Liuqiu at that time. Starting from the Song and Yuan dynasties, the imperial central governments of China all set up administrative bodies to exercise jurisdiction over Penghu and Taiwan.

In 1624, Dutch colonialists invaded and occupied the southern part of Taiwan. In 1662, General Zheng Chenggong, hailed as a national hero, led an expedition and expelled them from the island. Subsequently, the Qing court gradually set up more administrative bodies in Taiwan. In 1684, a Taiwan prefecture administration was set up under the jurisdiction of Fujian Province. In 1885, Taiwan's status was upgraded and it became the 20th province of China.

In July 1894, Japan launched a war of aggression against China. In April 1895, the defeated Qing government was forced to cede Taiwan and the Penghu Islands to Japan. During the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931–1945), China's Communists called for the recovery of Taiwan. Talking with American journalist Nym Wales on May 15, 1937, Mao Zedong said that China's goal

was to achieve a final victory in the war—a victory that would recover the occupied Chinese territories in Northeast China and to the south of the Shanhai Pass, and secure the liberation of Taiwan.

On December 9, 1941, the Chinese government issued a declaration of war against Japan, and proclaimed that all treaties, conventions, agreements, and contracts regarding relations between China and Japan had been abrogated, and that China would recover Taiwan and the Penghu Islands.

The Cairo Declaration issued by China, the United States and the United Kingdom on December 1, 1943 stated that it was the purpose of the three allies that all the territories Japan had stolen from China, such as Northeast China, Taiwan and the Penghu Islands, should be restored to China.

The Potsdam Proclamation was signed by China, the United States and the United Kingdom on July 26, 1945, and subsequently recognized by the Soviet Union. It reiterated: “The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out.” In September of the same year, Japan signed the instrument of surrender, in which it promised that it would faithfully fulfill the obligations laid down in the Potsdam Proclamation. On October 25 the Chinese government announced that it was resuming the exercise of sovereignty over Taiwan, and the ceremony to accept Japan’s surrender in Taiwan war theater of the Allied powers was held in Taibei (Taipei). From that point forward, China had recovered Taiwan *de jure* and *de facto* through a host of documents with international legal effect.

On October 1, 1949, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was founded, becoming the successor to the Republic of China (1912–1949), and the Central People’s Government became the only legitimate government of the whole of China. The new government replaced the previous KMT regime in a situation where China, as a subject under international law, did not change and China’s sovereignty and inherent territory did not change. As a natural result, the government of the PRC should enjoy and exercise China’s full sovereignty, which includes its sovereignty over Taiwan.

As a result of the civil war in China in the late 1940s and the interference of external forces, the two sides of the Taiwan Straits have fallen into a state of protracted political confrontation. But the sovereignty and territory of China have never been divided and will never be divided, and Taiwan’s status as part of China’s territory has never changed and will never be allowed to change.

At its 26th session in October 1971, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 2758, which undertook “to restore all its rights to the People’s Republic of China and to recognize the representatives of its Government as the only legitimate representatives of China to the United Nations, and to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the United Nations and in all the organizations related to it.” This resolution settled once and for all the political, legal and procedural issues of China’s representation in the UN, and it covered the whole country, including Taiwan. It also spelled out that China has one single seat in the UN, so there is no such thing as “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan.”

The specialized agencies of the UN later adopted further resolutions restoring to the PRC its lawful seat and expelling the representatives of the Taiwan authorities. One of these is Resolution 25.1 adopted at the 25th World Health Assembly in May 1972. It was clearly stated in the official legal opinions of the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN Secretariat that “the United Nations considers ‘Taiwan’ as a province of China with no separate status,” and the “‘authorities’ in ‘Taipei’ are not considered to... enjoy any form of government status.” At the UN the island is referred to as “Taiwan, Province of China.”

Resolution 2758 is a political document encapsulating the one-China principle whose legal authority leaves no room for doubt and has been acknowledged worldwide. Taiwan does not have any ground, reason, or right to join the UN, or any other international organization whose membership is confined to sovereign states.

In recent years some elements in a small number of countries, the U.S. foremost among them, have colluded with forces in Taiwan, to falsely claim that the resolution did not conclusively resolve the issue of Taiwan’s representation. Puffing up the illegal and invalid Treaty of San Francisco and disregarding the Cairo Declaration, the Potsdam Proclamation and other international legal documents, they profess that the status of Taiwan has yet to be determined, and declare their support for “Taiwan’s meaningful participation in the UN system.” What they are actually attempting to do is to alter Taiwan’s status as part of China and create “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan” as part of a political ploy—using Taiwan to contain China. These actions in violation of Resolution 2758 and international law are a serious breach of political commitments made by these countries. They damage China’s sovereignty and dignity, and treat the basic principles of international law with contempt. The Chinese government has condemned and expressed its resolute opposition to them.

The one-China principle represents the universal consensus of the international community; it is consistent with the basic norms of international relations. To date, 181 countries including the United States have established diplomatic relations with the PRC on the basis of the one-China principle. The China-US Joint Communique on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations, published in December 1978, states: “The Government of the United States of America acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China.” It also states: “The United States of America recognizes the Government of the People’s Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China. Within this context, the people of the United States will maintain cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan.”

The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, adopted at the Fifth Session of the Fifth National People's Congress (NPC) in December 1982, stipulates: "Taiwan is part of the sacred territory of the People's Republic of China. It is the inviolable duty of all Chinese people, including our compatriots in Taiwan, to accomplish the great task of reunifying the motherland."

The Anti-Secession Law, adopted at the Third Session of the 10th NPC in March 2005, stipulates: "There is only one China in the world. Both the mainland and Taiwan belong to one China. China's sovereignty and territorial integrity brook no division. Safeguarding China's sovereignty and territorial integrity is the common obligation of all Chinese people, the Taiwan compatriots included. Taiwan is part of China. The state shall never allow the 'Taiwan independence' secessionist forces to make Taiwan secede from China under any name or by any means."

The National Security Law, adopted at the 15th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th NPC in July 2015, stipulates: "The sovereignty and territorial integrity of China brook no violation or separation. Safeguarding national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity is the common duty of all Chinese citizens, including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan compatriots."

We are one China, and Taiwan is part of China. This is an indisputable fact supported by history and the law. Taiwan has never been a state; its status as part of China is unalterable. Any attempt to distort these facts and dispute or deny the one-China principle will end in failure.

Resolute Efforts of the CPC to Realize China's Complete Reunification

The CPC has always been dedicated to working for the well-being of the Chinese people and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Soon after its founding in 1921, the CPC set itself the goal of freeing Taiwan from colonial rule, reuniting it with the rest of the country and liberating the whole nation, including compatriots in Taiwan. It has made a tremendous effort to achieve this goal.

The CPC is committed to the historic mission of resolving the Taiwan question and realizing China's complete reunification. Under its resolute leadership, people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits have worked together to de-escalate tension across the Straits. They have set out on a path of peaceful development and made many breakthroughs in improving cross-Straits relations.

After the founding of the PRC in 1949, China's Communists, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, proposed the essential guideline, underlying principle, and basic policy for peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question. The CPC prepared and worked for the liberation of Taiwan, thwarted the Taiwan authorities' plans to attack the mainland, and foiled attempts to create "two Chinas" and "one China, one Taiwan." Through their efforts, the lawful seat and rights of the PRC in the United Nations were restored and the one-China principle was subscribed to by the majority of countries, laying important groundwork for peaceful reunification. The CPC central leadership established high-level contact with the Taiwan authorities through proper channels in pursuit of a peaceful solution to the Taiwan question.

Following the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee in 1978, with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the PRC and the United States, China's Communists, led by Deng Xiaoping, defined the fundamental guideline for peaceful reunification in the vital interests of the country and the people and on the basis of the consensus for peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question. The CPC introduced the creative and well-conceived concept of "one country, two systems," and applied it first in resolving the questions of Hong Kong and Macao. It took action to ease military confrontation across the Taiwan Straits, restore contact, and open up people-to-people exchanges and cooperation, opening a new chapter in cross-Straits relations.

After the Fourth Plenary Session of the 13th CPC Central Committee in 1989, China's Communists, led by Jiang Zemin, made eight proposals for the development of cross-Straits relations and the peaceful reunification of China. The CPC facilitated agreement across the Straits on the 1992 Consensus, which embodies the one-China principle. It initiated cross-Straits consultations and negotiations, resulting in the first talks between heads of the nongovernmental organizations authorized by the two sides of the Straits, and expanded cross-Straits exchanges and cooperation in various fields. The CPC took firm action against separatist activities led by Lee Teng-hui, and struck hard at the separatist forces seeking "Taiwan independence." It ensured the smooth return of Hong Kong and Macao to China, and applied the policy of "one country, two systems," which had a constructive impact on the settlement of the Taiwan question.

After the 16th CPC National Congress in 2002, China's Communists, led by Hu Jintao, highlighted the importance of peaceful development of cross-Straits relations. The CPC pushed for the enactment of the Anti-Secession Law to curb separatist activities in Taiwan, hosted the first talks between the leaders of the CPC and the Kuomintang in six decades since 1945, and defeated attempts by Chen Shui-bian to fabricate a legal basis for "independence." The CPC effected profound changes in moving the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations forward by promoting institutionalized consultations and negotiations that produced fruitful results, establishing overall direct two-way links in mail, business and transport, and facilitating the signing and implementation of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement.

After the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, China's Communists, under the leadership of Xi Jinping, took a holistic approach to cross-Straits relations in keeping with changing circumstances, added substance to the theory on national reunification and the principles and policies concerning Taiwan,

and worked to keep cross-Straits relations on the right track. The CPC developed its overall policy for resolving the Taiwan question in the new era, and set out the overarching guideline and a program of action.

At its 19th National Congress in October 2017, the CPC affirmed the basic policy of upholding “one country, two systems” and promoting national reunification, and emphasized its resolve never to allow any person, any organization, or any political party, at any time or in any form, to separate any part of Chinese territory from China.

In January 2019, Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee and president of China, addressed a meeting marking the 40th anniversary of the release of the Message to Compatriots in Taiwan. In his speech, Xi Jinping proposed major policies to advance the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations and the peaceful reunification of China in the new era. These are: First, working together to promote China’s rejuvenation and its peaceful reunification; second, seeking a “two systems” solution to the Taiwan question and making innovative efforts towards peaceful reunification; third, abiding by the one-China principle and safeguarding the prospects for peaceful reunification; fourth, further integrating development across the Straits and consolidating the foundations for peaceful reunification; fifth, forging closer bonds of heart and mind between people on both sides of the Straits and strengthening joint commitment to peaceful reunification.

The CPC and the Chinese government have thereby adopted a series of major measures for charting the course of cross-Straits relations and realizing China’s peaceful reunification:

The CPC and the Chinese government have facilitated the first meeting and direct dialogue between leaders of the two sides since 1949, raising exchanges and interactions to new heights, opening up a new chapter, and creating new space for cross-Straits relations. This is a new milestone. The departments in charge of cross-Straits affairs on both sides have established regular contact and communication mechanisms on a common political foundation, and the heads of the two departments have exchanged visits and set up hotlines.

Upholding the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus, the CPC and the Chinese government have facilitated exchanges between political parties across the Straits, and conducted dialogues, consultations, and in-depth exchanges of views on cross-Straits relations and the future of the Chinese nation with relevant political parties, organizations, and individuals in Taiwan. These efforts have resulted in consensus on multiple issues, and promoted a number of joint initiatives exploring the “two systems” solution to the Taiwan question with all sectors of Taiwan society.

Guided by the conviction that people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits are of the same family, the CPC and the Chinese government have promoted peaceful development of cross-Straits relations and integrated development of the two sides for the benefit of both the mainland and Taiwan. We have also refined the institutional arrangements, policies and measures to promote cross-Straits exchanges and cooperation, designed to advance the well-being of the people of Taiwan. These include the delivery of water from the coastal province of Fujian to Kinmen Island, electronic travel passes for Taiwan residents to enter or leave the mainland, residence permits for Taiwan residents, progressively ensuring that Taiwan compatriots have equal access to public services so as to facilitate their studying, starting businesses, working and living on the mainland, and an ongoing effort to pave the way for Taiwan to benefit first from the mainland’s development opportunities.

While countering interference and obstruction from separatist forces, the CPC and the Chinese government have called on the people of Taiwan to promote effective and in-depth cooperation and people-to-people exchanges in various fields across the Straits. Having overcome the impact of COVID-19, we have held a number of exchange events such as the Straits Forum, and maintained the momentum of cross-Straits exchanges and cooperation.

Resolute in defending state sovereignty and territorial integrity and opposing separatist activities and external interference, the CPC and the Chinese government have safeguarded peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits and the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation. We have taken lawful action against and effectively deterred separatist forces. We have handled Taiwan’s external exchanges in a sound manner, and consolidated the international community’s commitment to the one-China principle.

Under the guidance of the CPC, great progress has been made in cross-Straits relations over the past seven decades, especially since the estrangement between the two sides was ended. Increased exchanges, broader cooperation and closer interactions have brought tangible benefits to people across the Straits, especially of Taiwan. This fully demonstrates that cross-Straits amity and cooperation are mutually beneficial.

The volume of cross-Straits trade was only 46 million US dollars in 1978. It rose to 328.34 billion US dollars in 2021, up by a factor of more than 7,000. The mainland has been Taiwan’s largest export market for the last 21 years, generating a large annual surplus for the island. The mainland is also the largest destination for Taiwan’s off-island investment. By the end of 2021 Taiwan businesses had invested in almost 124,000 projects on the mainland, to a total value of 71.34 billion US dollars.

In 1987 less than 50,000 visits were made between the two sides; by 2019 this number had soared to about 9 million. In the past three years, affected by COVID-19, online communication has become the main form of people-to-people interactions across the Straits, and the numbers of people participating in and covered by online communication are reaching new highs.

The CPC has always been the spine of the Chinese nation, exercising strong leadership in realizing

national rejuvenation and reunification. Its consistent efforts over the decades to resolve the Taiwan question and achieve complete national reunification are based on the following:

First, the one-China principle must be upheld, and no individual or force should be allowed to separate Taiwan from China.

Second, it is imperative to strive for the well-being of all Chinese people, including those in Taiwan, and to realize the aspirations of all Chinese people for a better life.

Third, we must follow the principles of freeing the mind, seeking truth from facts, maintaining the right political orientation, and breaking new ground, and defending the fundamental interests of the nation and the core interests of the state in formulating principles and policies on work related to Taiwan.

Fourth, it is necessary to have the courage and skill to fight against any force that attempts to undermine China's sovereignty and territorial integrity or stands in the way of its reunification.

Fifth, extensive unity and solidarity must be upheld to mobilize all factors to fight against any force that would divide the country, and pool strengths to advance national reunification.

China's Complete Reunification Is a Process That Cannot Be Halted

Against a backdrop of profound and complex changes in the domestic and international situation, our cause of complete national reunification is facing new challenges. The CPC and the Chinese government have the strength and the confidence to deal with complexities and overcome risks and threats, and the ability to take great strides forward on the path to national reunification.

Complete Reunification Is Critical to National Rejuvenation

Throughout China's 5,000-year history, national reunification and opposition to division have remained a common ideal and a shared tradition of the whole nation. In the modern era from the mid-19th century, due to the aggression of Western powers and the decadence of feudal rule, China was gradually reduced to a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society, and went through a period of suffering worse than anything it had previously known. The country endured intense humiliation, the people were subjected to great pain, and the Chinese civilization was plunged into darkness. Japan's 50-year occupation of Taiwan epitomized this humiliation and inflicted agony on both sides of the Taiwan Straits. Our two sides face each other just across a strip of water, yet we are still far apart. The fact that we have not yet been reunified is a scar left by history on the Chinese nation. We Chinese on both sides should work together to achieve reunification and heal this wound.

National rejuvenation has been the greatest dream of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation since the modern era began. Only by realizing complete national reunification can the Chinese people on both sides of the Straits cast aside the shadow of civil war and create and enjoy lasting peace. National reunification is the only way to avoid the risk of Taiwan being invaded and occupied again by foreign countries, to foil the attempts of external forces to contain China, and to safeguard the sovereignty, security, and development interests of our country. It is the most effective remedy to secessionist attempts to divide our country, and the best means to consolidate Taiwan's status as part of China and advance national rejuvenation. It will enable us to pool the strengths of the people on both sides, build our common home, safeguard our interests and well-being, and create a brighter future for the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. As Dr Sun Yat-sen, the great pioneer of China's revolution, once said, "Unification is the hope of all Chinese nationals. If China can be unified, all Chinese will enjoy a happy life; if it cannot, all will suffer."

In exploring the path to rejuvenation and prosperity, China has endured vicissitudes and hardships. "Unification brings strength while division leads to chaos." This is a law of history. The realization of complete national reunification is driven by the history and culture of the Chinese nation and determined by the momentum towards and circumstances surrounding our national rejuvenation. Never before have we been so close to, confident in, and capable of achieving the goal of national rejuvenation. The same is true when it comes to our goal of complete national reunification. The Taiwan question arose as a result of weakness and chaos in our nation, and it will be resolved as national rejuvenation becomes a reality. When all the Chinese people stick together and work together, we will surely succeed in realizing national reunification on our way to national rejuvenation.

National Development and Progress Set the Direction of Cross-Strait Relations

China's development and progress are a key factor determining the course of cross-strait relations and the realization of complete national reunification. In particular, the great achievements over four decades of reform, opening up and modernization have had a profound impact on the historical process of resolving the Taiwan question and realizing complete national reunification. No matter which political party or group is in power in Taiwan, it cannot alter the course of progress in cross-strait relations or the trend towards national reunification.

International Monetary Fund statistics show that in 1980 the GDP of the mainland was about 303 billion US dollars, just over 7 times that of Taiwan, which was about 42.3 billion US dollars; in 2021, the GDP of the mainland was about 17.46 trillion US dollars, more than 22 times that of Taiwan, which was about 790 billion US dollars.

China's development and progress, and in particular the steady increases in its economic power, technological strength, and national defense capabilities, are an effective curb against separatist activities and interference from external forces. They also provide broad space and great opportunities for cross-

Strait exchanges and cooperation. As more and more compatriots from Taiwan, especially young people, pursue their studies, start businesses, seek jobs, or go to live on the mainland, cross-Strait exchanges, interaction and integration are intensified in all sectors, the economic ties and personal bonds between the people on both sides run deeper, and our common cultural and national identities grow stronger, leading cross-Strait relations towards reunification.

The CPC has united the Chinese people and led them in embarking on the new journey of building China into a modern socialist country in all respects. Following the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the mainland has improved its governance and maintained long-term economic growth; it enjoys a solid material foundation, a wealth of human resources, a huge market, strong resilience in development, and social stability. It therefore has many strengths and favorable conditions for further development, and these have become the driving force for reunification.

Grounding its effort in the new development stage, the mainland is committed to applying the new development philosophy, creating a new development dynamic, and promoting high-quality development. As a result, the overall strength and international influence of the mainland will continue to increase, and its influence over and appeal to Taiwan society will keep growing. We will have a more solid foundation for resolving the Taiwan question and greater ability to do so. This will give a significant boost to national reunification.

Any Attempt by Separatist Forces to Prevent Reunification Is Bound to Fail

Taiwan has been an integral part of China's territory since ancient times. Moves to separate Taiwan from China represent the serious crime of secession, and undermine the common interests of compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation. They will lead nowhere.

The DPP authorities have adopted a separatist stance, and colluded with external forces in successive provocative actions designed to divide the country. They refuse to recognize the one-China principle, and distort and deny the 1992 Consensus. They assert that Taiwan and the mainland should not be subordinate to each other, and proclaim a new "two states" theory. On the island, they constantly press for "de-sinicization" and promote "incremental independence." They incite radical separatists in and outside the DPP to lobby for amendments to their "constitution" and "laws." They deceive the people of Taiwan, incite hostility against the mainland, and obstruct and undermine cross-Strait exchanges, cooperation and integrated development. They have steadily built up their military forces with the intention of pursuing "independence" and preventing reunification by force. They join with external forces in trying to sow the seeds of "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan." The actions of the DPP authorities have resulted in tension in cross-Strait relations, endangering peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits, and undermining the prospects and restricting the space for peaceful reunification. These are obstacles that must be removed in advancing the process of peaceful reunification.

Taiwan belongs to all the Chinese people, including the 23 million Taiwan compatriots. The Chinese people are firm in their resolve and have a deep commitment to safeguarding China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation, and this resolve and commitment will frustrate any attempt to divide the country. When Taiwan was invaded by a foreign power more than 100 years ago, China was a poor and weak country. More than 70 years ago, China defeated the invaders and recovered Taiwan. Today, China has grown into the world's second-largest economy. With significant growth in its political, economic, cultural, technological, and military strength, there is no likelihood that China will allow Taiwan to be separated again. Attempts to reject reunification and split the country are doomed, because they will founder against the history and culture of the Chinese nation as well as the resolve and commitment of more than 1.4 billion Chinese people.

External Forces Obstructing China's Complete Reunification Will Surely Be Defeated

External interference is a prominent obstacle to China's reunification. Still lost in delusions of hegemony and trapped in a Cold War mindset, some forces in the U.S. insist on perceiving and portraying China as a major strategic adversary and a serious long-term threat. They do their utmost to undermine and pressurize China, exploiting Taiwan as a convenient tool. The US authorities have stated that they remain committed to the one-China policy and that they do not support "Taiwan independence." But their actions contradict their words. They are clouding the one-China principle in uncertainty and compromising its integrity. They are contriving "official" exchanges with Taiwan, increasing arms sales, and colluding in military provocation. To help Taiwan expand its "international space," they are inducing other countries to interfere in Taiwan affairs, and concocting Taiwan-related bills that infringe upon the sovereignty of China. They are creating confusion around what is black and white, right and wrong. On the one hand, they incite separatist forces to create tension and turmoil in cross-Strait relations. On the other hand, they accuse the mainland of coercion, pressurizing Taiwan, and unilaterally changing the status quo, in order to embolden these forces and create obstacles to China's peaceful reunification.

The important principles of respecting state sovereignty and territorial integrity as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are the cornerstones of modern international law and basic norms of international relations. It is the sacred right of every sovereign state to safeguard national unity and territorial integrity. It goes without saying that the Chinese government is entitled to take all measures necessary to settle the Taiwan question and achieve national reunification, free of external interference.

Behind the smokescreens of “freedom, democracy, and human rights” and “upholding the rules-based international order,” some anti-China forces in the U.S. deliberately distort the nature of the Taiwan question—which is purely an internal matter for China—and try to deny the legitimacy and justification of the Chinese government in safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity. This clearly reveals their intention of using Taiwan to contain China and obstruct China’s reunification, which should be thoroughly exposed and condemned.

These external forces are using Taiwan as a pawn to undermine China’s development and progress, and obstruct the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. They are doing so at the cost of the interests, well-being and future of the people of Taiwan rather than for their benefit. They have encouraged and instigated provocative actions by the separatist forces; these have intensified cross-Straits tension and confrontation, and undermined peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. This runs counter to the underlying global trends of peace, development and win-win cooperation, and goes against the wishes of the international community and the aspiration of all peoples.

Shortly after the PRC was founded, even though the country itself had to be rebuilt on the ruins of decades of war, China and its people won a resounding victory in the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea (1950–1953). We defeated a powerful and well-armed enemy through gallantry and tenacity. In doing so, we safeguarded the security of the newly founded People’s Republic, reestablished the status of China as a major country in the world, and demonstrated our heroic spirit, our lack of fear, and our will to stand up against the abuse of the powerful.

China is firmly committed to peaceful development. At the same time, it will not flinch under any external interference, nor will it tolerate any infringement upon its sovereignty, security and development interests. Relying on external forces will achieve nothing for Taiwan’s separatists, and using Taiwan to contain China is doomed to fail.

Tranquility, development and a decent life are the expectations of our Taiwan compatriots, and the common aspiration of those on both sides of the Taiwan Straits. Under the strong leadership of the CPC, the Chinese people and the Chinese nation have stood upright, won prosperity, and grown in strength. A moderately prosperous society in all respects has been built on the mainland, where a large population once lived in dire poverty. We now have better conditions, more confidence, and greater capabilities. We can complete the historic mission of national reunification, so that both sides of the Straits can enjoy a better life. The wheel of history rolls on towards national reunification, and it will not be stopped by any individual or any force.

National Reunification in the New Era

Taking into consideration the overall goal of national rejuvenation in the context of global change on a scale unseen in a century, the CPC and the Chinese government have continued to follow the CPC’s fundamental guidelines on the Taiwan question and implement its principles and policies towards Taiwan, and have made concrete efforts to promote peaceful cross-Straits relations, integrate the development of the two sides, and work towards national reunification.

Upholding the Basic Principles of Peaceful Reunification and “One Country, Two Systems”

National reunification by peaceful means is the first choice of the CPC and the Chinese government in resolving the Taiwan question, as it best serves the interests of the Chinese nation as a whole, including our compatriots in Taiwan, and it works best for the long-term stability and development of China. We have worked hard to overcome hardships and obstacles to peaceful reunification over the past decades, showing that we cherish and safeguard the greater good of the nation, the well-being of our compatriots in Taiwan, and peace on both sides.

The “one country, two systems” principle is an important institutional instrument created by the CPC and the Chinese government to enable peaceful reunification. It represents a great achievement of Chinese socialism. Peaceful reunification and “one country, two systems” are our basic principles for resolving the Taiwan question and the best approach to realizing national reunification. Embodying the Chinese wisdom—we thrive by embracing each other—they take full account of Taiwan’s realities and are conducive to long-term stability in Taiwan after reunification.

We maintain that after peaceful reunification, Taiwan may continue its current social system and enjoy a high degree of autonomy in accordance with the law. The two social systems will develop side by side for a long time to come. “One country” is the precondition and foundation of “two systems;” “two systems” is subordinate to and derives from “one country;” and the two are integrated under the one-China principle.

We will continue working with our compatriots in Taiwan to explore a “two systems” solution to the Taiwan question and increase our efforts towards peaceful reunification. In designing the specifics for implementing “one country, two systems,” we will give full consideration to the realities in Taiwan and the views and proposals from all walks of life on both sides, and fully accommodate the interests and sentiments of our compatriots in Taiwan.

Ever since the “one country, two systems” principle was proposed, certain political forces have been misrepresenting and distorting its objectives. The DPP and the authorities under its leadership have done

everything possible to target the principle with baseless criticisms, and this has led to misunderstandings about its aims in some quarters of Taiwan. It is a fact that since Hong Kong and Macao returned to the motherland and were reincorporated into national governance, they have embarked on a broad path of shared development together with the mainland, and each complements the others' strengths. The practice of "one country, two systems" has been a resounding success.

For a time, Hong Kong faced a period of damaging social unrest caused by anti-China agitators both inside and outside the region. Based on a clear understanding of the situation there, the CPC and the Chinese government upheld the "one country, two systems" principle, made some appropriate improvements, and took a series of measures that addressed both the symptoms and root causes of the unrest. Order was restored and prosperity returned to Hong Kong. This has laid a solid foundation for the law-based governance of Hong Kong and Macao and the long-term continuation of "one country, two systems."

To realize peaceful reunification, we must acknowledge that the mainland and Taiwan have their own distinct social systems and ideologies. The "one country, two systems" principle is the most inclusive solution to this problem. It is an approach that is grounded in democratic principles, demonstrates good will, seeks peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question, and delivers mutual benefit. The differences in social system are neither an obstacle to reunification nor a justification for secessionism. We firmly believe that our compatriots in Taiwan will develop a better understanding of the principle, and that the "two systems" solution to the Taiwan question will play its full role while compatriots on both sides work together towards peaceful reunification.

Peaceful reunification can only be achieved through consultation and discussion as equals. The long-standing political differences between the two sides are the fundamental obstacles to the steady improvement of cross-strait relations, but we should not allow this problem to be passed down from one generation to the next. We can phase in flexible forms of consultation and discussion. We are ready to engage with all parties, groups, or individuals in Taiwan in a broad exchange of views aimed at resolving the political differences between the two sides based on the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus. Representatives will be recommended by all political parties and all sectors of society on both sides, and they will engage in democratic consultations on peaceful development of cross-strait relations, integrated development of the two sides, and the peaceful reunification of our country.

Promoting Peaceful Cross-Strait Relations and Integrated Development

Peaceful cross-strait relations and integrated development pave the way for reunification and serve to benefit our people on both sides. Thus, both sides should work together towards this goal. We will extend integrated development, increase exchanges and cooperation, strengthen bonds, and expand common interests in the peaceful development of cross-strait relations. In this way, we will all identify more closely with the Chinese culture and Chinese nation, and heighten the sense of our shared future. This lays solid foundations for peaceful reunification.

We will explore an innovative approach to integrated development and take the lead in setting up a pilot zone for integrated cross-strait development in Fujian Province, advancing integration through better connectivity and more preferential policies, and based on mutual trust and understanding. Both sides should continue to promote connectivity in any area where it is beneficial, including trade and economic cooperation, infrastructure, energy and resources, and industrial standards. We should promote cooperation in culture, education, and health care, and the sharing of social security and public resources. We should support neighboring areas or areas with similar conditions on the two sides in providing equal, universal, and accessible public services. We should take active steps to institutionalize cross-strait economic cooperation and create a common market for the two sides to strengthen the Chinese economy.

We will improve the systems and policies to guarantee the well-being of Taiwan compatriots and ensure that they are treated as equals on the mainland, and we will protect their legitimate rights and interests here in accordance with the law. We will support our fellow Chinese and enterprises from Taiwan in participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, major regional development strategies, and the strategy for coordinated regional development. We will help them integrate into the new development dynamic, participate in high-quality development, share in more development opportunities, and benefit from national socio-economic development.

We will expand cross-strait exchanges and cooperation in various fields and overcome any obstacles and obstruction. We will encourage our people on both sides to pass on the best of traditional Chinese culture and ensure that it grows in new and creative ways. We will strengthen communication among the general public and the younger generations on both sides, and encourage more fellow Chinese in Taiwan—young people in particular—to pursue studies, start businesses, seek jobs, or live on the mainland. This will help people on both sides to expand mutual understanding, strengthen mutual trust, consolidate a shared sense of identity, and forge closer bonds of heart and mind.

Defeating Separatism and External Interference

Separatism will plunge Taiwan into the abyss and bring nothing but disaster to the island. To protect the interests of the Chinese nation as a whole, including our compatriots in Taiwan, we must resolutely oppose it and work for peaceful reunification. We are ready to create vast space for peaceful reunification, but we will leave no room for separatist activities in any form.

We Chinese will decide our own affairs. The Taiwan question is an internal affair that involves China's core interests and the Chinese people's national sentiments, and no external interference will be tolerated. Any attempt to use the Taiwan question as a pretext to interfere in China's internal affairs or obstruct China's reunification will meet with the resolute opposition of the Chinese people, including our compatriots in Taiwan. No one should underestimate our resolve, will and ability to defend China's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We will work with the greatest sincerity and exert our utmost efforts to achieve peaceful reunification. But we will not renounce the use of force, and we reserve the option of taking all necessary measures. This is to guard against external interference and all separatist activities. In no way does it target our fellow Chinese in Taiwan. Use of force would be the last resort taken under compelling circumstances. We will only be forced to take drastic measures to respond to the provocation of separatist elements or external forces should they ever cross our red lines.

We will always be ready to respond with the use of force or other necessary means to interference by external forces or radical action by separatist elements. Our ultimate goal is to ensure the prospects of China's peaceful reunification and advance this process.

Some forces in the U.S. are making every effort to incite groups inside Taiwan to stir up trouble and use Taiwan as a pawn against China. This has jeopardized peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits, obstructed the Chinese government's efforts towards peaceful reunification, and undermined the healthy and steady development of China-US relations. Left unchecked, it will continue to escalate tension across the Straits, further disrupt China-US relations, and severely damage the interests of the U.S. itself. The U.S. should abide by the one-China principle, deal with Taiwan-related issues in a prudent and proper manner, stand by its previous commitments, and stop supporting Taiwan separatists.

Working with Our Fellow Chinese in Taiwan Towards National Reunification and Rejuvenation

National reunification is an essential step towards national rejuvenation. The future of Taiwan lies in China's reunification, and the well-being of the people in Taiwan hinges on the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, an endeavor that bears on the future and destiny of the people on both sides. A united and prosperous China will be a blessing for all Chinese, while a weak and divided China will be a disaster. Only China's rejuvenation and prosperity can bring lives of plenty and happiness to both sides. But it requires the joint efforts of both sides, as does the complete reunification of the country.

Separatist propaganda and the unresolved political dispute between the two sides have created misconceptions over cross-Straits relations, problems with national identity, and misgivings over national reunification among some fellow Chinese in Taiwan. Blood is thicker than water, and people on both sides of the Straits share the bond of kinship. We have great patience and tolerance and we will create conditions for closer exchanges and communication between the two sides, and to increase our compatriots' knowledge of the mainland and reduce these misconceptions and misgivings, in order to help them resist the manipulation of separatists.

We will join hands with our fellow Chinese in Taiwan to strive for national reunification and rejuvenation. We hope they will stand on the right side of history, be proud of their Chinese identity, and fully consider the position and role of Taiwan in China's rejuvenation. We hope they will pursue the greater good of the nation, resolutely oppose separatism and any form of external interference, and make a positive contribution to the just cause of China's peaceful reunification.

Bright Prospects for Peaceful Reunification

Once peaceful reunification is achieved under "one country, two systems," it will lay new foundations for China to make further progress and achieve national rejuvenation. At the same time, it will create huge opportunities for social and economic development in Taiwan and bring tangible benefits to the people of Taiwan.

Taiwan Will Have a Vast Space for Development

Taiwan boasts a high level of economic growth, industries with distinctive local features, and robust foreign trade. Its economy is highly complementary with that of the mainland. After reunification, the systems and mechanisms for cross-Straits economic cooperation will be further improved. Backed up by the vast mainland market, Taiwan's economy will enjoy broader prospects, become more competitive, develop steadier and smoother industrial and supply chains, and display greater vitality in innovation-driven growth. Many problems that have long afflicted Taiwan's economy and its people can be resolved through integrated cross-Straits development with all possible connectivity between the two sides. Taiwan's fiscal revenues can be better employed to improve living standards, bringing real benefits to the people and resolving their difficulties.

Taiwan's cultural creativity will also enjoy a great boost. Both sides of the Taiwan Straits share the culture and ethos of the Chinese nation. Nourished by the Chinese civilization, Taiwan's regional culture will flourish and prosper.

The Rights and Interests of the People in Taiwan Will Be Fully Protected

Provided that China's sovereignty, security and development interests are guaranteed, after

reunification Taiwan will enjoy a high degree of autonomy as a special administrative region. Taiwan's social system and its way of life will be fully respected, and the private property, religious beliefs, and lawful rights and interests of the people in Taiwan will be fully protected. All Taiwan compatriots who support reunification of the country and rejuvenation of the nation will be the masters of the region, contributing to and benefitting from China's development. With a powerful motherland in support, the people of Taiwan will enjoy greater security and dignity and stand upright and rock-solid in the international community.

Both Sides of the Taiwan Straits Will Share the Triumph of National Rejuvenation

The people of Taiwan are brave, diligent and patriotic, and have made unremitting efforts to improve themselves. They revere their ancestry and love their homeland. Working together and applying their talents, people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits will create a promising future. After reunification, we Chinese will bridge gaps and differences caused by long-term separation, share a stronger sense of national identity, and stand together as one. After reunification, we can leverage complementary strengths in pursuit of mutual benefit and common development. After reunification, we can join hands to make the Chinese nation stronger and more prosperous, and stand taller among all the nations of the world.

The people separated by the Taiwan Straits share the same blood and a common destiny. After reunification, China will have greater international influence and appeal, and a stronger ability to shape international public opinion, and the Chinese people will enjoy greater self-esteem, self-confidence and national pride. In Taiwan and on the mainland the people will share the dignity and triumph of a united China and be proud of being Chinese. We will work together to refine and implement the "two systems" solution to the Taiwan question, to improve the institutional arrangements for implementing the "one country, two systems" policy, and to ensure lasting peace and stability in Taiwan.

Peaceful Reunification of China Is Conducive to Peace and Development in the Asia-Pacific and the Wider World

Peaceful cross-Straits reunification is of benefit not only to the Chinese nation, but to all peoples and the international community as a whole. The reunification of China will not harm the legitimate interests of any other country, including any economic interests they might have in Taiwan. On the contrary, it will bring more development opportunities to all countries; it will create more positive momentum for prosperity and stability in the Asia-Pacific and the rest of the world; it will contribute more to building a global community with a shared future, promoting world peace and development, and propelling human progress.

After reunification, foreign countries can continue to develop economic and cultural relations with Taiwan. With the approval of the central government of China, they may set up consulates or other official and quasi-official institutions in Taiwan, international organizations and agencies may establish offices, relevant international conventions can be applied, and relevant international conferences can be held there.

Conclusion

Over its 5,000-year history, China has created a splendid culture that has shone throughout the world from past times to present, and has made an enormous contribution to human society. After a century of suffering and hardship, the nation has overcome humiliation, emerged from backwardness, and embraced boundless development opportunities. Now, it is striding towards the goal of national rejuvenation.

Embarking on a new journey in a new era, the CPC and the Chinese government will continue to rally compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits, and lead the efforts to answer the call of the times, shoulder historic responsibilities, grasp our fate and our future in our own hands, and work hard to achieve national reunification and rejuvenation.

The journey ahead cannot be all smooth sailing. However, as long as we Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits devote our ingenuity and energy to the same goal, let there be no doubt—we will tolerate no foreign interference in Taiwan, we will thwart any attempt to divide our country, and we will combine as a mighty force for national reunification and rejuvenation. The historic goal of reuniting our motherland must be realized and will be realized.

Hong Kong: Democratic Progress Under the Framework of One Country, Two Systems

Source: State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
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Preamble

Under British colonial rule, there was no democracy in Hong Kong. After resuming the exercise of sovereignty, the Chinese government implemented the basic policy of "one country, two systems" and established democracy in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). It has since provided constant support to the region in developing its democratic system. The determination, sincerity, and

efforts of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese government to this end have remained consistent and are obvious to any objective observer.

Hong Kong has faced an extended period of damaging social unrest caused by anti-China agitators both inside and outside the region. Over the years, those who attempt to overturn the new constitutional order and destabilize Hong Kong and the rest of China have colluded to obstruct the democratic process. On the pretext of “fighting for democracy,” they have attempted to stage a color revolution, split Hong Kong from China, and seize power there. Their attempts have gravely threatened the order established by the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (Constitution) and the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Basic Law), thus endangering China’s national security and Hong Kong’s stability and prosperity.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, President Xi Jinping has emphasized on many occasions the importance of upholding the “one country, two systems” policy in the new era. His observations provide the fundamental guidance for its sustained implementation. President Xi has pointed out that in developing democracy in Hong Kong, we must abide by the principle of “one country, two systems” and the Basic Law and act in an orderly manner, in line with local realities and in accordance with the law. To put an end to the political turmoil of recent years and the serious damage it has caused in Hong Kong, the CPC and the Chinese government have taken a series of major decisions, based on a clear understanding of the situation in the region. These include strengthening the central authorities’ overall jurisdiction over the HKSAR in accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law, improving the relevant systems and mechanisms to enforce the Constitution and the Basic Law, reinforcing the legal framework and supporting mechanisms for safeguarding national security in the HKSAR, and modifying the region’s electoral system, thereby laying the foundations for Hong Kong patriots to govern Hong Kong. These measures address both the symptoms and root causes of the unrest, and have restored order to Hong Kong, returning the democratic process to a sound footing. The Chinese government will continue to implement the principle of “one country, two systems” fully and faithfully, and it will support Hong Kong in developing a democratic system that conforms to the region’s constitutional status and actual conditions.

Developing and improving democracy in Hong Kong is of profound importance in safeguarding the democratic rights of the people, realizing good governance, and ensuring long-term prosperity, stability and security. A comprehensive review of the origin and development of democracy in the HKSAR, and the principles and position of the central government, will help clarify facts, set the record straight, and build consensus. It will further the orderly progress of democracy in Hong Kong, ensure the long-term implementation of “one country, two systems,” and benefit all local residents.

Under British Colonial Rule There Was No Democracy in Hong Kong

Hong Kong has been a part of China’s territory since ancient times. In the 1820s, British merchants began smuggling opium into the mainland of China via Hong Kong Island.

After the First Opium War of 1840–1842, British troops occupied Hong Kong Island. On August 29, 1842, Britain forced the Qing government to sign the Treaty of Nanking, the first of the unequal treaties in China’s modern history, which ceded Hong Kong Island to Britain.

After the Second Opium War of 1856–1860, Britain forced the Qing government to sign the Beijing Convention on October 24, 1860, which ceded to the UK the part of Kowloon Peninsula south of present-day Boundary Street.

After the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, Britain again forced the Qing government to sign the Convention Between Great Britain and China Respecting an Extension of Hong Kong Territory on June 9, 1898, by which the New Territories were leased to Britain for 99 years. The rental payment for this “lease” was zero. As a result, Britain occupied the entire area that is now known as Hong Kong.

These three unequal treaties were imposed on China through British aggression. They were never recognized as valid by the Chinese people or by any Chinese government after the Revolution of 1911.

Britain Exercised a Typical Colonial Rule over Hong Kong

A governor was appointed to rule on behalf of Britain without the people of Hong Kong ever being consulted. He was answerable only to the British government and was entirely at its command. His paramount powers and prerogatives in Hong Kong were free of any checks and balances, and he took charge of “all things that belong to his said office.” He assumed all executive and legislative powers, and had the power to appoint and remove all senior government officials and judges. He also served as commander-in-chief of the British forces in Hong Kong.

The Executive Council and the Legislative Council, whose members were appointed by the governor with the approval of the British government and who answered to the governor, were merely advisory bodies on decision-making and lawmaking for the governor. The governor was president of both bodies. It was not until February 1993 that the governor no longer served concurrently as president of the Legislative Council.

Before Hong Kong’s return to China, the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council exercised the power of final adjudication and the power of final interpretation of all laws in Hong Kong.

The British colonial government maintained a repressive rule in Hong Kong, tightly controlling the

press and restricting freedom of speech.

In March 1952, *Ta Kung Pao* reprinted a commentary by the *People's Daily* on brutalities committed by the British Hong Kong authorities. The paper was convicted of publishing seditious content. A heavy fine was imposed on it, and it was banned from publication.

In August 1967, three newspapers published articles calling on the Hong Kong people to resist oppression. They were ordered to suspend publication for six months, accused of publishing fraudulent and seditious articles, and the newspapers' owners and printers were sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

Local Chinese residents were subjected to surveillance by British Military Intelligence and the Special Branch of the Hong Kong Police Force. Patriotic social organizations and residents who had close ties with Chinese mainland were brutally suppressed.

The British Hong Kong authorities practiced racial discrimination against local Chinese, and imposed harsh laws and severe punishments on them.

Over many years, local Chinese were subjected to inhumane punishments such as flogging and hanging. The authorities practiced separate rule over Chinese and Westerners and imposed curfews on the local Chinese. A Chinese person had to hold a pass issued by the police superintendent when going out at night; violators could be punished by fine, detention, flogging, wearing a cangue in public, and even summary execution.

The local Chinese were not allowed to hold public gatherings without approval, with the exception of religious ceremonies and during holidays.

Only European-style buildings could be built in some downtown areas, and the local Chinese were prohibited from living there.

The local Chinese were long barred from entering some premises and sharing certain public facilities with the British.

In judicial proceedings, the Chinese suffered discrimination and were subjected to different penalties from Westerners for the same offense, and the penalties were often severe.

The authorities prohibited patriotic teachers and students from flying the Chinese national flag and singing the Chinese anthem in schools. Patriotic schools were closed down, patriotic organizations were dissolved, patriotic individuals were deported, protests were brutally suppressed, and patriots were arrested. Workers who staged demonstrations were shot at and some were killed.

Local Chinese were long excluded from governance bodies and were denied participation in Hong Kong's governance.

It was not until 1880 that a Chinese was appointed a non-official member of the Legislative Council.

It was not until 1926 that a Chinese was appointed a non-official member of the Executive Council.

It was not until 1948 that a Chinese held the post of administrative officer.

It was not until 1957 that a Chinese became a police superintendent.

It was not until 1989 that a Chinese served as the commissioner of police.

The post of attorney general was held by a Briton right up until Hong Kong's return to China.

The British Government Repeatedly Rejected All Calls for Democratic Reform in Hong Kong

People in Hong Kong made numerous demands for democracy, but the British government rejected or ignored all of them. For example:

Over a prolonged period in Hong Kong, there were repeated calls to establish a municipal council, provide elected seats in the Legislative Council, and restructure the Legislative Council, as well as requests for local autonomy. All were rejected by the British government.

After World War II, the international colonial system collapsed and democratic movements surged across the world. In 1946, under pressure from the Hong Kong people, the then governor Mark Aitchison Young made proposals to the British government to establish an elected municipal council and reform local governance, which, however, were refused.

On May 20, 1976, the British government ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Many of the rights were denied to Hong Kong and other dependencies. Article 25 (b) of the covenant provides the right "to vote and be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot..." However, by means of a specific reservation, the British government explicitly excluded "the establishment of an elected Executive or Legislative Council in Hong Kong."

It can be seen from all this that under their rule, the British colonial authorities suppressed any democratic elements in Hong Kong.

The Sudden Interest of the British Government in "Electoral Reform" at the End of the Colonial Rule Revealed Its Ulterior Motives

In March 1979, the then Hong Kong Governor Murray MacLehose paid a visit to Beijing and was left in no doubt about the Chinese government's determination to recover Hong Kong. The British government then suddenly reversed its previous opposition to democratic reform in Hong Kong, and started a major program to introduce and expand electoral processes. Within a very short period, the Hong Kong district councils and the Legislative Council switched from having all their seats appointed to having most of their seats elected. In particular, in October 1992, soon after he took office, Chris Patten,

the last Governor, presented a proposal for electoral reform which violated the Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong (Sino-British Joint Declaration), violated the principle of aligning Hong Kong's future political system with the Basic Law, and violated previous agreements and understandings reached between the two sides. Known as the "Three Violations," these were imposed in Hong Kong in the face of strong opposition from China.

After the establishment of the parliamentary system, the electoral system of the UK experienced hundreds of years of evolution, but the British government rushed through electoral reform in Hong Kong in the very short remaining period of the colonial rule. Its ulterior motives were obvious. In fact, this was part of a British attempt to portray their withdrawal as somehow "honorable" under a veneer of "British-style representative democracy." The intention was to undermine China's sovereignty and full governance and extend British political influence after Hong Kong's return to China, by turning Hong Kong into a de facto independent or semi-independent political entity.

The vicious nature of British colonial rule and the British government's repeated refusal to develop democracy in Hong Kong cannot be concealed or changed. The colonial rule did not bring any genuine democracy to Hong Kong; instead, it laid hidden snares for the development of democracy in Hong Kong after its return to China.

The Return of Hong Kong to China Ushered In a New Era for Democracy

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Chinese government decided to resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, and announced the policy of "one country, two systems," under which Hong Kong would be governed by the people of Hong Kong, exercising a high degree of autonomy. A blueprint for developing democracy in post-1997 Hong Kong was drawn up.

China's State and Political Systems Determined that Hong Kong Would Establish a System of Democracy After Its Return to China

It is stipulated in China's Constitution that all power in the People's Republic of China (PRC) belongs to the people. The organs through which the people exercise state power are the National People's Congress (NPC) and the local people's congresses at all levels. The NPC and the local people's congresses are established through democratic election and are accountable to the people and subject to their oversight. All national and local administrative, supervisory, adjudicatory and prosecuting organs are created by the people's congresses and are answerable to them and subject to their oversight, in full accordance with the principles of democracy. According to the policy of "one country, two systems," Hong Kong is a special administrative region directly under the Central People's Government. In common with all other parts of China, its government is organized on the basis of democratic principles, as are its functions. At the same time, Hong Kong can develop democracy with its own characteristics in light of its actual conditions.

In the early 1980s, the CPC and the Chinese government laid down 12 basic policies on the future status of Hong Kong, known as the 12 Policies. These 12 Policies set out an overall policy and institutional framework for Hong Kong after its return to China, covering political, economic, social and cultural issues, external affairs and other fields. They constitute the core elements of the "one country, two systems" policy. The fourth basic policy stated that the government of the HKSAR would be composed of local inhabitants, and that principal officials would be selected by election or through consultations held locally and be appointed by the Central People's Government. It thus outlined steps for establishing a system of democracy in post-1997 Hong Kong. This measure—ensuring that Hong Kong is governed by the people of Hong Kong and that the principal officials are elected or selected by means of consultation—was never considered under British colonial rule.

The Chinese Government Remains Committed to Developing Democracy in the HKSAR

On December 19, 1984, the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed in Beijing. The document specified that the government of the People's Republic of China would resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong with effect from July 1, 1997 and that the government of the United Kingdom would restore Hong Kong to the PRC with effect from July 1, 1997. The document also outlines the steps to be taken during the transitional period before Hong Kong's return to China. The purpose was not to determine what political system would be implemented in Hong Kong after the handover, and certainly not to define the precise nature of the electoral system.

Paragraph 4 of Article 3 of the Sino-British Joint Declaration reads: "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will be composed of local inhabitants. The Chief Executive will be appointed by the Central People's Government on the basis of the results of elections or consultations to be held locally."

Annex I to the Sino-British Joint Declaration further specifies that "the government and legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be composed of local inhabitants" and that "the legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be constituted by elections."

These are the sole provisions of the Sino-British Joint Declaration concerning elections in Hong Kong. No mention is made of universal suffrage or democracy.

It is for China to decide what political and electoral systems will be adopted in Hong Kong after its return. During the formulation of the Basic Law, keeping in mind the national interests and the long-term development of Hong Kong, the Chinese government set as the ultimate goal that the Chief Executive of the HKSAR will be selected and the legislature constituted by universal suffrage. The assertion that “the UK secured universal suffrage for Hong Kong” has no factual basis.

The allegations that China has violated the Sino-British Joint Declaration are baseless. In reality, the British government unilaterally altered its policy towards China after the declaration was signed. It made massive changes to Hong Kong laws prior to the return, and since the return it has continued to interfere, with actions that contravene the Sino-British Joint Declaration and other agreements between China and the UK.

Prior to the return, these included creating a proposal for political reform (the OMELCO Consensus), implementing the British Nationality Selection Scheme, announcing an electoral reform package for 1994/1995, and enacting the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance.

In July 2020, the British government issued a new policy for Hong Kong residents to apply for a British National (Overseas) visa as a means for them to emigrate to the UK. The policy was another flagrant violation of the principles set in the Sino-British Joint Declaration and relevant agreements between China and the UK.

Since Hong Kong’s return to China, China’s Constitution and the Basic Law of the HKSAR have been the foundations underpinning the Chinese government’s governance of the region. The UK has no sovereignty, power of administration, or right of supervision over post-1997 Hong Kong, nor does it have the right to intervene in Hong Kong affairs in any form. Legislative interventions and imposition of sanctions, in the guise of “democracy” and on the pretext of overseeing the implementation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, flout international law and international rules, disrupt the successful practice of “one country, two systems,” and interfere with and undermine the development of democracy in Hong Kong.

The Constitution and the Basic Law Established the System of Democracy in the HKSAR The Constitution and the Basic Law Accord the Constitutional Powers and Duties to the Central Government to Establish and Develop Democracy in the HKSAR

It is stipulated in Article 31 of China’s Constitution that “The state may establish special administrative regions when necessary. The systems instituted in special administrative regions shall, in light of specific circumstances, be prescribed by laws enacted by the National People’s Congress.”

The NPC decided to set up a drafting committee for the HKSAR Basic Law on April 10, 1985. On July 1, the drafting committee, consisting of 59 mainland and Hong Kong members, was formally established. Representatives from various sectors of Hong Kong society were involved in drafting the Basic Law, a process lasting four years and eight months.

The Basic Law was adopted at the Third Session of the Seventh NPC on April 4, 1990. It codifies the central government’s basic policies towards Hong Kong in the form of a national law and specifies related institutional steps. The Basic Law provides the constitutional basis for establishing and developing democracy in Hong Kong. It also accords the central government constitutional powers and duties to direct and make decisions on the development of democracy in the HKSAR.

The Constitution and the Basic Law together create the constitutional foundations underpinning the HKSAR. They grant the central authorities overall jurisdiction over the region, detail the powers directly exercised by the central authorities, empower the HKSAR to exercise a high degree of autonomy, and confirm the central authorities’ right to supervise the exercise of this autonomy. The direct powers of the central authorities are to establish the HKSAR, decide on its systems, organize its government, manage foreign affairs and defense affairs related to the HKSAR, appoint the Chief Executive and principal officials, archive and review legislation of the HKSAR, and amend and interpret the Basic Law. The central authorities also exercise the power to decide on the system of democracy in the region.

The Basic Law Provides the Core Components of Democracy in the HKSAR and the Pathway and Principles for Its Future Development

Article 45 and Article 68 of the Basic Law provide the core components of democracy in Hong Kong and the principles for implementation. The original versions of Annex I and Annex II of the Basic Law laid out the methods for selecting the Chief Executive and for forming the Legislative Council in the first decade after Hong Kong’s return to China, as well as the processes for amending these methods after 2007. The Decision of the National People’s Congress on the Method for the Formation of the First Government and the First Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was adopted on April 4, 1990 together with the Basic Law, specifying the method to be used.

Hong Kong practices an executive-led system with the Chief Executive at its core. Under this system, there are checks and balances and coordination between the executive and legislative branches, and the judiciary exercises its power independently. In the Explanations on the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China (Draft) and Its Related Documents, the Drafting Committee for the Basic Law underlined that to ensure the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, the political system should conform to the principle of “one country, two systems” and respect the legal status and realities of the region. It should accommodate the interests of all sectors of Hong Kong

society and facilitate Hong Kong's economic growth under capitalism. The best practices of Hong Kong's previous political system should be maintained, together with an orderly and phased development of democracy. These are the principles for developing democracy in the region.

Paragraph 2 of Article 45 of the Basic Law provides:

"The method for selecting the Chief Executive shall be specified in the light of the actual situation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress. The ultimate aim is the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage upon nomination by a broadly representative nominating committee in accordance with democratic procedures."

Paragraph 2 of Article 68 provides:

"The method for forming the Legislative Council shall be specified in the light of the actual situation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress. The ultimate aim is the election of all the members of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage."

This sets dual universal suffrage as the ultimate goal in developing democracy in Hong Kong.

The Basic Law Embodies the Principle of Hong Kong People Governing Hong Kong, with Patriots at the Core

Article 2 of the Basic Law provides:

"The National People's Congress authorizes the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to exercise a high degree of autonomy and enjoy executive, legislative and independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication, in accordance with the provisions of this Law."

Article 3 continues:

"The executive authorities and legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be composed of permanent residents of Hong Kong in accordance with the relevant provisions of this Law."

Article 104 provides:

"When assuming office, the Chief Executive, principal officials, members of the Executive Council and of the Legislative Council, judges of the courts at all levels and other members of the judiciary in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region must, in accordance with law, swear to uphold the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and swear allegiance to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China."

These provisions of the Basic Law encapsulate the principle of Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong, as expressed in the words of former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping: "We are confident that our fellow Chinese in Hong Kong can govern Hong Kong well... Hong Kong must be governed by the people of Hong Kong, with patriots at the core." These statements set the parameters for Hong Kong's governance under the policy of "one country, two systems," which underpin full democracy in Hong Kong.

The Basic Law Grants Extensive Democratic Rights and Freedoms to Hong Kong Residents

Under the Basic Law, permanent residents of the HKSAR have the right to vote and the right to stand for election in accordance with the law, and Hong Kong residents have freedom of speech, freedom of the press and publication, freedom of association, assembly, procession and demonstration, and other rights and freedoms provided for under the Basic Law and the laws of the HKSAR. The provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and international labor conventions as applicable to Hong Kong remain in force and shall be implemented through the laws of Hong Kong.

In addition, the Basic Law stipulates that Chinese citizens who are HKSAR residents are entitled to participate in the management of state affairs in accordance with the law. Furthermore, permanent residents of the HKSAR who are not of Chinese nationality also enjoy extensive political rights, including the right to vote and the right to stand for election. By any standard, Hong Kong's system of democracy is highly open and inclusive.

The Chinese Government Put an End to Interference and Established the Governance Structure for the HKSAR

Striving to Secure the "Through Train" Arrangement

In order to achieve a smooth transition and transfer of government in Hong Kong, and ensure the effective functioning of the democratic system of the region following the transition, the Chinese government, in consultation with the British government, made a special arrangement for the First Legislative Council of the HKSAR: As long as they met the requirements of the relevant decisions of the NPC and provisions of the Basic Law, members of the final Legislative Council under British rule would be confirmed as members of the First Legislative Council of the HKSAR. This was known as the "Through Train" arrangement.

In October 1992, however, the British Hong Kong authorities unilaterally introduced electoral reform which violated the Sino-British Joint Declaration, the principle of alignment with the Basic Law, and the agreements and understandings reached between the two sides. This was known as the "Three Violations."

The Chinese government expressed its firm opposition to this measure. Notwithstanding, with utmost sincerity and patience, it conducted 17 rounds of talks with the British government on electoral

arrangements. However, due to intransigence and deliberate confrontation on the British side, the negotiations eventually broke down.

It should be made clear that the Chinese government did not simply overturn the British electoral reform. Instead it adopted a pragmatic approach that took into account the realities in Hong Kong and the principle of developing its democracy in a gradual and orderly manner—an approach that responded to the people’s reasonable wishes for democracy. Once again, this demonstrates that the Chinese government was committed to democracy in Hong Kong. What it opposed was arbitrary and duplicitous actions by the British side.

Establishing the First Government and the Provisional Legislative Council of the HKSAR

In accordance with the Decision of the National People’s Congress on the Method for the Formation of the First Government and the First Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, adopted on April 4, 1990, the HKSAR Preparatory Committee of the NPC passed the Method for the Selection of the First Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on October 5, 1996, and established the Selection Committee of the First Government of the HKSAR on November 2. The broadly representative Selection Committee consisted of 400 permanent residents from various social groups, sectors and backgrounds in Hong Kong.

On December 11, 1996, all 400 members of the Selection Committee cast their votes and elected the First-term Chief Executive of the HKSAR. On December 16 the central government appointed the First-term Chief Executive of the HKSAR. This was the first time in history that the head of Hong Kong had been elected by its people, and it was the first time that a local Chinese citizen had assumed this significant role.

After the “Through Train” was derailed, the HKSAR Preparatory Committee of the NPC had to avoid a vacuum in its legislature once the HKSAR was established. It therefore passed a decision on March 24, 1996 to establish a Provisional Legislative Council. The decision mandated the formation and the functions of the Provisional Legislative Council after the election of the First-term Chief Executive, until the First Legislative Council was formed.

On October 5, 1996, the Preparatory Committee adopted the method for forming this body. On December 21, the Selection Committee elected 60 members from a total of 130 candidates to form the Provisional Legislative Council.

On July 1, 1997, the Chinese government resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, ending more than 150 years of British colonial rule. Our compatriots in Hong Kong have since then truly held their future in their own hands. With the founding of the HKSAR and the inauguration of its First-term Chief Executive and First Government, the system of democracy set up by the state in the HKSAR became fully operational under the framework of “one country, two systems.” This was a landmark event in the history of democracy in Hong Kong.

There is no question that the CPC and the Chinese government designed, created, safeguarded and advanced Hong Kong’s system of democracy. They conceived the principle of “one country, two systems,” put in place its institutional framework, built a creative democratic system aligned with the principle, and passed laws to ensure the functioning of democracy in Hong Kong. Thus began an unprecedented endeavor—the governance of Hong Kong by the people of Hong Kong. The establishment of democratic institutions and the exercise of democracy in Hong Kong would not have been possible had China not resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong. It would not have been possible without the deep concern of the CPC and the Chinese government for the people of Hong Kong, and without their commitment to the principle of “one country, two systems.”

The Central Government Is Committed to Developing Democracy in Hong Kong

Since Hong Kong’s reintegration into China’s national governance system, the central government has remained committed to the policy of “one country, two systems” and to the Basic Law of the HKSAR, fully supporting the orderly development of democracy in Hong Kong in accordance with the law.

In accordance with the original Annex I and Annex II of the Basic Law, the Second-term Chief Executive of the HKSAR was elected in 2002, and the first, second and third Legislative Councils of the HKSAR were formed in 1998, 2000 and 2004. With these elections, the relevant provisions of the Basic Law for the period prior to 2007 were fully implemented, representing gradual progress in advancing democracy.

On April 6, 2004, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Interpretation of Article 7 of Annex I and Article III of Annex II to the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China (April 6 Interpretation), laying out the statutory procedures that must be followed in amending the methods for selecting the Chief Executive and for forming the Legislative Council of the HKSAR (Two Methods). The April 6 Interpretation established procedures for making the Two Methods more democratic after 2007, and for eventually moving towards dual universal suffrage.

The central government has advanced the system of democracy in Hong Kong pursuant to these procedures. It has taken three significant steps.

First Step: Giving Approval to Amend the Election Methods for the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council

On April 15, 2004 in accordance with the April 6 Interpretation, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR submitted to the NPC Standing Committee the Report on Whether There Is a Need to Amend the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2007 and for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2008. The report conveyed both the desire of the majority of Hong Kong people to make the Two Methods more democratic, and the views held by some people in Hong Kong that the 2007 election of the Chief Executive and the 2008 election of all Legislative Council members should be conducted by universal suffrage.

After soliciting opinions from various sectors of Hong Kong, on April 26, 2004, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Decision on Issues Relating to the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2007 and for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2008 (April 26 Decision).

In the decision it was pointed out that as democratic elections were new in Hong Kong, and as there were substantial differences of opinion in Hong Kong on how to amend the Two Methods, the conditions were not yet ripe in Hong Kong for electing the Chief Executive and Legislative Council by universal suffrage. Universal suffrage would therefore not be adopted in the election of the Third-term Chief Executive in 2007 or the election of all members of the Fourth Legislative Council in 2008. Appropriate amendments consistent with the April 26 Decision could therefore be made to the Two Methods in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Basic Law and the principle of making gradual and orderly progress.

The April 26 Decision created more scope for expanding democracy in Hong Kong. This was the first major step taken by the central government to advance the region's system of democracy.

Acting in accordance with the April 26 Decision, on October 19, 2005 the HKSAR government presented the Package of Proposals for the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive in 2007 and for Forming the Legislative Council in 2008. These proposals made the Two Methods more democratic, and won the support of the majority of Hong Kong people. However, they did not secure the required two-thirds majority in the Legislative Council vote on December 21, 2005, as some self-styled "democrats" on the council voted against the package.

As a result, the first opportunity to improve democracy after 2007 was lost, and the Third-term Chief Executive was selected in 2007 and the Fourth Legislative Council was formed in 2008 in accordance with the existing methods. The responsibility for this missed opportunity lies entirely with those seeking confrontation and conflict and attempting to overturn the constitutional order and destabilize Hong Kong.

Second Step: Setting a Timetable for Universal Suffrage

After the Third-term Chief Executive of the HKSAR was elected in 2007, the people of Hong Kong hoped that a timetable could be set as early as possible for universal suffrage, and that methods for electing the Fourth-term Chief Executive and for forming the Fifth Legislative Council in 2012 could be adopted.

On December 12, 2007, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR submitted to the NPC Standing Committee the Report on the Public Consultation on Constitutional Development and on Whether There Is a Need to Amend the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2012.

On December 29, 2007, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Decision on Issues Relating to the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2012 and on Issues Relating to Universal Suffrage (December 29 Decision). This decision allowed that appropriate amendments could be made to the Two Methods for elections in 2012, the Fifth-term Chief Executive could be elected by universal suffrage in 2017, and after the election of the Chief Executive, all the members of the Legislative Council could also be elected by universal suffrage.

By making the December 29 Decision, the NPC Standing Committee gave approval to amend the Two Methods for the 2012 elections. In particular, the timetable for universal suffrage was set. The central government had pledged that its basic policies regarding Hong Kong would remain unchanged for 50 years from 1997. The timetable for universal suffrage to begin in 2017, which was early in the first half of the 50-year period, highlighted the commitment of the central government to realizing the goal of dual universal suffrage laid down in the Basic Law of the HKSAR. This was the second major step taken by the central government to advance the system of democracy in Hong Kong.

On April 14, 2010, in accordance with the December 29 Decision, the HKSAR government released the Package of Proposals for the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive and for Forming the Legislative Council in 2012 and submitted it to the Legislative Council on June 7. The main features of the package are as follows: The members of the Election Committee would increase in number from 800 to 1,200, and the number of seats in the Legislative Council would expand from 60 to 70.

On June 24–25, 2010, the Legislative Council adopted the proposals to amend the methods for electing

the Chief Executive and forming the Legislative Council in 2012.

On July 28, 2010, the Chief Executive gave consent to the amendments and submitted them to the NPC Standing Committee for approval and for the record.

On August 28, 2010, the NPC Standing Committee approved the amendments and placed them on the record.

In March and September 2012, the Fourth-term Chief Executive and the Fifth Legislative Council were elected by the new methods.

The amended methods further increased democracy in the Hong Kong electoral system, fully demonstrating the goodwill and readiness of the central government to support the development of democracy in Hong Kong.

Third Step: Drawing Up a Roadmap for Electing the Chief Executive by Universal Suffrage

As 2017 drew near, the people of Hong Kong hoped that the method for electing the Fifth-term Chief Executive of the HKSAR by universal suffrage could be agreed as quickly as possible. On July 15, 2014, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR submitted to the NPC Standing Committee the Report on Whether There Is a Need to Amend the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2017 and for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2016.

On August 31, 2014, after soliciting opinions from a broad sector of the Hong Kong public, the NPC Standing Committee made the Decision on Issues Relating to the Selection of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region by Universal Suffrage and on the Method for Forming the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in the Year 2016 (August 31 Decision).

In view of the realities in Hong Kong and in response to the wishes of the majority of people in Hong Kong, the NPC Standing Committee reaffirmed in the August 31 Decision that from 2017 the Chief Executive of the HKSAR would be elected by universal suffrage, and it specified the key elements of the method. It was also reaffirmed that after the election of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, all the members of the Legislative Council of the HKSAR would likewise be elected by universal suffrage.

This decision set out the principles and guidelines for electing the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, a step taken by the central government to fulfill its constitutional responsibility. It was also the third major step taken by the central government to advance democracy in Hong Kong.

However, clinging to a confrontational mindset and disregarding the relevant provisions of the Basic Law, the self-styled “democratic” camp in Hong Kong ferociously attacked the August 31 Decision. It rejected the method proposed by the HKSAR government on the basis of the August 31 Decision, and instead demanded “civic nomination” for the post of Chief Executive in flagrant violation of the Basic Law.

In an attempt to coerce the central government into withdrawing the August 31 Decision and incite a color revolution in Hong Kong, its followers launched the illegal Occupy Central movement on September 28, 2014, which lasted 79 days.

After taking lawful action to end the movement, on June 18, 2015 the HKSAR government submitted the motion on the method for electing the Chief Executive by universal suffrage to the Legislative Council to a vote. The “democrats” on the council again voted against the motion, blocking its passage. As a result, the goal of electing the Fifth-term Chief Executive in 2017 was not realized as envisioned, and the old method was maintained. Once again democracy in Hong Kong was held back by those seeking to overturn the constitutional order and destabilize Hong Kong.

In the face of repeated interference and disruptions, the central government has never wavered in its commitment to support Hong Kong in developing democracy and has never faltered in its efforts towards this goal.

From 1997 to 2017, four elections were held for the Chief Executive and six elections for the Legislative Council, all in accordance with the law. The methods for conducting these elections have become increasingly democratic, and the lawful rights of all permanent residents in Hong Kong to vote and stand for election are fully protected.

Chinese citizens who are permanent residents of the HKSAR can participate in the governance of both Hong Kong and the country as empowered by law. For example, in accordance with the assigned number of seats and the selection method specified by the NPC, Chinese nationals who are HKSAR residents can elect 36 deputies from Hong Kong to participate in the work of the NPC, China’s highest body of state power.

More than 5,600 representatives from all walks of life in Hong Kong serve as members of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) at all levels, including over 200 in the CPPCC National Committee. Many Hong Kong people work in leadership positions or serve as advisers in the central and local governments and in social organizations.

The central government has given support and assistance to professionals and outstanding young people in Hong Kong to help them work in international organizations and thus become involved in global governance.

Any rational observer can clearly see that since Hong Kong’s return to China, its people have gained much greater access to political participation and enjoy more democratic rights than ever before.

Democracy in Hong Kong is flourishing.

Anti-China Agitators Undermine and Disrupt Democracy in Hong Kong

Taking advantage of the profound changes that are sweeping the world, anti-China forces have ramped up their efforts. The implementation of the “one country, two systems” policy in Hong Kong is faced with a situation of growing complexity, both internally and externally, and the struggle over the development of democracy in the region has intensified.

The instigators of disorder have been challenging the authority of the Constitution and the Basic Law, with the goal of seizing power in Hong Kong through a color revolution. Exploiting their elected positions on the Legislative Council and district councils, and otherwise abusing their capacity as holders of public office, these anti-China agitators openly challenge the “one country, two systems” principle, the constitutional order, and the rule of law in Hong Kong. They carry out activities detrimental to China’s national security and Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability, in an attempt to derail the development of democracy in the region. This has had a serious impact on the social environment and on progress towards democracy.

Rejecting the Constitutional Order and Endangering National Security

The Agitators Openly Challenge the HKSAR Order Established by the Constitution and the Basic Law

They refuse to recognize the legal authority of the Constitution over Hong Kong, attempt to sever the link between the Constitution and the Basic Law, and reject the authority of the Basic Law.

In an attempt to undermine the Basic Law, they falsely claim that the Sino-British Joint Declaration became the legal foundation of the new constitutional order of Hong Kong following its return to China, and tout the claims of the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance—rushed through before the end of the British rule in Hong Kong—in the region’s legal system. They push for unlawful referendums and espouse ideas such as “the Constitution devised by the people” in election campaigns, in an attempt to overturn the constitutional order.

To obstruct the central authorities’ overall jurisdiction over Hong Kong, they have gone out of their way to create chaos. They refuse to accept the central authorities’ leadership and their right to determine the course of democracy in Hong Kong, and they refuse to recognize the authority of the relevant decisions and interpretations of the National People’s Congress and its Standing Committee.

They have engaged in provocative public acts such as burning, tearing down, and stamping on the national flag. They have defaced the national emblem, and ripped and burned copies of the Basic Law. As a result of their concerted filibuster, the local legislation on national security required by Article 23 of the Basic Law has been stalled, and it took 18 months for the National Anthem Ordinance to pass through the Legislative Council.

The Agitators Carry Out Defiant Acts of Subversion and Secession

They call for referendums to separate Hong Kong from China, incite anti-China, anti-CPC and secessionist sentiment throughout Hong Kong society, especially among young people, and attack the CPC’s leading role and the socialist system practiced on the mainland. Their goal is to subvert the sense of national identity and manipulate public support in favor of their plans to undermine state power and split the country.

They have founded various radical secessionist organizations, and they run for Legislative Council and district council elections under a banner of “Hong Kong independence.” Once elected to public office, they abuse their power to promote secession and engage in separatist and subversive activities. When taking the oath of office on October 12, 2016, some members-elect of the Sixth Legislative Council displayed banners reading “Hong Kong Is Not China” and “Hong Kong Independence.”

During the 2019 turmoil, they chanted separatist slogans such as “liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times,” besieged and stormed the resident offices of the central government in Hong Kong and HKSAR government agencies, and even forced entry into the Legislative Council Complex. Inside the building they created ugly scenes, wrecking facilities and displaying the British Hong Kong flag on the podium.

In defiance of the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong National Security Law) enacted in June 2020, they organized an unlawful primary after the election for the Seventh Legislative Council had begun. They have described a process that they call “Ten Steps to Actualize Mutual Destruction” and they have used it to manipulate the election for the Legislative Council. Their intention was to veto any bills and motions from the government after taking control of the Legislative Council, and subvert the government by forcing the Chief Executive to resign, paralyzing the government, and creating a constitutional crisis.

The Hong Kong Agitators Collude with External Anti-China Forces, and Make Themselves Their Willing Tools

Their leading figures make frequent visits to other countries to smear and attack China and call for foreign sanctions on the mainland and Hong Kong. Some members regard themselves as political agents of other countries and pledge to fight for the U.S.; others publish articles inciting their followers to turn Hong Kong under “one country, two systems” into a “Trojan horse for mass killings” which could open a

backdoor to “regime change” in China.

External forces, who have masterminded attempts to provoke a color revolution behind the scenes, have intensified their meddling in Hong Kong affairs, posing a growing threat to China’s national security. Now stepping into public view, they hold high-profile meetings with leading agitators, openly champion their cause, and pledge their support. By legislative or administrative means and through such channels as their agencies and NGOs in Hong Kong, they have provided the Hong Kong element with cover, funds and training and imposed baseless sanctions on mainland and Hong Kong officials. Such moves expose their determination to use Hong Kong as a pawn in their attempts to toxify China and hamstring its progress.

Destroying the Foundations of the Rule of Law and Inciting Hatred in Society

Agitators in Hong Kong Have Instigated, Abetted, Organized, and Engaged in Illegal Activities

The agitators call for civil disobedience and lawbreaking “in the interests of justice,” instigating the public to achieve unlawful ends through unlawful means. During the Occupy Central movement in 2014, the Mong Kok riot in 2016, and the 2019 turmoil, they planned, organized, and carried out a series of illegal activities, posing a serious threat to law and order in Hong Kong.

They have justified and incited violence as a means to solve Hong Kong’s political issues, asserting that “a criminal record adds color to life.” At their instigation and under their coercion, young students became the main participants of the Occupy Central movement in 2014 and the 2019 turmoil. The agitators poison young minds, and the harm they have done to the young people of Hong Kong is unforgivable.

The Agitators Are Perpetrators of Violence and Terrorism

During the 2019 turmoil, mobs barricaded roads and damaged transport facilities, even paralyzing the airport at some points. When the situation was at its worst, 147 Mass Transit Railway stations—more than 90 percent of the total—were damaged. The Cross-Harbour Tunnel, a vital transport link, was closed. Hong Kong International Airport, a hub of Asia-Pacific aviation, was paralyzed.

Public services were obstructed. Kindergartens, elementary schools, secondary schools, and universities had to suspend operations for days, and many university campuses were illegally occupied. Shops could not open for business, and over 1,200 commercial outlets and many banks were vandalized.

The mobs attacked people who stood up to them. They beat a journalist and kept him trapped for several hours at the airport. A passer-by who tried to talk some sense into them was set on fire with gasoline. A sanitation worker was hit by a brick and killed. The graves of the parents of a Legislative Council member were dug up in broad daylight.

The Agitators Have Set People at Odds with Each Other, Poisoning the Public Sphere

They have incited hatred among local people towards the CPC, their mainland compatriots, and the country. They have manipulated polls to mislead people into questioning their identity and to drive a wedge between Hong Kong and the mainland.

They have fanned the flames of minor conflicts between locals and people from the mainland, or themselves provoked such problems, in order to harass, insult and attack mainland visitors. They have stirred up anti-government sentiment through malicious verbal attacks on the Chief Executive and other officials of the HKSAR government.

During the 2019 turmoil, they turned on the police who were trying to maintain order and members of the public who were trying to prevent their unlawful activities. They illegally exposed the personal information of police officers and other officials, and bullied and verbally abused the children of police officers. One police officer had his finger bitten off, another was shot with a crossbow bolt, and yet another had his throat slit. These are shocking levels of violence.

Obstructing Governance and Dragging Down the Economy

Agitators in Hong Kong Have Obstructed Government Administration

They have engaged in filibustering at the Legislative Council by repeatedly moving motions for amendments that contravene the Basic Law and issuing repeated calls for unnecessary headcounts. This has prevented the passage of many major policies that could have benefited Hong Kong’s economy and improved the people’s lives. The opposition members of the Legislative Council have abused their powers of investigation, summons and inquiry, proposing motions of no confidence and insulting holders of public office.

For example, it took the Legislative Council three years to pass the motion to set up the Innovation and Technology Bureau, an institution of far-reaching significance for Hong Kong’s future development. The House Committee of the Sixth Legislative Council was unable to function for more than eight months in the 2019–2020 legislative session, with the result that 14 bills and over 80 items of subsidiary legislation were not scrutinized and followed up before their vetting period expired. Bills dealing with matters such as improving welfare for local residents and vulnerable communities failed to pass due to the standstill.

Some Agitators Hold Seats on the Legislative Council and District Councils, and Have Employed Various Means to Paralyze It

For example, at a meeting on April 24, 2018, a council member snatched the mobile phone of a government employee. When the Chief Executive was delivering the annual Policy Address on October 16, 2019, a group of opposition members used dazzling lights to stop her from completing the address. At the sessions of May 28 and June 4, 2020, a council member hurled a noxious liquid at the

president of the Legislative Council and other people in the room.

These intolerable acts all violate the law, disrupt the functioning of the Legislative Council, pit legislation against administration, hamstringing the HKSAR government, and prevent it from doing its work.

The agitators have abused the statutory functions of the district councils and misused their power. They have tried to turn district councils into a platform to engage in secessionist and subversive activities, creating further instability in Hong Kong.

Perverting Democracy and Impeding Its Progress

The Agitators Have Perverted the Meaning of Democracy

The agitators have misled public opinion by portraying Hong Kong as a sovereign country. They judge democracy as “true” or “fake” only by their own criteria—that is, whether it can help them come to power.

Regarding the method for electing the Chief Executive by universal suffrage, they have concocted criteria that they claim to be the base for “universal suffrage by international standards,” and they have raised proposals that violate the Basic Law. They have gone on to sabotage the efforts to advance democracy in Hong Kong, made by the central government and the HKSAR government.

The Agitators Have Disrupted Fair and Orderly Electoral Processes

During the elections for the sixth-term district councils in November 2019, opposition candidates used violence, coercion, and threats to intimidate voters and patriotic candidates. Assassination attempts were even made on candidates in broad daylight. As the Electoral Affairs Commission of the HKSAR reported, during these elections there was a surge in complaints, more than 1,000 of which were about acts of sabotage, violence and intimidation that constituted criminal offenses.

The Agitators Have Constantly Obstructed the Gradual and Orderly Development of Democracy in Hong Kong

Disregarding the public will, they twice voted down proposals delivered by the HKSAR government to the Legislative Council for expanding democracy in local elections. Without their obstruction, Hong Kong could have realized universal suffrage in the election of its Chief Executive by 2017 and the election of all members of its Legislative Council by 2020. They have wreaked havoc on the social foundations of democracy in Hong Kong, attempting to provoke hostility between the central government and the region.

All this demonstrates that the agitators in Hong Kong and the external groups behind them must be held to account for threatening the principle of “one country, two systems,” endangering national security, damaging the region’s prosperity and stability, and impeding its progress towards democracy.

Progress towards democracy has stalled in the region because of the local agitators and the external groups behind them—the former are the frontline saboteurs and the latter the covert masterminds. Hong Kong youth have become their pawns, and local residents are the victims who will suffer the consequences of this dangerous game.

The 2019 turmoil and the chaos in the election for district councils both revealed shortcomings in the electoral system of the HKSAR. The most obvious of them is laxity in the electoral process, which has allowed agitators to be easily elected into Hong Kong’s governing organizations. This opens the way for external forces to meddle in Hong Kong’s affairs in various ways, thereby providing themselves with the means to infiltrate Chinese mainland and engage in acts of subversion. Development of democracy in any country should never come at the expense of national security. Improving the democratic system of the HKSAR, especially its electoral system, is a prerequisite for governing Hong Kong by law and keeping the region on the right track—itself essential for safeguarding national security and the constitutional order, and as a foundation for sound progress in steering Hong Kong towards democracy.

Development of Democracy in Hong Kong Is Back on Track

The 2019 turmoil was a painful blow to national security, the rule of law, and social and economic stability in Hong Kong. At the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee concluded on October 31, 2019, the following decisions were made: to reinforce the legal framework and supporting mechanisms for safeguarding national security in the special administrative regions; to support the regions in strengthening law enforcement; to improve the systems and mechanisms for enforcing the Constitution and the Basic Law in the two regions; to ensure Hong Kong and Macao are governed by patriots; to build up the capacity of the special administrative regions to govern in accordance with the law; to grant zero tolerance to any attempt to challenge the “one country, two systems” principle or divide the country. The central government responded swiftly to the turmoil by taking a series of decisive measures that addressed both the symptoms and root causes of the unrest, restored order, and brought Hong Kong and democracy back on track.

Formulating and Enforcing the Hong Kong National Security Law Has Created Favorable Conditions for the Development of Democracy

National security is of paramount significance for any country. The central government bears a fundamental responsibility for matters of national security pertaining to the HKSAR, and the HKSAR bears a constitutional responsibility for safeguarding national security. On May 28, 2020, at the Third Session of the 13th NPC, the Decision on Establishing and Improving the Legal System and Enforcement

Mechanisms for Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was adopted. The decision set the guidelines on establishing the legal framework and supporting mechanisms for safeguarding national security in the HKSAR. It authorized the NPC Standing Committee to formulate legislation to effectively prevent, halt, and punish any acts and activities severely jeopardizing national security in the region. On June 30, the NPC Standing Committee passed the Hong Kong National Security Law and included it in Annex III to the Basic Law. On the same day, the HKSAR government released the Hong Kong National Security Law and had it published on the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Gazette for enforcement.

The Hong Kong National Security Law stipulates four offenses—secession, subversion of state power, organization and perpetration of terrorist activities, and collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security—and the corresponding penalties. This law improves the enforcement mechanisms for safeguarding national security at both national and HKSAR levels, and it defines the criteria for eligibility and the required qualifications of candidates or nominees for public service positions in Hong Kong. The promulgation and enforcement of the Hong Kong National Security Law provides a strong legal safeguard for protecting national security in Hong Kong. It has dealt a heavy blow to extremist advocates of independence, and it has been instrumental in quickly quelling riots and restoring order in Hong Kong. The law marks a milestone in advancing the cause of “one country, two systems.”

Whatever form of democracy runs in any country, it must first and foremost safeguard national security. There can never be workable, authentic democracy without security. To safeguard national security and to develop democracy in the HKSAR, solid measures must be taken to prevent, halt, and punish offenses that seriously undermine national security. The enforcement of the Hong Kong National Security Law has created favorable conditions for restoring order to the process of building democracy in Hong Kong.

Rules Have Been Formulated for Hong Kong Public Servants to Stand for Election, Assume Office, and Take the Oath of Office

On November 7, 2016, following an incident when some members of the Sixth Legislative Council of the HKSAR insulted China and the Chinese nation when taking the oath of office, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Interpretation of Article 104 of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The interpretation prescribes that upholding the Basic Law and pledging allegiance to the HKSAR are the legal requirements and prerequisites for standing for election or assuming public office in Hong Kong. The interpretation defines the act of taking the oath of office in accordance with the law as well as its legal weight and the legal responsibility it entails. It thus sets rules for oath-taking by members of the Legislative Council and other holders of public office in Hong Kong, and serves as a legal safeguard to prevent agitators from infiltrating the Hong Kong government system by means of elections.

On August 11, 2020, in response to a proposal made to the State Council by the Chief Executive to avoid the absence of a legislature caused by the postponement of the Seventh Legislative Council election due to COVID-19, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Decision on the Continuing Discharge of Duties by the Sixth Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The decision affirmed that after September 30, 2020, the Sixth Legislative Council of the HKSAR would continue to discharge duties for no less than one year until the Seventh Legislative Council started functioning.

On November 11, 2020, to resolve disputes concerning the continued qualification of a few members of the Legislative Council, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the Decision on Issues Relating to the Qualification of the Members of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. It provides that a member of the Legislative Council of the HKSAR should be immediately disqualified if he or she is determined, in accordance with the law, to have committed one of the following acts:

- advocates or supports “Hong Kong independence”;
- refuses to recognize China’s sovereignty over Hong Kong and its exercise of such sovereignty;
- seeks intervention by external forces in the affairs of Hong Kong;
- carries out other activities endangering national security;
- fails to meet the legal requirements and conditions of endorsing the Basic Law and pledging allegiance to the HKSAR.

The decision further defines the legal qualification of members of the Legislative Council and improves the relevant system and mechanism.

The Electoral System of Hong Kong Has Been Improved

On March 11, 2021, the Decision on Improving the Electoral System of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was adopted at the Fourth Session of the 13th NPC. The decision defines the basic principles and core elements for improving Hong Kong’s electoral system, and authorizes the NPC Standing Committee to amend Annex I and Annex II to the Basic Law.

On March 30, at its 27th Session, the 13th NPC Standing Committee unanimously passed the amended Annex I “Method for the Selection of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” and Annex II “Method for the Formation of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Its Voting Procedures.” The amended Annex I and Annex II came into force

on March 31, and the methods previously in force ceased to apply.

The Hong Kong government then implemented the decision and the amended Annex I and Annex II through local legislation. It proposed a bill on the amendment of local laws, including 8 principal laws and 24 subsidiary laws. On May 27, 2021, the Legislative Council passed the Improving Electoral System (Consolidated Amendments) Bill 2021, thus completing the improvements to Hong Kong's electoral system.

The improvements are underpinned by five major principles:

- Fully and faithfully implementing the policy of “one country, two systems,” abiding by the Constitution, the Basic Law and the relevant decisions of the NPC, resolutely safeguarding China's sovereignty, security and development interests, resolutely opposing external interference, and maintaining enduring peace and order in Hong Kong.
- Fully implementing the principle of Hong Kong patriots governing Hong Kong, keeping the power to govern Hong Kong firmly in the hands of those who love the country, and ensuring the legitimate rights and interests of Hong Kong residents.
- Upholding the rule of law and its authority in Hong Kong, safeguarding the order established by the Constitution and the Basic Law, and holding to account anyone guilty of violating the law or undermining the rule of law.
- Making the Election Committee and the Legislative Council more representative, expanding balanced and orderly political participation, and safeguarding the overall and fundamental interests of Hong Kong.
- Improving coordination between the executive and the legislature, improving governance, and reducing political conflict and internal strife.

The improvements cover three areas:

First, the Election Committee has been restructured, with its membership enlarged, its sectors increased in number, its delimitation of sectors improved, and its functions enhanced.

- The membership of the Election Committee is increased from 1,200 to 1,500; the number of sectors increased from 4 to 5, with each comprising 300 members. The additional Fifth Sector is composed of Hong Kong deputies to the NPC, Hong Kong members of the CPPCC National Committee, and representatives of Hong Kong members of relevant national organizations. The term of office of the Election Committee is five years, and members of the Election Committee must be permanent Hong Kong residents.
- There are specific provisions concerning the delimitation and allocation of seats, and the formation of the 40 subsectors under the five sectors of the Election Committee, with the delimitation of sectors further improved. The three constituent groups that previously formed the Election Committee will continue to supply members—exofficio members, validly nominated members, and validly elected members.
- The functions of the Election Committee have been improved and expanded: Its function of electing the Chief Executive designate from the list of nominations is retained; its function of electing some members of the Legislative Council is restored; and its role in nominating candidates for the Legislative Council is added.

The restructured Election Committee has a wider social basis. It is more representative, with more balanced participation by all sectors of society. It thus better represents the overall and fundamental interests of Hong Kong as an international, pluralistic and highly-developed capitalist society, and it fully conforms to the constitutional status and realities of Hong Kong as a local administrative region under the direct jurisdiction of China's central government.

Second, provisions are made concerning the methods for the selection of the Chief Executive and the formation of the Legislative Council. The basic elements of the previous system for selecting the Chief Executive are retained, while the nomination mechanisms are adjusted to ensure that the Chief Executive must be a loyal patriot trusted by the central government. The priority is to reform the voting procedures of the Legislative Council so as to strike a better balance between the overall interests of Hong Kong society, the interests of individual sectors, and the interests of the various parts of Hong Kong. The number of members of the Legislative Council has increased from 70 to 90; of these, 40 members are returned by the Election Committee, 30 by functional constituencies, and 20 by geographical constituencies through direct election. There are specific provisions regarding the nomination of candidates for the Legislative Council, voter eligibility, and voting methods.

Third, the system of candidate eligibility review is improved. The Candidate Eligibility Review Committee is established, which is responsible for reviewing the eligibility of candidates for the Election Committee, nominees for the Chief Executive, and candidates for the Legislative Council. This is to ensure that the principle of Hong Kong patriots governing Hong Kong is fully implemented and that those who seek to overturn Hong Kong's constitutional order and destabilize Hong Kong are disbarred from participation in Hong Kong's government system.

On September 19, 2021, the polls closed in Hong Kong's 2021 Election Committee Subsector Election, the first major election held successfully under the improved electoral system.

Held on December 19, the elections for the Seventh Legislative Council were open, fair, secure and clean, representing another step forward for democracy in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong's new electoral system has the following characteristics and strengths:

First, it is broadly representative. The new electoral system has attracted an impressive range of candidates from a diversity of backgrounds. Among them are representatives of business, academia and the professions, as well as workers, employees, and operators of small and medium-sized enterprises from the primary level. They include natives of Hong Kong, residents from the mainland and Taiwan who have come to live and work in Hong Kong, and naturalized foreign residents. They range from political veterans to a new generation of young people full of energy and innovation. Ordinary people including residents from public housing and subdivided apartment complexes, bus drivers, and electricians are all likely candidates for the Legislative Council. This would never have happened in Hong Kong in the past.

Second, it is politically inclusive. Elections should reflect more than one voice. Candidates for the Legislative Council represent various political groups and interests from different points on the political spectrum, espousing different political philosophies, and aspiring to different goals. This shows clearly the open and inclusive nature of the new electoral system. Upholding the principle of loving the country and Hong Kong, the new electoral system has expanded the boundaries of political involvement in line with the fundamental interests of Hong Kong: the sustained implementation of "one country, two systems," the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, and the pursuit of a better life for the people of Hong Kong.

Third, it ensures balanced participation. The new electoral system has optimized the composition of the Legislative Council by dividing membership among those returned by the Election Committee, by functional constituencies, and by geographical constituencies through direct elections. Participation of all social groups and all constituencies in the legislature ensures balanced political representation—diverse interests are thus taken into consideration. While ensuring the sound development of capitalism, the system conforms to Hong Kong's realities and enables the Legislative Council to better represent the overall interests of Hong Kong, protect the interests of all social groups and geographical constituencies, and reflect public opinion in a more comprehensive way.

Fourth, it guarantees fair competition. All 90 seats in the Legislative Council elections were contested—the first time since Hong Kong's return to China. The new electoral system attaches greater importance to the competence and quality of candidates, thus making election activities more rational, fair and orderly, and it addresses a higher level of attention to issues such as people's lives and regional development. All candidates compete on the same platform, campaigning on their expertise, policies, ideas, contributions, and sense of responsibility.

Prior to the handover, the UK tried to impose elements of a fake Western-style democracy on Hong Kong. Since the handover, local agitators have created polarization and social disorder resulting in economic imbalance and ineffective regulation. None of this has ever helped Hong Kong residents to enjoy genuine democracy. The new electoral system has brought benign, rational, fair and clean competition back to elections, so that the true purpose of elections is achieved, to the greater benefit of the people of Hong Kong.

Obviously, Hong Kong's improved electoral system gives full expression to the policy of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law in line with Hong Kong's realities.

- It is based on the principle of "one country" while respecting the differences between the "two systems."
- It is guided by the principle of Hong Kong patriots governing Hong Kong; it closes the loopholes in the previous electoral system, and is open and inclusive.
- It ensures both extensive and balanced participation.
- It reinforces both electoral democracy and consultative democracy.
- It safeguards state authority and improves governance.
- It promotes good governance and upholds and realizes the democratic rights of the Hong Kong people.

The improved electoral system shows that democracy in Hong Kong is advancing with the times. This system ensures the sound long-term development of democracy in Hong Kong, and fosters favorable conditions necessary for the election by universal suffrage of the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council.

According to the Constitution, the system of people's congresses is China's fundamental political system. The NPC is the highest organ of state power, and its permanent institution is the NPC Standing Committee. The NPC and its Standing Committee exercise the legislative power of the state, the power to decide on major issues, the power to appoint and remove top-level officials, and the power of oversight. The NPC Standing Committee has the power to interpret the Constitution and laws. The system of people's congresses provides a fundamental institutional safeguard for the policy of "one country, two systems."

Since the 1980s, the NPC and its Standing Committee have played a vital role in approving the Sino-British Joint Declaration, drafting and enacting the Basic Law, deciding on the establishment of the HKSAR, addressing complex political and legal issues in the transition period, and meeting new challenges encountered in the course of implementing the policy of "one country, two systems" since Hong Kong's return to China.

In particular, in response to the 2019 turmoil, the NPC and its Standing Committee have fulfilled their

constitutional responsibilities and made a series of sound and timely decisions—enacting the Hong Kong National Security Law, amending Annex I and Annex II to the Basic Law, and improving Hong Kong’s electoral system. The NPC and its Standing Committee have thus played a critical role in quelling riots and restoring order in Hong Kong. They have ensured that the development of democracy in Hong Kong will continue to make orderly progress, and that the policy of “one country, two systems” and the Basic Law are fully and faithfully implemented and enforced.

By making all these efforts to develop and improve democracy in Hong Kong, the central government aims to ensure the success of the policy of “one country, two systems,” to enable the Hong Kong residents to better exercise their democratic rights, and to maintain Hong Kong’s long-term stability and prosperity. The central government will continue to steer the course for the development of democracy in Hong Kong and support this endeavor, and it will continue to resolutely uphold the fundamental interests of all the people in Hong Kong.

The Prospects Are Bright for Democracy in Hong Kong

The policy of “one country, two systems” is the optimal solution to problems carried over from history. It is the best policy for sustaining prosperity and stability following Hong Kong’s return, and it provides the fundamental safeguard for the development of democracy in Hong Kong. With more than 20 years of experience, the CPC and the Chinese government have gained a deeper and clearer understanding of how to develop democracy in accordance with the policy of “one country, two systems” and in line with the realities in Hong Kong. We will continue to take more solid steps to advance democracy in the right direction with greater confidence.

The Principle of “One Country, Two Systems” Provides the Fundamental Guarantee for the Development of Democracy in HKSAR

The CPC created the “one country, two systems” policy and has guided its development ever since. Upheld by the CPC and the Chinese government as a basic long-term policy, it has been confirmed by all the CPC National Congresses and other important meetings, and written into all major documents promulgated since the 1980s. It is also enshrined in the Constitution, and codified and institutionalized through the Basic Law. It has been fully and faithfully implemented in the decisions on Hong Kong made by the NPC and its Standing Committee, and in the interpretation of the Basic Law made by the NPC Standing Committee.

On November 11, 2021, at its Sixth Plenary Session, the 19th CPC Central Committee adopted the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century. “One country, two systems” is included as one of the Party’s important achievements and a major contributor to its experience. This is the first time that Hong Kong and Macao affairs, and “one country, two systems” have been listed in such a momentous document.

To carry forward the policy of “one country, two systems” in the new era, we must continue to abide by a set of key principles: Hong Kong governed by the people of Hong Kong, a high degree of autonomy for the region, upholding and improving the policy of “one country, two systems,” Hong Kong governed in accordance with the law, and overall jurisdiction over Hong Kong by the central authorities. The legal systems and supporting mechanisms in the HKSAR must maintain national security, sovereignty and development interests, ensure overall social stability, and sustain lasting prosperity and stability. The principle of Hong Kong patriots governing Hong Kong must be implemented to consolidate the order established by the Constitution and the Basic Law. We should implement the policy of “one country” and respect the differences of the “two systems.” We should ensure overall jurisdiction by the central authorities over Hong Kong and a high degree of autonomy in Hong Kong. The central authorities should continue to provide full support to Hong Kong, and Hong Kong, on its part, should improve its competitiveness. We should ensure that this policy will remain unchanged and that it is implemented faithfully. This is the fundamental guarantee for the development of democracy in the HKSAR.

Gaining a Full Understanding of the Relationship Between One Country and Two Systems and Faithfully Applying This Policy

“One country” is the prerequisite and basis for the “two systems,” and the “two systems” are subordinate to and derive from “one country”. The socialist system practiced on the mainland, the main body of the country, and the capitalist system in Hong Kong, run in parallel. However, the fact that the latter is subordinate to the former is not to be challenged. Leadership by the CPC is the defining feature of Chinese socialism, and it is at the core of the order established by the Constitution. As such, it must be truly respected and upheld in Hong Kong.

We must foster a strong sense of “one country” as a fundamental state policy. We must safeguard China’s sovereignty, security and development interests, and take resolute action to prevent and stop external interference in the affairs of Hong Kong. Any activity that jeopardizes China’s sovereignty and security, any activity that challenges the right of the central authorities and the authority of the Basic Law, and any infiltration or sabotage directed at the mainland via Hong Kong are in violation of the “one country” policy and will not be tolerated. The more we adhere to the policy of “one country”, the greater

the scope there will be for “two systems.”

Governing Hong Kong in Strict Accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law

We must consolidate the base of the HKSAR underpinned by the Constitution and the Basic Law and uphold the order in Hong Kong decided by the Constitution and the Basic Law. These should be the overarching norms in handling the affairs of Hong Kong. We must consolidate the constitutional status of the Basic Law in Hong Kong’s legal system, improve the legal system and mechanisms for enforcing the Basic Law, and ensure all its provisions are implemented and its authority is upheld.

Properly Handling the Relationship Between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR and Ensuring Both Overall Jurisdiction by the Central Authorities and a High Degree of Autonomy in Hong Kong

The central authorities have overall jurisdiction over the HKSAR, and the HKSAR enjoys a high degree of statutory autonomy. The HKSAR government is answerable to the central government and must implement the directives issued by the central government in accordance with the law. While exercising autonomy, the HKSAR government is under the supervision of the central government and is accountable to it. The HKSAR government should not exploit its high degree of autonomy to challenge or confront the exercise of relevant statutory powers by the central government. All central government departments and local governments should truly respect and uphold the statutory autonomy enjoyed by the HKSAR and not interfere in the affairs within the scope of its autonomy.

Practicing the Executive-Led System with the Chief Executive at Its Core and Supporting the Chief Executive and the HKSAR Government in Exercising Law-Based Governance and Efficiently Performing Their Duties

We fully support the HKSAR government in exercising law-based governance under the leadership of the Chief Executive. We support the HKSAR executive, legislative and judicial branches in performing their statutory duties.

We support the HKSAR government in rallying all sectors of Hong Kong, in pursuing economic development, in taking effective steps to improve people’s well-being, in firmly upholding the rule of law, in making gradual and orderly progress towards greater democracy, and in building a more inclusive and harmonious society.

We support the HKSAR government in actively responding to the need to advance social development, in meeting the new expectations of the Hong Kong people, and in solving the deep-rooted and acute problems influencing Hong Kong’s economic and social development and its long-term peace and stability. We support the HKSAR government in improving its governance capacity and performance.

Integrating Hong Kong into China’s Overall Development and Supporting Hong Kong in Extensive Exchanges and Cooperation with Other Countries and Areas

We support Hong Kong in defining its development strategy within the national development strategy and in contributing to the national effort to open up and build a modern economy. We support Hong Kong in playing its part in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, in creating a platform for the Belt and Road Initiative, and in tapping into its strengths to realize coordinated development with other parts of the country.

We support Hong Kong in continuing to be a separate customs territory and a free port, in strengthening global exchanges and cooperation, in consolidating its international status as a financial, shipping and trade center and an aviation hub, and in boosting its role as a global center for offshore Renminbi business and asset and risk management.

We support Hong Kong in building itself into an international center of innovation and technology, an international legal and dispute resolution services center in the Asia-Pacific Region, a regional center of intellectual property trade, and a center of cultural and art exchanges between China and other countries.

From the outset, when it adopted the policy of “one country, two systems,” the Chinese government attached great importance to protecting the legitimate interests of foreign investors in Hong Kong. It made clear then that Hong Kong may establish mutually beneficial business ties with the UK and other countries and that due regard would be given to their legitimate economic interests in Hong Kong. More detailed provisions in this regard are laid out in the Basic Law and local laws, which give comprehensive and equal protection to the legitimate interests of investors from around the world. The Chinese government is ready to share with all other countries the gains of reform and opening up through Hong Kong, an international financial, business and trade center.

The CPC and the Chinese government are committed to the principle of “one country, two systems,” and to building a high-quality democracy conforming to the realities of Hong Kong.

Remaining Committed to the Principle of Hong Kong Patriots Governing Hong Kong

To ensure that “one country, two systems” will make steady progress, and to further the development of democracy in Hong Kong, we must remain committed to the principle that Hong Kong is governed by Hong Kong patriots. This is a principle that has a fundamental bearing on China’s national sovereignty, security and development interests, and on the sustained prosperity and stability in Hong Kong.

Loving one’s country is a basic requirement for anyone engaged in state governance. Patriots governing their country is a universal practice around the world. Hong Kong governed by the patriots of Hong Kong

is essential to the “one country, two systems” principle, and quintessential to democracy in the region. To develop democracy in Hong Kong in the new era, the region must be governed by patriots and patriots only. No instigator of disorder should be allowed into the governing body of the HKSAR, and resolute measures must be taken to guard the region’s administration against destabilizing influences and the forces behind them. The governance of the HKSAR must be secure.

The criteria for a patriot are objective and clear. A patriot is one who respects the Chinese nation, sincerely supports the motherland’s resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong, and wishes in no way to impair Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability. Now that Hong Kong has returned to China and has been reincorporated into the national governance system, a patriot is required to safeguard China’s national sovereignty, security and development interests, respect and uphold the order established by the Constitution and the Basic Law, and work for prosperity and stability in Hong Kong.

Any Hong Kong residents can stand for election and participate in governing Hong Kong in accordance with the law, as long as they love the country and Hong Kong, and are not involved in activities that undermine national sovereignty, security and development interests, or jeopardize Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability. Those who take the opposite view will be disqualified from governance.

Having Hong Kong patriots govern Hong Kong does not exclude people with different political views or ideas, nor will criticism of the government be suppressed. Democracy in the HKSAR allows ample room for different opinions and political groups, and there will be a plurality of voices in the government. All those who love the country and Hong Kong should stand together to form the most extensive united front, and expand it and make it more inclusive under the “one country, two systems” framework.

The central government and the HKSAR government will continue to improve the system for selecting and cultivating patriotic individuals for Hong Kong’s governance, promoting the upright and competent, and ensuring more patriots participate in Hong Kong’s governance.

Developing Democracy in Line with Hong Kong’s Realities

There is no single set of criteria for democracy and no single model of democracy that is universally acceptable. Democracy works only when it suits actual conditions and solves actual problems. The social and political crises and turbulence in some countries and regions in recent years are evidence that there is no perfect democracy anywhere in the world. Disregarding the reality of one’s own country and blindly copying the systems of others often causes chaos and brings disaster to the people.

The political system of the HKSAR applies locally. This is determined by the region’s constitutional status under the “one country, two systems” framework and by its actual conditions. Therefore, the system of democracy in Hong Kong should not be a replica of some other model. Rather, a path to democracy in Hong Kong should be explored under the policy of “one country, two systems” and the Basic Law and in keeping with its political, economic, social, cultural and historical conditions.

Democracy in Hong Kong Should Be Guided by the Central Authorities and Make Steady Progress in Accordance with the Law

The central authorities have the final say in determining the system of democracy in the HKSAR, which is a matter of national sovereignty and security, a reflection of the nature of relationship between the central authorities and the HKSAR, and one that affects the region’s long-term peace, stability and prosperity. Only under central guidance can Hong Kong expect its democracy to make healthy progress. The central authorities exercise their constitutional power by law, and the NPC and its Standing Committee revise and improve the electoral system in the HKSAR, according to a process that is fair, just, lawful and constitutional. This is the path along which democracy should progress in Hong Kong. Any system of democracy takes time to form and proceeds in stages. These stages are more than simply quantitative units; they should also be measured against quality.

The Constitutional Order Must Be Consolidated to Safeguard National Security

In developing democracy in Hong Kong, it is imperative to consolidate the order established by the Constitution and the Basic Law and ensure Hong Kong’s constitutional status as stipulated in the Basic Law: “The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is an inalienable part of the People’s Republic of China.” “The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be a local administrative region of the People’s Republic of China, which shall enjoy a high degree of autonomy and come directly under the Central People’s Government.” National security is the prerequisite for peace and democracy in Hong Kong. Without national security, there would be no stability in Hong Kong, and no prospects of implementing democracy. The key issue that has emerged in the course of developing democracy in Hong Kong over the past two decades is not whether Hong Kong should pursue democracy. Rather, it is an issue of upholding the “one country” principle and opposing separatism, subversion and intervention. Safeguarding national security must be a focus in developing democracy in Hong Kong, and all latent threats and risks that could undermine national security must be neutralized.

The Executive-led System Should Be Implemented to Ensure Good Governance

In developing democracy in Hong Kong, it is imperative to implement the executive-led system and consolidate the Chief Executive’s core position and authority in the region’s governance. There should be strong and steady support for the Chief Executive and the HKSAR government in the Legislative Council to end the long-standing conflict between the legislature and the executive and resolve the internal strife within the Legislative Council. This will enable Hong Kong and its government to focus on economic

development, improve people's lives, and boost Hong Kong's strengths in the face of fierce international competition.

There Should Be Balanced Participation in Governance, and Hong Kong Should Remain Open and Pluralistic

Under the "one country, two systems" framework, Hong Kong will maintain its capitalist economic model and way of life for a long period of time. Development of democracy in Hong Kong must be conducive to economic development under capitalism, and the interests of all social groups, sectors and stakeholders should be protected by law. A broadly-based mechanism of public representation should be formed to advance balanced political participation. Development of democracy in Hong Kong should help the region to integrate into the broader framework of national development, and keep it highly open, as the common home of both Chinese and foreign residents who work and live here, and a destination of opportunity for entrepreneurs and investors from around the world.

The Rule of Law Will Be Upheld to Protect Personal Rights and Freedoms

In developing and improving democracy in Hong Kong, it is imperative to follow the rule of law in accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law. Any proposition or act that is incompatible with the Constitution, the Basic Law, and the relevant decisions of the NPC and its Standing Committee goes against the principle of rule of law and undermines its authority. Development of democracy in Hong Kong should protect the people's rights and freedoms provided for in the Constitution and the Basic Law, and it should ensure that they enjoy these rights and freedoms and exercise them. These include freedom of speech, the press and publication, freedom of association, assembly, procession and demonstration, the right to vote and stand for election, and the right and freedom to organize and join trade unions and strikes.

Democracy Should Be Promoted in Many Forms

Democracy comes in many forms. It cannot be reduced to the simplistic question of whether there are elections, and elections themselves cannot be defined exclusively as direct elections. Nor can progress in democracy be defined only as more representation from direct elections. What matters is whether public representation is expanding and whether the fundamental interests and the common will of the people are faithfully represented. For democracy to develop in Hong Kong, measures should be taken to improve the electoral system, and more forms of democracy—consultation, inquiry, hearing and dialogue—should be tested, to open up more channels for democracy of quality and substance.

The Economy Will Be Boosted for the Greater Benefit of the People of Hong Kong

Democracy should progress side by side with the economy and society. The main criterion for evaluating any form of democracy should always be whether it allows the whole of the population to prosper. Only those models that continue to improve overall well-being are good; those that undermine the economy and the lives of the people are not. The central government is determined to promote the development of democracy in the HKSAR in line with the region's realities, in ways that will help generate high-quality economic growth and improve quality of life. It is intended that this will also be a practical means of addressing the most troublesome and long-standing problems that beset Hong Kong society, so that economic and social progress will benefit every local resident in a fairer way, and that Hong Kong will maintain its status as an international financial, shipping and trade center. This will ensure lasting prosperity and stability in Hong Kong, enabling it to play a more prominent part in national rejuvenation. Quality economic and social development in Hong Kong will also prepare the region for further democratic progress.

The central government will continue to develop and improve democracy in Hong Kong in line with its realities and in accordance with the Constitution, the Basic Law, and the relevant decisions of the NPC and its Standing Committee. It will work with all social groups, sectors and stakeholders towards the ultimate goal of election by universal suffrage of the Chief Executive and all members of the Legislative Council. Under the framework of "one country, two systems," the prospects are bright for democracy in Hong Kong.

Conclusion

The people of China have always yearned for democracy, and the CPC has always stayed true to the mission of delivering their dream. Over the past century, the CPC has led the Chinese people on a long and arduous journey to establish a model of democracy with Chinese characteristics, and it has enabled 1.4 billion Chinese, one fifth of world population, to run their own country with extensive and substantive democratic rights. Their satisfaction with the results proves that this effort has borne fruit.

The CPC puts the people first, serves the public good, and exercises power in the interests of the people. It ensures that the Party exercises leadership, the people run their country, and governance is based in law. Through systemic and institutional improvements, it has championed whole-process people's democracy in China, and this has laid the groundwork for developing democracy in Hong Kong under the framework of "one country, two systems."

The policy is a creative innovation of the CPC and the Chinese government. Robust and resilient, it has proved to be a great success in Hong Kong. With their political vision, the CPC and the Chinese government are certain of the long-term success of the socialist system on the mainland. They are equally

certain of the long-term success of both the capitalist system in Hong Kong and a form of democracy suited to its realities.

Hong Kong is entering a new stage of restored order, a thriving society, and further prosperity. With the Hong Kong National Security Law coming into force, and with improvements to the electoral system, governance by patriots will be further strengthened, the rule of law and the business environment will continue to improve, and Hong Kong will become a more harmonious society. This will create the conditions required to effectively resolve long-standing and deep-seated problems in the region.

Rooted in the motherland, and buttressed by democracy and the rule of law, a free and inclusive Hong Kong will continue to prosper, to enjoy enduring stability and harmony, and to open itself to the world. The policy of “one country, two systems” will be a resounding success story in Hong Kong, and this dynamic region will continue to prosper.

Xi Stresses Adherence to “One Country, Two Systems” as Macao SAR Celebrates Silver Jubilee

Source: Xinhua
December 2024

Chinese President Xi Jinping stressed on Friday the long-term adherence to “one country, two systems” as Macao celebrates a quarter-century of transformative success since its return to the motherland.

At a televised ceremony held in a major sports venue in Macao, Xi swore in Sam Hou Fai, a 62-year-old former senior judge, as the sixth-term chief executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR). Sam’s team of principal officials for the SAR government was also sworn in before Xi.

After the inauguration, Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, addressed an audience of over 1,000 people.

Xi stated that the great achievements of Macao since its return have proven to the world that “one country, two systems” has prominent institutional strengths and tremendous vitality.

Enormous Transformation

Macao and its neighbor Hong Kong are China’s two SARs governed under the “one country, two systems” policy since China resumed the exercise of sovereignty over them following long periods of Portuguese and British colonial rule. The policy allows them to maintain their capitalist systems and ways of life within socialist China.

At Friday’s ceremony, Xi said the practice of “one country, two systems” with Macao characteristics has been a tremendous success, hailing the enormous transformation that has taken place in the region.

Xi highlighted Macao’s achievements in economic and social development, the improvement of its residents’ well-being, and the expansion of external cooperation. He said Macao residents enjoy a wider range of rights and freedoms than at any other time in history.

In 2023, Macao’s GDP rose to seven times the figure of 1999. Its per capita GDP now ranks among the world’s highest. Macao is also one of the safest places globally. Education is free from kindergarten to senior high, and average life expectancy in the region has risen to 83.1 years.

Macao was once labeled a “casino city” for its dominant gaming industry, but that situation is changing as the city makes efforts to appropriately diversify its economy.

On Friday, Xi said Macao’s role has been strengthened as a world tourism and leisure center, a commercial and trade cooperation service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, and a base for exchange and cooperation where Chinese culture is the mainstream and diverse cultures coexist.

Entering the 26th year of being an SAR of China, Macao is brimming with cheerful vibes. Festive posters and floral decorations adorn popular sites such as the Ruins of St. Paul’s, while national flags and SAR flags flutter along the streets.

“This year’s decorations are the most vibrant I’ve ever seen,” said Leung Chon Long, a middle school teacher who was born the same year as Macao’s return to the motherland. “It makes me feel warmly embraced by my country.”

Good System

The concept of “one country, two systems” was first proposed by late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s to reunify the country, initially with Taiwan in mind. It was later implemented in Hong Kong and Macao following their handovers from British and Portuguese rule in the late 1990s.

Xi said “one country, two systems” is a good policy that helps maintain long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao, serves the noble cause of building a stronger country and achieving national rejuvenation, and promotes peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation between different

social systems.

He urged the new government of the Macao SAR to better leverage the institutional advantages of “one country, two systems” and open up new prospects for the cause’s high-quality development.

During his three-day stay, Xi visited the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin. Located in Zhuhai in Guangdong Province, Hengqin is separated from Macao by a narrow stretch of water. The zone, about three times the size of Macao, was established in 2021 to develop industries such as high-end manufacturing, traditional Chinese medicine, financial services, and cultural tourism, helping Macao reduce its over-dependence on the gaming sector.

“Macao plus Hengqin” is becoming a new model for enriching the practice of “one country, two systems” and a new high ground for advancing the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Xi said.

As Carlos Cid Alvares, president of the Macao Delegation of the Portugal-China Chamber of Commerce and Industry, aptly pointed out, “Macao may be small, but the potential of the Greater Bay Area is huge.”

“So I never talk about the 700,000 residents in Macao,” he said. “I talk about 80 million people in the Greater Bay Area.”

Macao will surely open up new horizons for development and continue creating new glories, as long as the policy of “one country, two systems” is comprehensively, accurately, and unwaveringly implemented, Xi said on Friday.

New Glory

On Friday, Xi expressed his expectations for the newly inaugurated government, calling on it to promote the appropriate diversification of the local economy, improve governance efficiency, build a platform for higher-level opening up, and safeguard social harmony and stability.

He also called on young people in Macao to assume the role of builders and successors of the cause of “one country, two systems.”

Xi said he met many outstanding young people during his stay in Macao, including government workers, entrepreneurs and teachers.

Visiting the Macau University of Science and Technology on Thursday, Xi had a cordial exchange with the faculty, students and researchers there. Lai Iat Him, a freshman, said he was excited to meet Xi in person. “It was a real inspiration for me hearing what he said, and we, as young people in Macao, should dream big, work hard to realize our goals, and contribute to our country,” Lai said.

Sam Hou Fai said in his inaugural speech that he felt a great sense of responsibility and honor for the mission.

“With the staunch support of the motherland and the collective efforts of Macao’s people, we have the confidence and capability to make Macao, ‘a pearl on the palm’ of the motherland, even more brilliant and shining,” Sam said.

Friday’s ceremony was also attended by senior officials including Cai Qi, as well as Ho Hau Wah, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, HKSAR Chief Executive John Lee, and former Macao SAR Chief Executives Chui Sai On and Ho Iat Seng.

International Development Cooperation

A Global Community with a Shared Future: China's Proposals and Actions

Source: The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
September 2023

Preface

In the universe there is only one Earth, the shared home of humanity. Unfortunately, this planet on which we rely for our subsistence is facing immense and unprecedented crises, both known and unknown, both foreseeable and unforeseeable. Whether human civilization can survive these has become an existential issue that must be squarely faced. More and more people have come to the realization that rather than amassing material wealth, the most pressing task is to find a guiding beacon for the sustainable development of human civilization, because we all care about our future.

Ten years ago President Xi Jinping propounded the idea of building a global community with a shared future, answering a question raised by the world, by history, and by the times: “Where is humanity headed?” His proposal lights the path forward as the world fumbles for solutions, and represents China’s contribution to global efforts to protect our shared home and create a better future of prosperity for all.

To build a global community with a shared future, all peoples, all countries, and all individuals—our destinies being interconnected—must stand together in adversity and through thick and thin, navigating towards greater harmony on this planet that we call home. We should endeavor to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity, turning people’s longing for a better life into reality.

The vision of a global community with a shared future bears in mind the well-being of all humanity. It is based on both observation of the present and visionary planning for the future. It lays out goals, charts the path, and offers action plans to achieve them. It concerns the future of humanity and the destiny of every human being.

President Xi Jinping first raised the vision of a global community with a shared future when addressing the Moscow State Institute of International Relations in 2013. Over the past decade it has been steadily enriched. He fleshed it out with a five-point proposal in his speech at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly in 2015. He further proposed five goals for the world in his speech at the United Nations Office in Geneva in 2017. This represents the steady increase in the depth and scope of the vision.

The past decade has seen steady progress in implementing the vision. From bilateral to multilateral and from regional to global dimensions, ground-breaking results have been achieved on every front. The Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative have taken root and borne fruits, bringing prosperity and stability to the world and creating substantive benefits for the people.

Over the past decade, the vision of a global community with a shared future has gained broader support. More countries and people have come to the understanding that this vision serves the common interests of humanity, represents popular calls for peace, justice and progress, and can create the greatest synergy among all nations for building a better world. It is now widely recognized in the international community that the vision has nothing to do with self-interest and protectionism. Instead, by presenting China’s vision of the course of human development, it confronts the hegemonic thinking of certain countries that seek supremacy. It is therefore of great significance to promote solidarity and cooperation among all countries and create a better future for humanity.

The Chinese government is publishing this white paper to introduce the theoretical base, practice and development of a global community with a shared future. We hope it will improve understanding and expand consensus in the international community, and reinforce the global effort to realize this vision.

Humanity at a Crossroads

This is an era of promise, and an era of challenges. At yet another crossroads in history, we have to choose between unity and division, between opening up and closing off, between cooperation and confrontation. With the overall interests of humanity at stake, this choice tests the wisdom of all countries.

Interdependence Is the Prevailing Trend Throughout History

In its history, humanity has progressed from primitive society to the Agricultural Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and now the Information Revolution. While this process has seen a steep increase in productivity, one fundamental reality has remained unchanged: The Earth is our one and only home. All countries bear responsibility for the safety of this planet and the future of humanity. If the pursuit of power and profit escalates to vicious competition or even armed conflict, self-destruction will be the certain outcome.

Throughout history, peace and development have been the primary aspirations of humanity. Having experienced the ravages of wars and conflicts, especially the two world wars, people around the globe have built a keener awareness of cherishing peace, expanding cooperation, and seeking common development. The idea that “we are all one human family” is gaining traction, and the desire for a global community grows stronger than ever.

Globalization has improved the allocation of production factors worldwide, including capital, information, technology, labor and management. As if connecting scattered lakes and creeks into an uninterrupted expanse of water, it draws nations out of isolation and away from the obsolete model of self-reliance, merging their individual markets into a global one and combining their respective experiences into world history.

As information technology advances with every passing day, most prominently in the fields of Internet, big data, quantum computing, and artificial intelligence, human exchanges have become deeper, broader, and more extensive than ever before, and countries are more interconnected and interdependent than at any point in the past. Globalization is not an option; it is the reality and the way of life. The global village is getting smaller—the longest distance between two places on earth has been reduced to a flight of no greater than 24 hours, and our planet is becoming flat—one tap on a mobile phone connects us to the other side of the world in a split second. This is an integrated world. Those who turn their back on it will have no place in it.

Living on the same planet, all countries, adjacent or distant, large or small, developed or developing, are members of an emerging community of shared interests, responsibility, and destiny, whose well-being and security are interrelated. Only when appropriate attention is paid to the collective future of humanity is it possible that the wishes of every country, people and individual come true. Whatever we may encounter on our journey ahead, the only right choice is to work together for the benefit of all.

Global Challenges Call for Global Response

Our world is undergoing change on a scale unseen in a century. Various problems old and new and complex issues are converging with and compounding each other, posing unprecedented challenges for human society. Instability, uncertainty, and unpredictability are now the norm.

The peace deficit is growing. Though human society has largely maintained peace since the end of World War II, threats to world peace continue to amass. War has returned to the Eurasian continent, tensions are rising, and a series of flashpoints are emerging. The shadow of the arms race lingers on, and the threat of nuclear war—the Sword of Damocles that hangs over humanity—remains. Our world is at risk of plunging into confrontation and even war.

The development deficit is ballooning. The global economic recovery is sluggish, and unilateralism and protectionism are rampant. Some countries are turning to a “small yard, high fence” approach to wall themselves off; they are pushing for decoupling, severing and “derisking” supply chains. All this has caused setbacks to globalization. At the same time the COVID-19 pandemic has reversed global development, exacerbating the North-South gap, development fault lines, and the technology divide. The Human Development Index has declined for the first time in 30 years. The world’s poor population has increased by more than 100 million, and nearly 800 million people live in hunger.

The security deficit is glaring. Due to more intense global strategic competition and a lack of mutual trust between major countries, the Cold War mindset has re-emerged, and calls for ideological confrontation have resurfaced. Some countries’ hegemonic, abusive, and aggressive actions against others, in the form of swindling, plundering, oppression, and the zero-sum game, are causing great harm. Non-traditional security challenges are on the rise, including terrorism, cyber-attacks, transnational crime, and biological threats.

The governance deficit is more severe. The world is facing multiple governance crises. The energy crisis, food crisis, and debt crisis are intensifying. Global climate governance is urgently needed, and the transition to green, low-carbon development requires dedicated efforts over an extended period of time. The digital divide continues to expand, and sound governance of artificial intelligence is lacking. The COVID-19 pandemic is a mirror through which we have observed that the global governance system is falling further behind the times and keeps breaking down on issues requiring resolution. It has to be reformed and improved.

In the face of global crises, the 190-plus countries in the world are all in the same big boat. Only big boats can withstand battering winds and crashing waves. No country, however strong it may be, can do everything on its own. We must engage in global cooperation. Only when all countries work together, only when we align individual interests with the interests of all, and only when we truly build a global community with a shared future, can humanity tide through the crises confronting us and sail towards a

better future.

The New Era Calls for New Ideas

This is an era when the world is undergoing rapid changes almost every day. We can no longer interpret the reality we are living in or find satisfactory solutions to the conundrums we are facing by means of traditional approaches to international relations. It is increasingly obvious that the idea that “all strong countries will seek hegemony,” the obsession with superior strength, and the zero-sum mentality are in conflict with the needs of our times. Humanity is in great need of new ideas that generate positive developments and conform to positive historical trends.

There is no iron law that dictates that a rising power will inevitably seek hegemony. This assumption represents typical hegemonic thinking and is grounded in memories of catastrophic wars between hegemonic powers in the past. China has never accepted that once a country becomes strong enough, it will invariably seek hegemony. China understands the lesson of history—that hegemony preludes decline. We pursue development and revitalization through our own efforts, rather than invasion or expansion. And everything we do is for the purpose of providing a better life for our people, all the while creating more development opportunities for the entire world, not in order to supersede or subjugate others.

The strong preying on the weak is not a way for humans to coexist. If the law of the jungle is imposed on human society, and the idea that “might makes right” prevails, the principle of sovereign equality will be fundamentally undermined, and world peace and stability will be severely endangered. In the age of globalization, all countries are interdependent and interconnected. Therefore the law of the jungle and the winner-takes-all mindset will lead nowhere—inclusive development for the benefit of all is the right path forward. China has consistently championed equity and justice, and remains committed to friendly cooperation with other countries, on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, in order to advance democracy in international relations.

The zero-sum game in which one wins by causing others to lose is doomed to fail. Nevertheless, certain countries still cling to this mindset, blindly pursuing absolute security and monopolistic advantages. This will do nothing for their development over the long run; it will simply create a major threat to world peace and prosperity. No country should hope for others to fail. Instead, it should work together with other countries for the success of all. China consistently aligns its development with global development, and aligns the interests of the Chinese people with the common interests of all peoples around the world. When the world thrives, China thrives, and vice versa.

An Answer to the Call of the Times and a Blueprint for the Future

Standing at a crossroads, humanity is faced with two opposing options. One is to revert to the Cold War mentality that deepens division and antagonism and stokes confrontation between blocs. The other is to act for the common well-being of humanity, strengthen solidarity and cooperation, advocate openness and win-win results, and promote equality and respect. The tug of war between these two options will shape the future of humanity and our planet in a profound way.

To build a global community with a shared future is to pursue openness, inclusiveness, mutual benefit, equity and justice. The goal is not to replace one system or civilization with another. Instead, it is about countries with different social systems, ideologies, histories, cultures and levels of development coming together to promote shared interests, shared rights, and shared responsibilities in global affairs. The vision of a global community with a shared future stands on the right side of history and on the side of human progress. It introduces a new approach to international relations, provides new ideas for global governance, opens up new prospects for international exchanges, and draws a new blueprint for a better world.

Introducing a New Approach to International Relations

The current international order is facing a myriad of challenges. Some countries, holding to the notion of might makes right, willfully engage in bullying, plundering and zero-sum competition. The development gap is widening and the deficit in security is growing. The isolationist and exclusive practice of alliance-based confrontation runs counter to the trend towards multipolarity and the evolution of international relations in the post-Cold War era. Especially with the rise of a large number of emerging market and developing countries, the current international order is increasingly out of step with the changing times. “What kind of world we need and how to build such a world” has become a vital question with the future of humanity at stake.

China’s answer to this question of the times is to build a global community with a shared future. It means that with their futures closely interlocked, all nations and countries should stick together, share weal and woe, live together in harmony, and engage in mutually beneficial cooperation. The idea is based on a reasonable design for state-to-state relations. It reflects the general consensus and common expectations of the international community, and demonstrates China’s sense of duty as a responsible major country.

In this global village, all human beings are one big family. With their interests intertwined and futures interlocked, countries are turning into a community with a shared future. Such a vision rises above the exclusive rules of bloc politics, the notion of might makes right, and the “universal values” defined by a

handful of Western countries. It conforms to the trend of the times, echoes the call for global cooperation, and contributes to a more just and equitable international order.

Highlighting the New Features of Global Governance

The concept of a global community with a shared future holds that all countries share a common future, and envisions a world characterized by openness and inclusiveness, equity and justice, harmonious coexistence, diversity and mutual learning, and unity and cooperation.

—Openness and inclusiveness. Countries should not draw lines based on ideology, target specific countries, or gang up to form exclusive blocs. The ocean is vast because it admits all rivers. To build a global community with a shared future, countries should advance democracy in international relations to make sure that the future of the world is determined by all, that international rules are written by all, that global affairs are governed by all, and that the fruits of development are shared by all.

—Equity and justice. The world needs justice, not hegemonism. No country has the right to dominate global affairs, dictate the future of others, or monopolize development advantages. Countries should safeguard the international order based on international law, uphold the authority of the international rule of law, and ensure equal and unified application of international law. The practice of double standards or selective application of law should be rejected.

—Harmonious coexistence. Countries should strive to achieve peaceful coexistence and common development by seeking common ground while reserving differences. Planet Earth is not an arena for wrestling between countries, but a stage for human coexistence. Despite their differences and diverse features, countries can develop together in harmony and unity, and it is precisely such diversity that gives strength to global development.

—Diversity and mutual learning. Different histories, national conditions, ethnic groups, and customs have given birth to diverse civilizations. Diversity of human civilizations is a basic feature of our world. Mutual learning among civilizations provides important impetus to human progress. Countries should respect one another and jointly pursue common development through exchanges and mutual learning.

—Unity and cooperation. Countries should act for the greater good. Pursuing development behind closed doors can only result in poverty. Viewed from a “country-first” perspective, the world is small and crowded, and locked in “fierce competition”; viewed from the perspective of a shared future, the world is vast, and full of opportunities for cooperation. No country can overcome global development challenges on its own. Cooperation among all countries is the only viable option.

Opening Up New Prospects for International Exchanges

China has made a five-point proposal for building a global community with a shared future in the areas of partnerships, security environment, development, inter-civilization exchanges, and ecosystem. This has opened up new prospects for international exchanges.

We should build partnerships in which countries treat each other as equals, engage in extensive consultation, and enhance mutual understanding. The principle of sovereign equality runs through the UN Charter. All countries are equals. The big, the mighty and the wealthy should not bully the small, the weak and the poor. We should uphold multilateralism and reject unilateralism. We should replace the outdated mindset of winner takes all with a new vision of seeking win-win outcomes for all. We should forge global partnerships at both international and regional levels, and embrace a new approach to state-to-state relations, one founded on dialogue rather than confrontation and that seeks partnership rather than alliance. In handling their relations, major countries should follow the principles of no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation. Big countries should treat small countries as equals and take the right approach to friendship and interests, pursuing both friendship and interests and putting friendship first.

We should create a security environment featuring fairness, justice, joint efforts, and shared interests. In the age of economic globalization, the security of all countries is interlinked, and each has an impact on the others. No country can maintain absolute security on its own, and no country can achieve stability by destabilizing others. The law of the jungle leaves the weak at the mercy of the strong; it is not the way for countries to conduct their relations. Those who choose to oppress will invite harm to themselves, like lifting a rock only to drop it on their own feet. We should reject Cold War mentality in all its manifestations, and foster a new vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security.

We should promote open, innovative and inclusive development that benefits all. Development is meaningful only when it is inclusive and sustainable. To achieve such development requires openness, mutual assistance and mutually beneficial relations. Long-term global development cannot be founded on one group of countries becoming increasingly prosperous while another group of countries remain chronically poor and backward. Development should be placed high on the international agenda, and efforts should be made to reduce inequality and imbalance in global development, leaving no country or individual behind.

We should increase inter-civilization exchanges to promote harmony, inclusiveness, and respect for differences. There are more than 200 countries and regions, over 2,500 ethnic groups and a vast number of religions in our world. Such cultural diversity is what makes the world colorful. Diversity breeds exchanges, exchanges lead to integration, and integration brings progress. Only by upholding the equality, mutual learning, dialogue and inclusiveness of civilizations, and working for mutual respect, experience

sharing, and harmonious coexistence while preserving diversity, can the world maintain its diversity and thrive. We should respect all civilizations, treat each other as equals, and draw inspiration from each other to boost the creative development of human civilization.

We should build an ecosystem that puts Mother Nature and green development first. Humanity may have the ability to utilize nature and even transform it, but it is still a part of nature. We should care for nature and not place ourselves above it. We should reconcile industrial development with nature, and pursue harmony between humanity and nature to achieve sustainable global development and all-round human development. We should respect nature, follow its ways, and protect it. We should firmly pursue green, low-carbon, circular and sustainable development.

Outlining a New Vision for Building a Better World

China proposes to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, common security, and common prosperity. From “the five-point proposal” to “the five goals,” the concept of a global community with a shared future has gained a broader historical perspective and deeper meaning, and set a clearer goal and drawn a clearer blueprint for the future of humanity.

We should build a world of lasting peace through dialogue and consultation. It means beating the swords of war into the plowshares of peace. The stone wall at the entrance to the UNESCO headquarters carries the inscription of one single message: “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” Throughout human history, obsession with power and hegemony has led to frequent wars and loss of lives. The lessons are painful and profound, and we need to remove the fuses of war from our minds. Big countries should treat the smaller ones as equals instead of seeking unilateral dominance or imposing their will on others. No country should open Pandora’s box by willfully provoking turmoil and armed conflict or undermining the international rule of law. Countries should respect each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, respect each other’s core interests and major concerns, and respect the development path and social system chosen by other peoples.

We should build a world of common security for all through joint efforts. It means turning absolute security for one into common security for all. There is no place in the world that enjoys absolute security, and a country cannot build its security on the turmoil of others. Threats to other countries can turn into a challenge to one’s own country. When neighbors are in trouble, instead of reinforcing one’s own fences, one should extend a helping hand. As challenges often take on global dimensions, it is all the more important for countries to cooperate in addressing them, turning pressure into motivation and crises into opportunities. Unilateral action or blind belief in the use of force cannot address the complex international security threats. The only solution lies in cooperative and common security. It is normal for countries to have differences, and they should be properly addressed through dialogue and consultation. As long as we show sincerity, goodwill and political wisdom, no conflict is too big to resolve and no ice is too thick to break.

We should build a world of common prosperity through win-win cooperation. It means bidding farewell to the winner-takes-all mindset and sharing development achievements. In this day and age, the international community has evolved into a sophisticated and integrated apparatus, as the removal of any single part will cause serious problems to its overall operation. We must keep to the correct direction of economic globalization, and oppose any attempt to set up technological blockades, cause technological divides, or seek development decoupling. While we should make the pie of the global economy bigger, it is even more important to divide it well, so that development achievements can benefit people of all countries more equitably, and bring about true cooperation and win-win results.

We should build an open and inclusive world through exchanges and mutual learning. It means bidding farewell to the mindset that one civilization is superior to another and starting to appreciate the strengths of other civilizations. Our world can fully accommodate the common growth and progress of all countries, and success for one country does not mean failure for another. There is no universally applicable development path. A development path that continuously benefits the people is the most viable one. Countries and nations should respect their differences and seek harmony without uniformity, and civilizations should draw strength from each other and make progress together. Exchanges and mutual learning between civilizations should be a driving force for human progress and a strong underpinning for world peace.

We should make our world clean and beautiful by pursuing green and low-carbon development. It means bidding farewell to the destructive exploitation of resources and preserving and enjoying the lush mountains and lucid waters. Humanity coexists with nature. Any harm we inflict on nature will eventually come back to haunt us. We often take natural resources such as air, water, soil and blue sky for granted. But we could not survive without them. Industrialization has created a level of material wealth never seen before, but it has also inflicted irreparable damage on the environment. We must not exhaust all the resources passed on to us by previous generations and leave nothing to our children, or pursue development in a destructive way. Lush mountains and lucid waters are invaluable assets. We must follow the philosophy of harmony between humanity and nature and observance of the laws of nature and pursue a path of sustainable development, so that everyone is able to enjoy a starry sky, lush mountains and fragrant flowers.

Building a global community with a shared future is China's proposed strategy for reforming and improving the international governance system. This does not mean that the international system should be dismantled or started afresh. Rather, it means promoting greater democracy in international relations and making global governance more just and equitable. This important vision reflects the broadest common aspiration of the peoples of all countries in pursuit of peace, development, and stability, and the broadest consensus among countries with different cultural backgrounds and at different stages of development. It transcends outdated mindsets such as zero-sum game, power politics, and Cold War confrontations. It has become the overall goal of China's major-country diplomacy in the new era, and a great banner that leads the trend of the times and the direction of human progress.

Deep Roots in History and Cultural Traditions

The concept of a global community with a shared future has deep roots in China's profound cultural heritage and its unique experience of modernization. It carries forward the diplomatic traditions of the People's Republic of China and draws on the outstanding achievements of all other civilizations. It manifests China's time-honored historical traditions, distinct characteristics of the times, and a wealth of humanistic values.

Inheriting the Best of Traditional Chinese Culture

China's fine traditional culture epitomizes the essence of the Chinese civilization. It provides inspiring insights to help understand and shape the world and address current challenges, and contains elements of the vision of building a global community with a shared future.

Harmony is the core concept of Chinese culture, which values the primacy of harmony and harmony within diversity, pursues the ideal of harmony and solidarity towards common progress, and embraces cultural diversity and global harmony.

The Chinese nation believes all nations together are one community, advocates fraternity among all peoples and peace for all countries, follows the principle of interstate relations that the strong do not bully the weak and the rich do not insult the poor, and pursues a world of fairness and justice for the common good.

The Chinese nation champions universal benevolence, holding that the virtuous are never left to stand alone, endorsing good neighborliness with good faith and good will, and pursuing both friendship and interests while putting friendship first.

The Chinese nation observes the rule that "to establish oneself, one must help others to establish themselves first; to succeed, one must help others to succeed first," believing that helping others is helping oneself. It also upholds the principle that "do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself," and never imposes its will upon other nations.

The Chinese nation acts on the belief that humans are part of nature and follows the old adage: "Fish with a line but not with a net; when fowling, do not aim at a roosting bird." It reveres the laws of the universe, loves nature, and pursues harmony between humanity and nature.

Showcasing the Global Vision of the Communist Party of China

Always championing a global vision is part of the valuable experience accumulated by the Communist Party of China (CPC) in its century-long history. Over the past one hundred years and more, the CPC has always sought happiness for the Chinese people and rejuvenation for the Chinese nation while pursuing progress for all of humanity and the common good of the world. It succeeded in leading the Chinese people onto a distinctively Chinese path to modernization and developing a new form of human advancement. These successes have laid a solid foundation for building a global community with a shared future, charting the course and opening up broad prospects for this great endeavor.

The CPC is committed to seeking progress for China while benefiting the wider world, bringing a good life to the Chinese people and also helping other peoples to prosper, and contributing more to humanity. The report to the 20th CPC National Congress in 2022 drew a great blueprint for rejuvenating the Chinese nation on all fronts by pioneering a uniquely Chinese path to modernization, and pointed out that striving to build a global community with a shared future is one of the intrinsic requirements of Chinese modernization, affirming the close bond between the future of China and the future of all humanity.

The CPC leads the Chinese people in blazing and expanding China's path to modernization based on both China's distinctive conditions and other countries' common approaches. Chinese modernization is the modernization of common prosperity for a huge population, coordinated material and cultural-ethical advancement, harmony between humanity and nature, and peaceful development. All these features have provided useful experience for other developing countries and a more robust and sustainable option for jointly building a global community with a shared future.

Promoting the Fine Diplomatic Traditions of New China

Over the past 70 years and more, China has made notable progress, established fine traditions, and forged a tenacious character and unique strengths in developing foreign relations. The initiative of building a global community with a shared future builds on the PRC's diplomatic philosophies, strategic thinking and traditions, and opens up new horizons for major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.

After the PRC was founded in 1949, China committed itself to an independent foreign policy of peace and put forward the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, the Three Worlds theory and other principles, policies and ideas. This allowed China to find its place, win respect, and expand its reach in the international community. After the launch of reform and opening up in 1978, China asserted that peace and development are the underlying trends of the times. It advocated multipolarity and greater democracy in international relations, promoted a harmonious world, and achieved significant progress in China's diplomacy around the world.

In the new era, championing peace, development, and win-win cooperation, China has advanced its major-country diplomacy on all fronts and formed a multifaceted, multilevel, and all-dimensional diplomatic strategy. China has initiated a range of visionary initiatives, including a global community with a shared future, a new type of international relations, the common values of humanity, the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, and promoted a set of approaches to global governance, to friendship and interests, to security, to development, to cooperation, and to the eco-environment. All these carry distinctively Chinese features, style and ethos.

Incorporating the Outstanding Achievements of Other Civilizations

The concept of a global community with a shared future incorporates the best of the cultures of enduring appeal and impact that have transcended time, space, and national borders in human history. It crystallizes the shared values of people from different regions, cultures, ethnic backgrounds and with different religious beliefs. It draws on the outstanding achievements of cultural integration between diverse civilizations. It embodies the common aspiration of all humanity.

All civilizations around the world have manifestations of the concept of a global community with a shared future. Ancient Greek philosophers conducted primary research on this concept based on city-states, believing that humanity as one community should act in concert to pursue common interests and thus must live in harmony. Ancient Indian literature records the motto of "Under Heaven—one family." The African philosophy of Ubuntu holds that "I am because we are," emphasizing interdependence of humanity.

The concept of a global community with a shared future reflects the common interests of all civilizations—peace, development, unity, coexistence, and win-win cooperation. A Russian proverb holds, "Together we can weather the storm." The Swiss-German writer Hermann Hesse proposed, "Serve not war and destruction, but peace and reconciliation." A German proverb reads, "An individual's effort is addition; a team's effort is multiplication." An African proverb states, "One single pillar is not sufficient to build a house." An Arabian proverb asserts, "If you want to walk fast, walk alone; if you want to walk far, walk together." Mexican poet Alfonso Reyes wrote, "The only way to be profitably national is to be generously universal." An Indonesian proverb says, "Sugarcane and lemongrass grow in dense clumps." A Mongolian proverb concludes, "Neighbors are connected at heart and share a common destiny." All the above narratives manifest the profound cultural and intellectual essence of the world.

In building a global community with a shared future, all countries should observe the widely acknowledged norms of international relations. Since the advent of modern times, a fair and equitable international order has been the long-standing goal of all humanity. From the principle of equity and sovereignty established by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, to international humanitarianism established by the Geneva Conventions in 1864, then to the four purposes and seven principles established by the Charter of the United Nations in 1945, and later to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence proposed at the Bandung Conference in 1955, these norms of international relations have evolved into widely recognized principles and become the essential foundations of a global community with a shared future.

Direction and Path

The vision of a global community with a shared future is the outcome of China's wisdom in handling contemporary international relations from the perspective of world peace and development—a Chinese plan for improving global governance, and a Chinese proposal to address various challenges in the 21st century. Vision guides action and direction determines the future. The international community should work together to turn the grand blueprint into a roadmap, and a beautiful vision into reality step by step.

Pressing Ahead with a New Type of Economic Globalization

Economic globalization is an irreversible trend of global economic development, and is in line with the desire for development and cooperation held by people of all countries. Economic globalization has greatly facilitated trade, investment, flows of people, and technological advances, making an important contribution to global economic development.

However, problems and drawbacks also accumulated in the process, and there are attempts at retreating from it. The current model of economic globalization fails to reflect the demands or represent the interests of developing countries. The law of the jungle, zero-sum game, and the "win-or-lose," "winner-takes-all" mindset have exacerbated the divide between the rich and poor, as evidenced by the widening gap between developed and developing countries, and that within developed countries. Some countries blame their problems in domestic governance on economic globalization or other countries, and resort

to unilateral, protectionist, and bullying actions. This has damaged global industrial, value, supply and consumption chains, and caused turbulence and even conflict in the current international trade order.

Promoting a new type of economic globalization is essential for building a global community with a shared future. Countries need to pursue a policy of openness and explicitly oppose protectionism, the erection of fences and barriers, unilateral sanctions, and maximum-pressure tactics, so as to connect economies and jointly build an open world economy. Countries should strive to build a system of fair, reasonable, and transparent international economic and trade rules, press ahead with trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and promote further global economic openness, exchange, and integration in order to form an economic globalization that is open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial for all, so that people of all countries can share the fruits of economic globalization and world economic growth.

Opening up should be a two-way journey, not a one-way street; one cannot demand the opening of other countries while closing its own doors. Some countries are seeking to decouple from and break chains with China, enclosing themselves in “small yards, high fences,” which will ultimately only backfire on themselves. Some people overstate the need to “reduce dependence” and “derisk,” which is essentially creating new risks. Risk prevention and cooperation are not mutually contradictory, whereas non-cooperation is the biggest risk and non-development is the biggest threat to security. Pursuing de-sinicization in the name of derisking and reducing dependence undermines opportunities, cooperation, stability, and development.

The current revolution in science and technology marked by artificial intelligence will have a profound impact on the new round of economic globalization and social development. Relevant rules and standards should be established to support scientific and technological innovation and guard the red line of human security. The interests of all countries, especially developing ones, should be taken into account in a balanced manner, to ensure that technological innovation is placed under the rule of law and internationally recognized norms, and ensure that innovation is steered by and works for humanity, and is consistent with human values.

Following a Peaceful Development Path

History tells us that for a country to develop and prosper, it must understand and follow the trend of global development; otherwise it will be abandoned by history. The trend now is the pursuit of peace, development, cooperation, and win-win results. The old path of colonialism and hegemonism leads to a dead end and those who follow it will pay a heavy price, whereas the path of peaceful development is the right one for the world to follow.

The pursuit of peace, amity and harmony is deeply rooted in the cultural realm of the Chinese nation and runs in the blood of the Chinese people. For a long time in the past, China was one of the most powerful countries in the world, but it does not have any record of colonization or aggression against other countries. China's adherence to the path of peaceful development is an extension of the millennia-old cultural tradition of the peace-loving Chinese nation.

China always adheres to an independent foreign policy of peace and has always emphasized that the goal of China's foreign policy is to maintain world peace and promote common development. China opposes all forms of hegemonism and power politics, and does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. It will never seek hegemony or engage in expansion. These principles are stated in China's policies, incorporated in its systemic designs, and always adhered to in its practices.

The world needs peace, just like a human being needs air and living things need sunshine. The path of peaceful development is beneficial to China and the world, and we cannot think of any reason not to stay on this path. China follows the path of peaceful development, and hopes that other countries will take this path as well. Only by working together to pursue peace, safeguard peace, and share peace can countries achieve their development goals and make greater contributions to the world. Only when everyone follows the path of peaceful development can countries coexist peacefully, and can there be hope for building a global community with a shared future.

Fostering a New Type of International Relations

The new type of international relations is different in that it has created a new path for interactions between countries, opened up a new chapter of world history where different civilizations and countries with different systems coexist in peace and seek common development, and paved the way for building a global community with a shared future.

A new type of international relations should be built on the principles of mutual respect, equity and justice, and mutually beneficial cooperation. Mutual respect means treating people with sincerity and equality, and opposing power politics and bullying practices. In upholding equity and justice, countries must discard extreme materialism and overemphasis on competition, and ensure that all countries have equal rights and opportunities for development. Mutually beneficial cooperation means that countries should reject the maximization of self-interest, address the legitimate concerns of other countries while pursuing their own interests, and promote common development of all countries alongside their own development.

The foundations for building a new type of international relations lie in broader and deeper global partnerships based on equality, openness, and cooperation. China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in pursuing friendship and cooperation with other countries. It works to reinforce

coordination and positive interaction with other major countries in order to build major-country relations featuring peaceful coexistence, overall stability, and balanced development. Acting on the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness, and the policy of forging friendships and partnerships with its neighbors, China strives to increase friendly ties, mutual trust, and converging interests with its neighboring countries. Guided by the principles of sincerity, real results, amity, and good faith and with a commitment to the right approach to friendship and interests, China endeavors to strengthen solidarity and cooperation with other developing countries and safeguard the common interests of the developing world.

Major countries are key actors in building a new type of international relations. The international status of a country is measured by its openness of mind, breadth of vision, and sense of responsibility rather than its size, strength or power. Major countries should direct their primary efforts to the future of humanity and assume greater responsibility for world peace and development, rather than wielding their power to seek monopoly over international and regional affairs. Major countries should strengthen coordination and cooperation, respect each other's core interests and major concerns, consider the perspectives of other parties and value mutual understanding, and treat smaller countries as equals. By building a global community with a shared future, emerging countries and established powers can avoid falling into the Thucydides trap, find the right way to get along in mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, and build common ground and achieve common development for different civilizations and countries with different social systems.

Practicing True Multilateralism

Building a global community with a shared future requires practicing true multilateralism. Building cliques in the name of multilateralism is no more than bloc politics. Seeking supremacy in the name of multilateralism is still unilateral thinking. "Selective multilateralism" is practicing a double standard. The world should be fair and free from domineering practices. China opposes all forms of unilateralism and the formation of camps and exclusive cliques targeting specific countries, and opposes actions that undermine the international order, create a new Cold War or stoke ideological confrontation in the name of the so-called rules-based order.

China firmly upholds the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, as well as the authority and status of the United Nations. The various confrontations and injustices in today's world do not arise because the purposes and principles of the UN Charter are outdated, but rather because these purposes and principles are not effectively followed. China maintains that for the world, there is only one system, which is the international system with the United Nations at its core, that there is only one order, which is the international order based on international law, and that there is only one set of rules, which is the basic norms governing international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

China actively participates in and leads the reform of the global governance system. It follows the vision of global governance featuring extensive consultation and joint contribution for shared benefits, that is, global affairs must be discussed by all, governance systems built by all, and benefits of governance shared by all, so that every country is a participant, contributor, and beneficiary of world peace and development.

Promoting the Common Values of Humanity

China advocates peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, the common values of humanity. With an open mind, China understands that different civilizations have different understandings of the nature of these values, and respects the efforts of people in different countries to explore their own development paths. It goes beyond the narrow historical limitations of the so-called universal values, and promotes the common values of humanity embedded in Chinese civilization. These are the values embodied in pursuing a global community with a shared future.

Peace and development are a common cause. A tree of peace cannot grow on barren land, nor can it bear the fruits of development amidst the flames of war. The fundamental solution to various global challenges lies in seeking peace and achieving development. Equity and justice are common ideals. No country should act as it pleases, or ride roughshod over others. Democracy and freedom are the common goals of humanity. There is no single model of democracy that is universally applicable, far less a superior one. Democracy is not Coca-Cola, tasting the same across the world as the syrup is produced in one single country. Democracy is not an ornament, but a solution to real problems. Attempts to monopolize the "patent" of democracy, arbitrarily define the "standards" of democracy, and fabricate a false narrative of "democracy versus authoritarianism" to provoke confrontation between political systems and ideologies are practices of fake democracy. Promoting the common values of humanity is not about canonizing the values of any particular country, but about seeking common ground while reserving differences, harmony without uniformity, and fully respecting the diversity of civilizations and the right of all countries to independently choose their social systems and development paths.

The more advanced human society becomes, the more important it is to strengthen exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations. All countries should treat each other with respect and as equals, discard arrogance and prejudice, deepen understanding of the differences between its own civilization and others, and promote dialogue and harmonious coexistence between different civilizations. Every country should value its own civilization, appreciate others, and facilitate their common progress. We should keep our own civilizations dynamic and create conditions for other civilizations to flourish. Together we can

make the garden of world civilizations colorful and vibrant. All countries should be open and inclusive, promote mutual learning, strive to remove all barriers to cultural exchanges, and seek nourishment from other civilizations to promote the common development of all civilizations. All countries should progress with the times, explore new ground in development, take in the best of the present age, and sustain the development of civilizations through innovation.

China's Action and Contribution

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Over the past decade, China has contributed its strength to building a global community with a shared future with firm conviction and solid actions.

Promoting High-Quality Belt and Road Cooperation

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a vivid example of building a global community with a shared future, and a global public good and cooperation platform provided by China to the world. Since introducing the BRI ten years ago, based on extensive consultation and joint contribution for shared benefits, China has pursued open, green, clean, and high-standard cooperation to promote sustainable development and improve people's lives, and advanced high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. It has laid the groundwork and set up the frameworks of BRI cooperation, delivering tangible results and achieving sustainable progress. Together, participants in the initiative have jointly advanced "hard connectivity," "soft connectivity" and "people-to-people connectivity," setting up an important platform that has enabled wide participation, built international consensus and pooled the strengths of all parties.

The Greek Port of Piraeus Getting a New Life

Located strategically at the "Southern Gate" of Europe, Piraeus, the largest port in Greece, has played an important role since its opening in around 400 BCE. More than a decade ago, the port was in crisis, suffering huge losses. In 2010, China COSCO Shipping Corporation Limited officially became involved in the operation of the port, injecting new vitality into it. The annual handling capacity of the port has now reached 7.2 million TEUs, and its global ranking has jumped from No. 93 in 2010 to No. 33 in 2022. It has created more than 3,000 direct jobs and more than 10,000 indirect jobs locally, resulting in direct social contributions of more than 1.4 billion euros to the area.

Chinese Juncao Is Our "Grass of Happiness"

Juncao technology, which uses grass instead of wood to cultivate edible fungi, has solved a significant challenge—that the production of edible fungi had to rely on felling trees. Over the past 20 years, China has held 270 international training sessions on Juncao technology that trained over 10,000 people from 106 countries. It has set up demonstration centers or bases in many countries, creating hundreds of thousands of green jobs. In Fiji, Juncao technology is seen as a new hope of agriculture for island states; in Lesotho, farmers call Juncao "the grass of prosperity" because it makes quick returns; in Rwanda, more than 3,800 poor households have seen their annual incomes double or quadruple after they began Juncao production.

Policy connectivity continues to deepen. By July 2023, more than three-quarters of countries in the world and over 30 international organizations had signed agreements on Belt and Road cooperation with China. China has successfully hosted the first Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in 2017 and the second in 2019, and will host the third this year, maximizing synergy for advancing high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. Infrastructure connectivity continues to strengthen. A general connectivity framework consisting of six corridors, six routes, and multiple countries and ports is in place. The overall layout of land, sea, air and cyberspace connectivity continues to improve, centered on economic corridors such as the New Eurasian Land Bridge, supported by routes like the China-Europe Railway Express and the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor and the information expressway, and underpinned by major railways, ports, and pipelines. Trade connectivity continues to increase. According to Belt and Road Economics, a report released by the World Bank, the BRI, when fully implemented, will increase intra-BRI trade by 4.1 percent. By 2030, the BRI will generate 1.6 trillion US dollars in annual global revenues. Financial connectivity continues to expand. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund have been set up, providing financing support for hundreds of projects. People-to-people connectivity continues to strengthen. Roads, bridges and development belts that lead to a happier and better life are constantly emerging in participating countries, and solid progress is being achieved in Juncao, wells, hybrid rice and other small projects that work faster in improving people's lives, giving local people of BRI countries a stronger sense of gain and fulfillment.

The BRI originated in China, but the opportunities and achievements it creates belong to the whole world. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, since its launch ten years ago, has lent strong impetus to the economic and social development of Pakistan. The China-Laos Railway has realized the long-cherished wish of the Lao people to convert Laos from a landlocked country to a land-linked hub. The Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway has become the first railway in Southeast Asia to reach a speed of 350 km an hour. The Mombasa-Nairobi Railway has added more than two percentage points to local

economic growth. Malawi's 600 wells built with Chinese assistance have become "wells of happiness" serving 150,000 local people. The China-Europe Railway Express serves as a "steel camel fleet" between China and Europe. Luban workshops help young people in Tajikistan and other countries acquire vocational skills. Cooperation in the fields of health, green development, digital economy, and innovation is thriving.

China-Laos Railway and Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway

The China-Laos Railway began operation on December 3, 2021, with 167 tunnels and 301 bridges built in 11 years along its total length of 1,035 km. The railway construction created more than 110,000 local jobs, and helped build about 2,000 km of roads and canals for villages along the railway, bringing many visible and tangible benefits to local people. As of January 31, 2023, the China-Laos Railway had run 20,000 passenger train journeys and handled 10.3 million passenger trips.

The Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway, with a maximum designed speed of 350 km per hour, is the first high-speed rail service in Southeast Asia. Now that the railway is in service, the commute time from Jakarta to Bandung has been reduced from more than three hours to just 40 minutes.

The BRI is an initiative for economic cooperation, not for geopolitical or military alliances. It is an open and inclusive process that neither targets nor excludes any party. Rather than forming exclusionary cliques or a "China club," it aims to help China and the rest of the world to seize opportunities and pursue common development. Rather than a private route for any one party, it is a broad path that can be joined by all interested countries to work together for shared benefits.

The international community speaks highly of the BRI, praising it not simply as some random road or economic belt, but as an initiative to achieve common progress for humanity, an initiative that has opened up new paths for the common development of all countries. The BRI has facilitated the modernization drive of developing countries, leading the world into a new era of transcontinental cooperation.

900 Days of Hard Work Leading to a 900-Second Miracle

The Qamchiq Tunnel on the Angren-Pap Railway line is the first ever railway tunnel built in Uzbekistan, and one of the most important cooperation projects between China and Uzbekistan under the BRI framework. Construction started on September 5, 2013, and was completed on February 25, 2016. Chinese builders spent 900 days creating the miracle of a train passing through the mountains in only 900 seconds. The locals were astonished: "In the global bidding for the project, the European and American companies offered a construction period of five years. But the Chinese company did it in 900 days. How did you make it?"

Implementing the Three Global Initiatives

It is widely recognized that peace and stability, material sufficiency, and cultural-ethical enrichment represent the basic goals of human society. Development serves as the material foundation for security and civilization, security acts as the fundamental prerequisite for development and civilization, and civilization provides the cultural-ethical support for development and security. The Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, and Global Civilization Initiative proposed by China guide the advance of human society across these three dimensions. Resonating and complementing each other, they have evolved into a crucial cornerstone for building a global community with a shared future, offering China's solutions to major challenges pertaining to peace and development for humanity.

Through the Global Development Initiative, China has issued a resounding call for commitment to development and reinvigorated cooperation, and made its contribution to resolving challenges to development and advancing global development. The fundamental aim of the initiative is to accelerate the implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its core requirement is a people-centered approach, its foremost philosophy is united, equal, balanced, and inclusive global development partnerships, and its pivotal measure entails results-oriented actions to bolster stronger, greener, and healthier global development and jointly build a global community of development.

China has hosted the High-level Dialogue on Global Development and presented 32 major measures to implement the initiative, such as creating the Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund totaling 4 billion US dollars, launching the China-FAO South-South Cooperation Trust Fund (Phase III), and strengthening support for the China-UN Peace and Development Fund. Over the past two years, the international community has extensively responded to the initiative and jointly tackled prominent issues including food security, poverty reduction, and energy security as the implementation mechanism steadily improves and practical cooperation delivers progress. The Global Development Promotion Center is running smoothly, and the library of the Global Development Initiative projects is expanding, with over 200 projects achieving good results. At the same time, China has issued the Global Development Report, and established the Global Knowledge Network for Development, contributing Chinese wisdom to the resolution of developmental challenges. Currently, more than 100 countries and international organizations have expressed support for the Global Development Initiative, with over 70 countries participating in the Group of Friends of the Global Development Initiative

established at the UN.

China is committed to propelling global development through its own development. It has thoroughly applied the new development philosophy, with a focus on promoting high-quality development to foster a new development paradigm. Modernization of the more than 1.4 billion Chinese people will create a market rivaling the aggregated size of all developed countries. This will open up more opportunities for all countries and stakeholders to partake in China's huge market. China has also pioneered major expos and fairs, exemplified by the China International Import Expo, China International Fair for Trade in Services, China Import and Export Fair, and China International Consumer Goods Expo. It has encouraged all countries and stakeholders to share the opportunities presented by China's institutional opening up and steadily expanded institutional opening up with regard to rules, regulations, management, and standards. It has enforced the Foreign Investment Law and its supporting rules and regulations, implemented the new catalogue for encouraging foreign investment, continued to remove items from the negative list of market access for foreign investment, advanced high-quality development of pilot free trade zones, and accelerated the development of the Hainan Free Trade Port.

China is committed to win-win cooperation and common development. As the largest developing country in the world and a member of the Global South, China has made every effort to aid other developing countries and help recipient countries expand their capacity for development. China is actively engaged in international exchanges and cooperation. It has cooperated with almost 20 international organizations, including the UN World Food Programme, the UN Development Programme, the UN Children's Fund, the UN Refugee Agency, the World Health Organization, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, and executed over 130 projects in nearly 60 countries including Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Nigeria. "Small but beautiful," these projects span fields such as poverty reduction, food security, COVID-19 response, and climate change, and have benefited more than 30 million individuals. China worked actively for the adoption of and has comprehensively acted on the Debt Service Suspension Initiative of the Group of Twenty (G20), contributing more than any other G20 member to its implementation. China has signed agreements or reached understandings on the suspension of debt repayments with 19 African countries, helping Africa alleviate debt pressure.

China is committed to building an open world economy. It has become the main trading partner of more than 140 countries and regions, and signed 21 free trade agreements with 28 countries and regions. It has worked for high-quality implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, actively worked to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement, and expanded its globally-oriented network of high-standard free trade areas. It has also promoted the internationalization of the Renminbi, and reinforced financial standards and its level of internationalization, thereby converging its interests closer with other countries.

Through the Global Security Initiative, China seeks to work with the international community in upholding the spirit of the UN Charter, and calls for adapting to the profound changes in the international landscape through solidarity, addressing traditional and non-traditional security risks and challenges with a win-win mindset, and creating a new path to security that features dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliance, and win-win results over zero-sum game.

Six Proposals of the Global Development Initiative

- Staying committed to development as its first priority. Putting development front and center in the global macro policy framework, boosting policy coordination among major economies, ensuring policy continuity, consistency, and sustainability, fostering global development partnerships featuring greater equality and balance, coordinating multilateral development cooperation to generate synergy, and accelerating the implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Staying committed to a people-centered approach. Ensuring and improving people's well-being and protecting and promoting human rights through development, ensuring that development is for the people and by the people and that its fruits are shared by the people, ensuring a stronger sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security for the people, and pursuing the people's well-rounded development.
- Staying committed to inclusiveness and benefits for all. Addressing the special needs of developing countries, supporting developing countries—especially vulnerable countries facing exceptional difficulties—by means such as debt suspension and development aid, and addressing imbalanced and inadequate development among and within countries.
- Staying committed to innovation-driven development. Seizing the historic opportunities created by the latest round of revolution in science and technology and industrial transformation, speeding up efforts to harness scientific and technological achievements to boost productivity, creating an open, fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory environment for scientific and technological advances, unleashing new impetus for post-pandemic economic growth, and joining hands to achieve leapfrog development.
- Staying committed to harmony between humanity and nature. Improving global environmental governance, actively responding to climate change, building a community of life for humanity and nature, accelerating the transition to green and low-carbon development, and achieving green recovery and development.
- Staying committed to results-oriented actions. Increasing the input of development resources,

prioritizing cooperation in areas such as poverty reduction, food security, pandemic response and vaccines, financing for development, climate change and green development, industrialization, the digital economy, and connectivity, and building a global community of development.

In February 2023, China officially released The Global Security Initiative Concept Paper. The document further elaborates the core concepts and principles of the initiative, elucidates its key avenues for cooperation, and presents recommendations and ideas concerning its cooperation platforms and mechanisms. This has demonstrated China's awareness of its duty to maintain world peace and its firm determination to safeguard global security. As an international public good, the Global Security Initiative serves the interests of and maintains peace for people throughout the world.

Six Proposals of the Global Security Initiative

- Staying committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security, and working together to maintain world peace and security.
- Staying committed to respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, upholding non-interference in others' internal affairs, and respecting the independent choices of development paths and social systems made by people in different countries.
- Staying committed to abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, rejecting the Cold War mentality, opposing unilateralism, and saying no to bloc politics and camp-based confrontation.
- Staying committed to taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously, upholding the principle of indivisible security, building a balanced, effective, and sustainable security architecture, and opposing the pursuit of one's own security to the detriment of others' security.
- Staying committed to peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation, supporting all efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of crises, rejecting double standards, and opposing the arbitrary use of unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction.
- Staying committed to maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains, and working together to address regional disputes and global challenges such as terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity, and biosecurity.

China is a pillar in maintaining world peace. It is committed to handling disputes with relevant countries over territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests through negotiation and consultation. It has settled land boundary issues peacefully with 12 of its 14 neighbors along its land borders through negotiation and consultation, and delimited the maritime boundary in the Beibu Bay with Vietnam. China has faithfully fulfilled its responsibilities and missions as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. It is the second largest contributor to the UN regular budget and peacekeeping assessment, and the largest contributor of peacekeeping troops among the permanent members of the Security Council. Over the past three decades and more, having sent more than 50,000 personnel to UN peacekeeping operations in over 20 countries and regions, China has become a key force in UN peacekeeping. China has dispatched more than 100 naval vessels in 45 taskforces to the Gulf of Aden and waters off the coast of Somalia to provide escort for over 7,000 Chinese and foreign ships.

Facing constant flare-ups of hotspot issues, China has been committed to fulfilling its role as a responsible major country, pushing for the resolution of international and regional flashpoints, such as the Korean Peninsula, Palestine, the Iranian nuclear issue, Syria, and Afghanistan. On the Ukraine issue, China has actively promoted talks for peace, put forth four key principles, four things that the international community should do together and three observations, and released China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis. China has dispatched the Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs to engage in extensive interactions and exchanges with stakeholders on the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

Through the mediation of China, Saudi Arabia and Iran have achieved historic reconciliation, setting a fine example for countries in the region to resolve disputes and differences and achieve good neighborly relations through dialogue and consultation, and catalyzing a wave of reconciliation in the Middle East.

China has actively cooperated with other parties in non-traditional security domains such as anti-terrorism, biosecurity, and food security. It has proposed the International Cooperation Initiative on Global Food Security within the framework of the G20, and pushed for the adoption of the Strategy on Food Security Cooperation of the BRICS Countries. It has also officially launched the China-Pacific Island Countries Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Cooperation Center, representing yet another robust action to help developing countries tackle non-traditional security challenges within the context of the Global Security Initiative.

China's Major Propositions on Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis

Four key principles:

- The sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries should be upheld;
- The purposes and principles of the UN Charter should be observed;
- The legitimate security concerns of all parties should be taken seriously;

- All efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of the crisis should be supported.
- Four things that the international community should do together:
 - The international community should jointly support all efforts to peacefully settle the Ukraine crisis, call on the parties concerned to stay rational, exercise restraint, and conduct direct engagement as quickly as possible, and create conditions for the resumption of negotiations.
 - The international community should jointly oppose the threat or use of nuclear weapons and advocate that nuclear weapons must not be used and nuclear wars must not be fought, to avoid a nuclear crisis on the Eurasian continent.
 - The international community should jointly work to keep global industrial and supply chains stable and prevent disruptions to international cooperation in energy, food, and finance that could undermine the global economic recovery, especially the economic and financial stability of developing countries.
 - The international community should jointly provide winter relief to civilians in conflict zones, and improve humanitarian conditions, with a view to preventing a humanitarian crisis on a larger scale.
- Three observations:
 - Conflicts and wars produce no winner.
 - There is no simple solution to a complex issue.
 - Confrontation between major countries must be avoided.

Through the Global Civilization Initiative, China calls for jointly advocating respect for the diversity of civilizations, jointly advocating the common values of humanity, jointly advocating the importance of continuity and evolution of civilizations, and jointly advocating closer international people-to-people exchanges and cooperation. The Global Civilization Initiative makes a sincere call for the world to enhance inter-civilization exchanges and dialogue, and promote human progress with inclusiveness and mutual learning, inspiring the building of a global community with a shared future.

China has hosted gatherings including the CPC in Dialogue with World Political Parties High-level Meeting, the CPC and World Political Parties Summit, and the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations. It has engaged in extensive bilateral and multilateral activities for political party exchanges and cooperation, and promoted diverse forms of civil diplomacy, city diplomacy, and public diplomacy. China has continued to deepen cooperation with the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the UN World Tourism Organization. It now has 43 items inscribed on the intangible cultural heritage lists of UNESCO.

China has celebrated over 30 large-scale cultural and tourist “years” (festivals), such as the China-Italy Year of Culture and Tourism, the China-Greece Year of Culture and Tourism, and the China-Spain Year of Culture and Tourism. It has promoted the steady development of 16 multilateral exchanges and cooperation mechanisms, such as the meeting of BRICS ministers of culture, as well as 25 bilateral cooperation mechanisms. It regularly hosts cultural activities at home, such as the Arabic Arts Festival and the Meet in Beijing International Arts Festival, and has held “Happy Spring Festival” celebrations outside China for more than 20 years in a row. It hosted approximately 2,000 events across over 130 countries in 2017, and has organized activities around the world under such brands as “Tea for Harmony” Yaji Cultural Salon. It has advanced cultural and tourism exchanges under the Belt and Road Initiative, carried out the Cultural Silk Road program, and established the Silk Road international theater, museum, art festival, library, and art museum alliances. It has also established approximately 3,000 pairs of sister cities or provinces with various countries, and launched the “Nihao! China” inbound tourism promotion program.

Four Proposals of the Global Civilization Initiative

- Jointly advocating respect for the diversity of civilizations. Countries should uphold equality, mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness among civilizations, and let cultural exchanges transcend estrangement, mutual learning transcend conflict, and inclusiveness transcend supremacy.
- Jointly advocating the common values of humanity. Peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom are shared aspirations of people across the world. Countries should be open to appreciating different perceptions of values by different civilizations, and refrain from imposing their own values or models on others and from stoking ideological confrontation.
- Jointly advocating the importance of continuity and evolution of civilizations. Countries should fully harness the relevance of their histories and cultures to the present times, and push for creative transformation and innovative development of their fine traditional cultures in the course of modernization.
- Jointly advocating closer international people-to-people exchanges and cooperation. Countries should explore the building of a global network for inter-civilization dialogue and cooperation, enrich the contents of exchanges and expand avenues of cooperation to promote mutual understanding and friendship among people of all countries, and jointly advance the progress of human civilization.

The international community has spoken highly of these three global initiatives, acknowledging that they reflect China's global vision and growing international influence and provide comprehensive solutions to the challenges confronting humanity. The Global Development Initiative is highly compatible

with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and resonates, in particular, with the aspirations of developing countries for greater development. The Global Security Initiative upholds the principle of common security, emphasizes comprehensive approaches, pursues sustainable security through cooperative efforts, and makes a valuable contribution to addressing international security challenges. The Global Civilization Initiative calls on all countries to respect the diversity of civilizations in the world, which is conducive to facilitating exchanges and mutual learning among different civilizations.

Working with More Countries and Regions

China has proposed a range of regional and bilateral initiatives on building communities with a shared future, and is working with stakeholders to build consensus and expand cooperation, thereby playing a constructive role in promoting regional peace and development.

The China-Africa community with a shared future was the first regional proposal. It values sincerity and equality, pursues both friendship and interests and puts friendship first, takes a people-oriented approach in pursuing practical and efficient cooperation, and follows an open and inclusive approach to cooperation. It has set a good example of China and African countries building a community with a shared future. The China-Arab community with a shared future, China-Latin America and the Caribbean community with a shared future, and China-Pacific Island Countries community with a shared future have all made swift and steady progress. They are vivid illustrations of solidarity, cooperation, and common progress among developing countries.

The community with a shared future among neighboring countries has taken firm root. As the China-ASEAN community with a shared future continues to make advances, China-ASEAN cooperation has evolved into the most fruitful, dynamic, and substantive cooperation in East Asia. The two sides have seen a steady increase in mutual trust, engaged in frequent high-level exchanges, and established dialogue and cooperation mechanisms in nearly 50 domains and institutions. The community with a shared future of Lancang-Mekong countries continues to make progress. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization community with a shared future has yielded substantial outcomes. The building of the China-Central Asia community with a shared future has made solid steps forward. The first China-Central Asia Summit was a success and a meeting mechanism at the heads-of-state level between China and Central Asian countries has been established. These efforts have contributed to enduring peace and shared prosperity in the region and the wider world.

At the bilateral level, China is building communities with a shared future with an increasing number of partners in different forms. China and countries including Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan, Mongolia, Cuba and South Africa have published action plans, released joint statements, or reached important agreements on building bilateral communities with a shared future. China has also implemented the vision of building a global community with a shared future on a bilateral level with all the five Central Asian countries. As this vision gains greater traction among the people, substantial outcomes have been delivered, significantly boosting local development and improving people's lives.

The global community with a shared future is a dynamic, open, and inclusive system. However different countries may be in geographical location, history, culture, social system, size of economy, and development stage, alignment with the core idea of a global community with a shared future enables them to seek common ground while shelving differences, achieve harmony in diversity, reinforce cooperation, and pursue win-win outcomes. China will work with more and more regions and countries to build a global community with a shared future and contribute to the development of all countries and the progress of human civilization.

Boosting International Cooperation in All Areas

The vision of a global community with a shared future addresses the deficits in peace, development, security, and governance facing the world today. As China's unique contribution to solving global problems, it also offers solutions which have been translated into concrete actions in areas such as health, climate change, and cybersecurity.

Confronted by the rampant COVID-19 pandemic, China proposed to build a community of health for all. It has stood in the frontline of international anti-pandemic cooperation, carrying out global emergency humanitarian relief and providing assistance and support to more than 150 countries and international organizations. China has advocated that vaccines must first and foremost be a global public good, and was among the first countries to make a commitment to supply COVID-19 vaccines as a global public good, to support waiving intellectual property rights on the vaccines, and to start joint production with other developing countries. It has also played a pioneering role in the equitable distribution of vaccines, contributing China's strength to the global health cause through firm commitment and practical actions.

To address disorder in cyberspace governance, China has proposed the concept of a community with a shared future in cyberspace. It actively participates in UN cybersecurity processes and supports the UN in playing a core role in global cyberspace governance. China has hosted the World Internet Conference and established the World Internet Conference Organization as a platform for global internet sharing and governance.

To advance the development of a set of rules for global digital governance, it has launched the Global

Data Security Initiative, and released the China-LAS Cooperation Initiative on Data Security together with the League of Arab States and the Data Security Cooperation Initiative of China + Central Asia together with the five Central Asian countries. To ensure that rights and responsibilities are shared among all countries, it promotes the improvement of governance rules in the deep sea, polar regions, outer space, and other new frontiers. Efforts are made to ensure that in formulating new rules for governance in new frontiers, the interests and expectations of emerging market countries and developing countries are fully reflected.

Concerning the fundamental issues in global nuclear security governance, China proposes to build a community with a shared future on nuclear security. It firmly safeguards the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and upholds a rational, coordinated and balanced approach to nuclear security. In response to the increasing risk of nuclear conflict, China has pushed for the conclusion of a joint statement among the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon states, reaffirming that “a nuclear war cannot be won, and must never be fought.” China actively advocates the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, and it is the only nuclear country that has publicly committed to no-first-use of nuclear weapons, and not using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Faced with increasingly complex maritime issues, China has proposed to form a maritime community with a shared future and has always been committed to peaceful resolution of territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests disputes through dialogue and consultation. China has signed and fully and effectively implemented the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea with ASEAN countries, and continues to advance consultations on the code of conduct in the South China Sea. China has proposed to jointly build a partnership on blue economy and strengthen maritime connectivity. It adheres to the path of pursuing joint development while setting aside disputes, and actively explores joint resource development with maritime neighbors at sea.

Faced with the severe and growing global climate challenge, China has proposed important concepts such as building a community of life for humanity and nature and a community of all life on Earth. China actively promotes economic development and transformation, and undertakes to strive to achieve peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and carbon neutrality before 2060. It has introduced a “1+N” policy system for carbon peaking and neutrality. China has built the world’s largest clean power generation network, contributed 25 percent of the world’s newly added green area since 2000, and enabled an annual economic growth rate of over 6 percent with an average annual energy consumption growth rate of 3 percent. It has the largest installed capacity of hydropower, wind power, and solar power in the world. It actively participates in global environmental governance, advocates the comprehensive and effective implementation by the international community of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, and adheres to the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities.” China tries its best to help developing countries improve their ability to address climate change, and vigorously supports their green and low-carbon energy development. It has inked 46 South-South cooperation documents with 39 developing countries to address climate change, and trained approximately 2,300 officials and technical personnel in the field of climate change for more than 120 developing countries. Holding the presidency of the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15), China made every effort to ensure the success of the meeting, taking the lead in funding the establishment of the Kunming Biodiversity Fund and contributing to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Northern Trek of Wandering Elephants

In March 2020, a group of wild Asian elephants from the Xishuangbanna National Nature Reserve in Yunnan Province traveled north, passing through multiple places in the province. After traveling for about a year and a half, they safely returned home under the care and meticulous protection of the local government and people. The collective migration of Asian elephants made regular headlines in China, and attracted the attention of netizens around the world, sparking lively domestic and international discussions on building a home on Earth featuring harmony between man and nature.

Whether dealing with the current crises or creating a better future together, all countries need to unite and cooperate. Faced with profound changes unseen in a century, China has proposed the building of a global community with a shared future, calls on all countries to uphold the concept of a shared future, fully communicate and consult with each other, share governance responsibilities, and form broad consensus and take concerted actions to address global issues, so as to inject confidence and momentum into humanity’s drive towards a bright future.

Conclusion

All good principles should adapt to changing times in order to remain relevant. A broad consensus of solidarity and cooperation has developed in the international community behind the proposal and the implementation of the concept of a global community with a shared future to address the challenges

facing humanity. Looking to the future, it is bound to shine as a pioneering thought with the power of truth that transcends time and space, opening up a beautiful prospect of common development, long-term stability, and sustained prosperity for human society. The future of humanity is bright, but it will not come without effort. Building a global community with a shared future is both a salutary vision and a historical process that calls for generations of hard work.

To realize this goal, confidence and determination are of foremost importance. The trend of our times for peace, development and win-win cooperation cannot be halted. Building a global community with a shared future is the way forward for all the world's peoples. However, it is not a goal to be accomplished overnight, and there will be no plain sailing. We need to make unremitting efforts and forge ahead with perseverance. We should never give up on our dreams because of harsh realities; we should never stop pursuing our ideals because they seem out of reach.

To realize this goal, a broad mind and a global vision are central as we live in great times. In the face of common challenges, no person or country can remain isolated. The only response is to work together in harmony and unity. Only by strengthening coordination and cooperation, and ensuring that the interests of the people of every country will be kept in line with those of all others, can all countries move forward towards a global community with a shared future.

To realize this goal, a sense of responsibility and a will to act hold the key. The key to success is simple and boils down to action. Building a global community with a shared future depends on the joint actions of all countries. All countries should take a sense of responsibility that treats the task as a bound duty, and take concrete actions instead of being bystanders. We should strengthen dialogue, build consensus, promote peace and development, improve governance, and carry out global actions, global responses, and global cooperation.

Our journey ahead will be a lengthy and arduous one. But as long as we press ahead with perseverance, there will be much to expect. Successes and setbacks await us, but hopes abound. When all countries unite in pursuing the cause of common good, plan together, and act together day by day towards the right direction of building a global community with a shared future, we can build an open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world of lasting peace, universal security and shared prosperity, and jointly create a better future for all of humanity.

The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community with a Shared Future

Source: State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
October 2023

Preamble

Over two millennia ago, inspired by a sincere wish for friendship, our ancestors travelled across grasslands and deserts to create a land Silk Road connecting Asia, Europe and Africa, leading the world into an era of extensive cultural exchanges. More than 1,000 years ago, our ancestors set sail and braved the waves to open a maritime Silk Road linking the East and the West, beginning a new phase of closer communication among peoples.

Spanning thousands of miles and years, the ancient silk routes were not only routes for trade but also roads for cultural exchanges. They made a great contribution to human progress. In the 1980s, the United Nations and some countries began to envisage the Eurasian Land Bridge, the Silk Road Initiative, and other plans, reflecting a common wish to engage in communication and cooperation.

In March 2013, President Xi Jinping proposed the vision of a global community with a shared future; in September and October that year, he raised the initiatives of joining with others to build a Silk Road Economic Belt and a 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (the Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI). The Belt and Road Initiative is a creative development that takes on and carries forward the spirit of the ancient silk routes—two of the great achievements in human history and civilization. It enriches the ancient spirit with the zeitgeist and culture of the new era, and provides a platform for building a global community with a shared future.

Since its launch 10 years ago, thanks to the combined efforts of all parties, cooperation under the BRI framework has expanded beyond the borders of China to become an international effort. It has evolved from ideas into actions, from a vision into reality, and from a general framework into concrete projects. It has been welcomed by the international community both as a public good and a cooperation platform, and has achieved solid results.

Over the past decade, the BRI cooperation has delivered real gains to partner countries. It has contributed to the sound development of economic globalization and helped to resolve global development challenges and improve the global governance system. It has also opened up a new path for all humanity to realize modernization, and ensured that the efforts of building a global community with a shared future

are delivering real results.

The Chinese government is publishing this white paper to present the achievements of the BRI during the past 10 years. It will give the international community a better understanding of the value of the initiative, facilitate high-quality cooperation under it, and ultimately deliver benefits to more countries and peoples.

Proposed by China but Belonging to the Whole World

The world today is going through profound change on a scale unseen in a century. Problems and challenges continue to threaten the progress of human civilization. In response to a changing global situation and the expectations of the international community, and with the future and overall interests of humanity in mind, China proposed the Belt and Road Initiative. Committed to the Silk Road spirit, a great heritage of human civilization, the BRI connects the past, the present and the future. This initiative was launched by China, but it belongs to the world and benefits the whole of humanity.

Rooted in History, the BRI Carries Forward the Silk Road Spirit

At around 140 BCE during China's Han Dynasty, Zhang Qian, a royal emissary, made a journey to the West from Chang'an (present-day Xi'an in Shaanxi Province), opening an overland route linking the East and the West. Centuries later, in the years of the Tang, Song and Yuan dynasties, silk routes boomed both over land and at sea, facilitating trade between the East and the West. In the early 15th century, Zheng He, a famous Chinese navigator of the Ming Dynasty, made seven voyages to the Western Seas, which boosted trade along the maritime silk routes.

For thousands of years the ancient silk routes served as major arteries of interaction, spanning the valleys of the Nile, the Tigris and Euphrates, the Indus and Ganges, and the Yellow and Yangtze rivers. They connected the birthplaces of the Egyptian, Babylonian, Indian and Chinese civilizations, the lands of the believers of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, and the homes of peoples of different nationalities and races. These routes increased connectivity among countries on the Eurasian continent, facilitated exchanges and mutual learning between Eastern and Western civilizations, boosted regional development and prosperity, and shaped the Silk Road spirit characterized by peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit.

Symbolizing communication and cooperation between the East and the West, the millennia-old silk routes demonstrated that by upholding solidarity and mutual trust, equality and mutual benefit, inclusiveness and mutual learning, and win-win cooperation, countries of different ethnic groups, beliefs and cultural backgrounds could share peace and achieve development together. The Silk Road spirit is consistent with the ideal of "all states joining together in harmony and peace" long upheld by the Chinese nation, with the Chinese people's principles of amity, good neighborliness and "helping others to succeed while seeking our own success," and with the call of the times for peace, development and win-win cooperation.

The Communist Party of China is a major political party with a global vision, and China is a major country pursuing peaceful development. The BRI, which carries forward the Silk Road spirit in the new era, evokes the pleasant memories of the past and has fired many countries' enthusiasm for connectivity.

The BRI pays respect to history and tries to recreate the bustling scenes of untiring envoys and businessmen over land and countless ships calling at ports along the ancient silk routes. It is also navigating a way to the future by drawing wisdom and strength from the ancient silk routes and the Silk Road spirit. Enlightened by history, we will continue to move forward and integrate the Chinese Dream with the world's dreams, in order to realize the aspiration of all peoples for exchanges between civilizations, peace and tranquility, common development, and better lives.

In Response to Reality, the BRI Resolves Problems in Development

Development holds the master key to solving all problems. Economic globalization has given strong momentum to the world economy. Over 500 years ago, after the ancient silk routes had been interrupted for more than a half century, the Age of Discovery arrived, fundamentally changing the course of human society. Since the advent of modern times, technological revolutions and development of the productive forces have made economic globalization a surging historical trend. In particular, since the 1990s, the rapid advance of economic globalization has greatly facilitated trade, investment, flows of people, and technological progress, making an important contribution to the progress of human society.

However, the economic globalization dominated by a few countries has not contributed to the common development that delivers benefits to all. Instead, it has widened the wealth gap between rich and poor, between developed and developing countries, and within developed countries. Many developing countries have benefited little from economic globalization and even lost their capacity for independent development, making it hard for them to access the track of modernization. Certain countries have practiced unilateralism, protectionism and hegemonism, hampering economic globalization and threatening a global economic recession.

It is imperative to address such global problems as sluggish economic growth, shortcomings in economic governance, and imbalanced economic development. It is no longer acceptable that only a few countries dominate world economic development, control economic rules, and enjoy development fruits.

The BRI targets development not only for China but for the world at large. Economic globalization remains an irreversible trend. It is unthinkable for countries to return to a state of seclusion or isolation. However, economic globalization must undergo adjustments in both form and substance. It should be made more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.

China has not only benefited from economic globalization but also contributed to it. As an active participant in economic globalization, China has achieved rapid economic growth through positive interactions with the rest of the world and explored a unique path towards modernization, expanding the options for other developing countries to achieve modernization. China's rapid economic growth and steady progress in reform and opening up has provided a strong driving force for global economic stability and growth as well as an open world economy.

China has been a firm advocate and defender of economic globalization. The BRI dovetails with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in concept, measures and goals. A major step taken by China, the BRI aims to promote higher-quality development through higher-standard opening up, and share China's development opportunities with the rest of the world. The BRI is also a Chinese solution to global development issues, which aims to advance modernization in partner countries in tandem, make economic globalization more dynamic, inclusive and sustainable, and ensure that more of the fruits will be shared more equitably by people across the world.

Oriented Towards the Future, the BRI Creates a Better World

Today, the world is moving ever closer towards greater multipolarity, economic globalization and cultural diversity, and becoming increasingly information-orientated in the process. Countries are more frequently connected and closely interdependent than at any time in the past. It is increasingly clear that humanity is a community with a shared future in which everyone's interests are inseparably entwined.

However, a growing deficit in peace, development, security and governance, together with intertwining conventional and non-conventional security issues such as regional conflicts, arms races, food security, terrorism, cyber-attacks, climate change, energy crises, major infectious diseases, and artificial intelligence problems, poses a grave threat to the beautiful planet on which all humans live.

In the face of emerging global difficulties and challenges, human society needs new ideas, new concepts, and a more just, equitable, balanced, resilient and effective global governance system. What kind of world to build and which way to take to create a brighter future are issues that have a bearing on every country and every person. We must respond to the challenges presented by the times and make the right historic choice.

As a major developing country that meets its responsibilities, China keeps in mind the future and the common interests of humanity. China has therefore proposed building a global community with a shared future, with the goal of creating an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity, charting a bright future for human development.

The ultimate goal of the BRI is to help build a global community with a shared future. As an important public good for improving global governance, the initiative provides a platform for turning the vision into reality. The BRI involves countries in different regions, at different development stages, and with different cultures. It transcends differences in ideologies and social systems. It enables different countries to share opportunities, realize common development and prosperity, and build a community of shared interests, responsibility and destiny characterized by mutual political trust, economic integration and cultural inclusiveness. As a practical means of building a global community with a shared future, the BRI has created new understanding and inspired the imagination of the world, and contributed new ideas and new approaches to international exchanges. It will produce a fairer and more equitable global governance system, and take humanity to a better future.

Paving the Way Towards Shared Development and Prosperity

The BRI is in alignment with the concept of a global community with a shared future. It promotes and puts into action ideas that are relevant to the present era, the world, development, security, openness, cooperation, civilization, and governance. It provides not only a conceptual framework but also a practical roadmap for all nations to achieve shared development and prosperity.

Principles: Extensive Consultation, Joint Contribution, and Shared Benefits

The BRI is founded on the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. It advocates win-win cooperation in pursuit of the greater good and shared interests. It emphasizes that all countries are equal participants, contributors and beneficiaries, and encourages economic integration, interconnected development, and the sharing of achievements.

The principle of extensive consultation signifies that the BRI is not a solo endeavor by China, but a collaborative effort involving all stakeholders. This principle promotes and activates authentic multilateralism, encouraging collective decision-making while fully respecting the varying levels of development, economic structures, legal systems, and cultural traditions of different nations. It emphasizes equal participation, effective communication, collective wisdom, freedom from any political or economic preconditions, and voluntary engagement to foster maximum consensus. Irrespective of size, strength and wealth, all countries participate on an equal footing and can provide opinions and proposals in bilateral

and multilateral cooperation.

Under this principle, economies at different stages of development will reinforce bilateral or multilateral communication, jointly identify and establish innovative cooperation mechanisms, and provide a platform for dialogue, cooperation and participation in global governance.

The principle of joint contribution highlights that the BRI is not one of China's international aid programs or geopolitical tools, but a collaborative effort for shared development. It aims to align with existing regional mechanisms rather than becoming their substitute and leverage complementary strengths. This principle emphasizes the participation of all parties involved, substantial coordination with the development strategies of relevant countries and regions, and the identification and utilization of their respective development potential and comparative strengths. The objective is to collectively create new opportunities, driving forces, and development space while achieving complementary and interactive growth by capitalizing on each party's strengths and capabilities.

To promote extensive participation, this principle encourages countries and businesses to engage through various forms such as bilateral cooperation, third-party market cooperation and multilateral cooperation, thereby creating synergy for development. This principle values market forces and promotes market-oriented operations to further the interests and meet the expectations of all parties involved. In this context, businesses play a central role as the main actors, while the government's responsibility lies in building platforms, establishing mechanisms, and providing policy guidance. China's key role in BRI cooperation stems from its economic size, market scale, experience in infrastructure construction, capacity to produce low-cost, high-quality, high-performance equipment, and comprehensive strengths in industry, capital, technology, talent and management.

The principle of shared benefits underscores the importance of win-win cooperation. It aims to identify common interests and grounds for cooperation, meet the development needs of all parties, and address the real concerns of the people. This principle emphasizes sharing development opportunities and outcomes among all partner countries, ensuring that none of them is left behind. Most participants are developing countries, all seeking to leverage collective strengths to address challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, lagging industrial development, limited industrialization, insufficient capital and technology, and a shortage of skilled workers, to promote their own economic and social development.

Under the BRI framework, China pursues the greater good and shared interests, with the former taking precedence, by providing assistance to partner countries within its capabilities and genuinely supporting other developing countries to accelerate development. Simultaneously, through BRI cooperation, China aims to foster all-round opening up by building connections with other countries over land and sea while creating synergy between its eastern and western regions. It seeks to build a more advanced open economy and create a dual circulation with the domestic economy as the mainstay and the domestic economy and international engagement providing mutual reinforcement.

Concepts: Open, Green and Clean Cooperation

The BRI is committed to open, green and clean cooperation towards inclusive and sustainable development. It has zero tolerance for corruption and promotes steady and high-quality growth.

The BRI is a public road open to all, not a private path owned by any single party. It is free from geopolitical calculations. It does not aim to create an exclusive club, nor does it target any party. It does not form cliques based on specific ideological standards. It has no intention of establishing military alliances. Countries from Eurasia, Africa, the Americas, and Oceania are all welcome to participate in the initiative, regardless of their political system, historical background, culture, development stage, ideology, or religious beliefs, as long as they seek common development. All participants uphold principles of openness and inclusiveness, while firmly opposing protectionism, unilateralism and hegemonism, and working together to create an all-round, three-dimensional landscape of interconnectivity. The goals are to develop a new model of cooperation based on win-win outcomes, shared responsibility, and collective participation, build a global network of partnerships, and nurture a harmonious coexistence for humanity.

The BRI embraces the global trend of green and low-carbon development, emphasizes respecting and protecting nature and following its laws, and respects the right of all parties to pursue sustainable and eco-friendly growth.

Based on a shared commitment to eco-environmental considerations, the parties involved have carried out policy dialogues, and shared ideas and achievements in green development. Through closer cooperation in areas such as green infrastructure, renewable energy, eco-friendly transport, and sustainable finance, all parties work together to broaden consensus and take concrete steps towards green development. The ultimate goal is to establish a resource-efficient, eco-conscious and low-carbon Silk Road, thereby making a significant contribution to protecting the eco-environment, achieving peak carbon and neutrality goals and addressing climate change.

Leveraging its expertise in renewable energy, energy conservation, environmental protection and clean production, and employing Chinese technology, products and experience, China actively promotes BRI cooperation in green development.

Clean governance is considered an intrinsic and necessary condition for the steady and sustained development of the BRI, with a commitment to transparency in cooperation. All participants joined to combat corruption, strengthening their legal systems and mechanisms, harmonizing their laws and

regulations, and fostering international cooperation. Furthermore, all participants stand united against all forms of corruption and other international criminal activities, and work consistently to combat commercial bribery. This ensures that financial resources and projects are managed with integrity and efficiency, leading to greater outcomes and making BRI cooperation an example of clean governance.

In April 2019, together with relevant countries, international organizations, and representatives from the business and academic communities, China launched the Beijing Initiative for the Clean Silk Road. This initiative calls for a clean Silk Road characterized by extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. Chinese companies expanding globally are committed to compliance and lawful operations, adhering to the laws of both China and the host countries and to international norms. They have particularly heightened their capacity to mitigate overseas operational risks, strengthening project supervision and management to ensure the delivery of clean, cost-efficient and high-quality projects.

State-owned enterprises (SOEs) directly under the central government have released 868 guidelines of compliance in key areas, and defined 5,000-plus job compliance responsibilities; SOEs and financial institutions directly under the central government and their branches have formulated and updated more than 15,000 rules for managing overseas operations. In November 2020, more than 60 Chinese enterprises engaged in extensive BRI cooperation joined in launching the Integrity and Compliance Initiative for BRI Enterprises.

Objectives: High Standards, Sustainability, and Better Lives

The BRI aims at high standards, sustainability, and better lives by raising cooperation standards, investment effectiveness, supply quality, and development resilience, delivering real and substantive results for all participants.

The BRI introduces universally accepted rules and standards to guide business practices in project tendering, procurement, development and operation. It promotes high-standard cooperation and construction in various sectors. It advocates establishing free trade zones in alignment with international rules and standards, and implementing policies to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation to a higher level. This will ensure safe, smooth and orderly flows of people, goods, funds and data, and enable greater interconnectivity and deeper exchanges and cooperation. The approach emphasizes world-class standards, practicality, and cost-effectiveness. Pilot projects precede wider implementation, and partner countries are encouraged to adopt rules and the path adapted to their national conditions. China has established a high-level leadership organization and issued policy documents to consistently improve BRI design and implementation.

In alignment with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the BRI promotes coordinated economic, social, and eco-environmental development. Its aims are to address the root causes and obstacles that hinder development and boost the self-driven development of partner countries. It strives to achieve lasting, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, integrating sustainable development principles into project selection, implementation and management. Following international practices and debt sustainability principles, it is working to create a long-term, stable, sustainable and risk-controlled investment and financing system with innovative models and diverse channels in order to establish a stable, transparent and high-quality funding guarantee system that ensures commercial and fiscal sustainability. No participating country has fallen into a debt crisis as a result of BRI cooperation.

The BRI takes a people-centered approach, with the focus on poverty eradication, job creation, and improvement of people's well-being to ensure that the benefits of cooperation reach all individuals. Deeper cooperation is encouraged in areas such as public health, poverty reduction, disaster mitigation, green development, science and technology, education, culture, arts, and health care. Closer exchanges are promoted among political parties, social organizations, think tanks, youth, women, and sub-national communities. These efforts aim to create projects that are grounded in the needs of the people, increasing their sense of gain and fulfillment. China actively promotes small-scale yet impactful projects through foreign aid, benefiting people's lives. From Asia to Africa, Latin America to the South Pacific, the construction of roads, railways, schools, hospitals and agricultural facilities contributes to poverty reduction and improves the people's well-being in partner countries.

Vision: A Path to Global Well-Being

An initiative towards progress, cooperation and inclusiveness, the BRI pursues development, promotes win-win outcomes, and inspires hope. It aims to deepen understanding and trust, strengthen comprehensive exchanges, and ultimately achieve common development and shared prosperity.

A path to peace. Peace is a prerequisite for development, while development serves as the foundation for peace. The BRI goes beyond the law of the jungle and the hegemonic order based on power struggles. It rejects zero-sum thinking and discards the Cold War mentality of ideological rivalry and geopolitical competition. Instead, it paves the way for peaceful development, and aims to offer a fundamental approach to lasting peace and universal security. Under the BRI, nations respect each other's sovereignty, dignity, territorial integrity, development path, social system, core interests, and major concerns. As the initiator of the BRI, China passionately campaigns for the establishment of a new model of international relations characterized by mutual respect, equity, justice, and win-win cooperation. It is committed to building partnerships based on dialogue rather than confrontation, and friendship rather than alliance, and to fostering a new vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. These efforts

help to create a peaceful and stable development environment.

A path to prosperity. The BRI is committed to building a prosperous future that diverges from the exploitative colonialism of the past, avoids coercive and one-sided transactions, rejects the center-periphery model of dependency, and refuses to displace crisis onto others or exploit neighbors for self-interest. Instead, it aims to achieve win-win outcomes and shared development and prosperity. Under the BRI, all parties will prioritize development as the common goal, leveraging their respective resources and potential advantages, igniting their own growth engines, growing their capacity for independent development, and collectively creating more opportunities and space for development. This collaborative effort aims to foster new centers and impetus for global economic growth, drive inclusive growth, and bring global development into a balanced, coordinated and inclusive new stage.

A path to openness. The BRI represents an open and inclusive collaborative process that transcends national borders, ideological differences, developmental disparities, social system variations, and geopolitical conflicts. It is not aimed at designing a new international system, but rather supplementing and improving the existing mechanisms. All parties involved uphold the core values and fundamental principles of the multilateral trading system. Together, participants will establish an open and cooperative platform, safeguard and promote an open global economy, create an environment conducive to open development, construct a fair, equitable and transparent system of international trade and investment rules, and advance cooperation based on win-win outcomes, shared responsibility and collective participation. The BRI facilitates the orderly flow of production factors, the efficient allocation of resources, deep integration of markets, and liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment, and ensures the stable performance and smooth operation of global industrial and supply chains. It aims to build an economic globalization that is open, inclusive, balanced, and beneficial to all.

A path to innovation. Innovation serves as a critical driving force for progress. The BRI is dedicated to innovation-led development, harnessing the opportunities presented by digital, internet-based and smart development. It explores new business forms, technologies and models, seeking out fresh sources of growth and innovative development pathways to propel transformative advancements for all involved. Participants collaborate to connect digital infrastructure, build the digital Silk Road, strengthen innovative cooperation in cutting-edge fields, and promote the deep integration of science, technology, industry and finance. These efforts aim to optimize the environment for innovation, gather innovative resources, foster a regional ecosystem of collaborative innovation, and bridge the digital divide, injecting strong momentum into common development.

A path to social progress. The BRI champions equality, mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness among civilizations. It upholds the shared values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom. It transcends barriers between cultures through exchanges, resolves conflicts through mutual understanding, and rejects superiority while promoting coexistence. It encourages civilizations to appreciate their differences, seek common ground, and learn from one another. Parties involved will establish multitiered mechanisms for people-to-people cooperation, create more platforms and channels, and facilitate exchanges across various fields. These efforts aim to reinforce mutual understanding, respect and trust among nations, broaden consensus on ideas and values, and achieve new human progress.

Promoting All-Round Connectivity in Multiple Fields

To promote greater connectivity through BRI cooperation, we have continued to facilitate policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and closer people-to-people ties, by orienting towards “hard connectivity” in infrastructure, bolstering “soft connectivity” through harmonized rules and standards, and strengthening people-to-people bonds. As its scope expands, the BRI has become the world’s largest platform for international cooperation, with the broadest coverage.

Extensive and In-depth Policy Coordination

Policy coordination underpins BRI cooperation. China has worked with partner countries and international organizations to establish a multilevel policy coordination and communication mechanism for aligning development strategies, technological and economic policies, and administration rules and standards. Under this mechanism, plans and measures for regional cooperation have been formulated through joint efforts to facilitate and speed up cooperation, making the BRI an important collaborative framework for international exchanges.

Strategy and policy coordination is expanding in scope. At the global level, the 193 UN member states unanimously agreed to incorporate the Belt and Road Initiative in the UN resolution passed at the 71st United Nations General Assembly in November 2016. In March 2017, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2344, calling for stronger regional economic cooperation through the BRI, among other initiatives. The United Nations Development Programme and the World Health Organization (WHO) have signed BRI cooperation agreements with China. At the World Trade Organization (WTO), China’s efforts have facilitated the conclusion of the negotiations on the text of the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement, with a view to establishing a coordinated and unified investment management system covering more than 110 countries and regions to encourage BRI cooperation on investment.

At regional and multilateral levels, the BRI has supported regional integration and global development by aligning with plans such as the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the European Union's Strategy on Connecting Europe and Asia.

At the bilateral level, the BRI has succeeded in coordinating with a wide range of strategies and initiatives, including Russia's Eurasian Economic Union framework, Kazakhstan's Bright Road economic policy, Turkmenistan's strategy of reviving the Silk Road, Mongolia's Steppe Road plan, Indonesia's Global Marine Fulcrum initiative, the Philippines' Build Better More program, Vietnam's Two Corridors and One Economic Circle plan, South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, Egypt's Suez Canal Corridor Project, and Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. By June 2023, China had signed more than 200 BRI cooperation agreements with more than 150 countries and 30 international organizations across five continents, yielding a number of signature projects and small-scale yet impactful projects.

A long-term mechanism for policy coordination is largely in place. Multilevel channels for regular communication among different parties have been opened up on different platforms. This has been made possible through top-down driven diplomatic efforts led by heads of state, with support from intergovernmental strategic communication and local and interdepartmental policy coordination, and with cooperation projects carried out by enterprises and social organizations.

China has hosted the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation twice, providing an important platform for partner countries and international organizations to expand exchanges, increase mutual trust, and strengthen ties. The first forum in 2017 welcomed heads of state and government from 29 countries, and more than 1,600 representatives from 140-plus countries and 80-plus international organizations, yielding a total of 279 deliverables in five categories. At the second forum held in 2019, 40 leaders, including heads of state and government from 38 countries, the UN secretary-general and the International Monetary Fund's managing director, attended the Leaders' Roundtable. More than 6,000 representatives participated, from over 150 countries and 92 international organizations, yielding 283 deliverables in 6 categories.

Multilateral cooperation is driving forward. Under the BRI framework, Chinese and foreign partners have launched 20-plus multilateral dialogue and cooperation mechanisms in professional domains such as railways, ports, energy, finance, taxation, environmental protection, disaster prevention and relief, think tanks, and the media, attracting a growing number of participants. BRI partner countries have also expanded practical cooperation through major multilateral platforms such as China-ASEAN (10+1) Cooperation, Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, Forum of China and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, China-Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum, China-Central and Eastern European Countries Cooperation, World Economic Forum, Boao Forum for Asia, and CPC and World Political Parties Summit.

Rules and standards are being coordinated. Cooperation on standardization has advanced to new levels. As of June 2023, China had signed 107 documents with standardization bodies in 65 countries such as Pakistan, Russia, Greece, Ethiopia, and Costa Rica and also with regional and international organizations, in areas covering civil aviation, climate change, agri-food, building materials, electric vehicles, oil and gas pipelines, logistics, small hydropower stations, oceanography, and surveying and mapping.

The Standard Information Platform Contributed by the Belt and Road Initiative partner countries provides overviews of standards information in 149 partner countries, and full-text search services for standards catalogues regarding 59 countries and 6 regional and international standardization organizations, serving as a bridge for partner countries. Chinese standards in foreign language versions have been supplied in larger quantities. Nearly 1,400 national standards and more than 1,000 industry standards have been published in foreign languages.

In May 2022, the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization opened a regional arbitration center in Hong Kong, providing solutions for multilateral disputes in BRI cooperation.

China has continued to strengthen cross-border accounting and auditing regulatory cooperation with 22 countries and regions including Russia, Malaysia and Singapore, providing institutional guarantees for expanding cross-border investment and financing channels.

Growing Connectivity of Infrastructure

The BRI prioritizes connectivity of infrastructure. Based on a framework comprising "six corridors, six routes, and multiple countries and ports," a multitiered and multi-dimensional infrastructure network is taking shape. Basic connectivity over land, maritime, air and cyberspace is in place, laying solid foundations for deeper cooperation in trade and industrial capacity, and strengthening cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

The construction of economic corridors and international routes is making substantial progress. Partner countries have pressed forward with the creation of international arterial routes, building an infrastructure network that connects subregions in Asia as well as the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa.

Major projects along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor are under way. The Peshawar-Karachi Motorway (Sukkur-Multan section), the Karakoram Highway Phase II (Havelian-Thakot section), and the Lahore Orange Line Metro are all open to traffic. Coal-fired power plants such as Sahiwal, Port Qasim,

Thar, and Hub are operating safely and steadily; the Mehra DC transmission project is operational; and the Kalot Hydropower Station is connected to the power grid. Rashakai Special Economic Zone has reached the stage of comprehensive development.

Along the New Eurasian Land Bridge, the Belgrade-Novı Sad section of the Hungary-Serbia Railway in Serbia became operational in March 2022, and track-laying has started on the Budapest-Kelebia section in Hungary. The Peljesac Bridge in Croatia has celebrated its first anniversary of opening to traffic. The Western Europe-Western China Highway has been completed. The Smokovac-Matesevo section of the Bar-Boljare Highway in Montenegro has been completed and is open to traffic.

Along the China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor, the China-Laos Railway has been completed and is providing sound service, and its role as a golden transport channel is becoming increasingly prominent. The Jakarta-Bandung High-speed Railway, the flagship project of BRI cooperation between China and Indonesia, has achieved an operational speed of 350 km per hour. The contract for the China-Thailand Railway Phase I (Bangkok-Nakhon Ratchasima section) was signed online, and 11 sections of the construction project have started, including one that has been completed.

Along the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, the Heihe-Blagoveshchensk Highway Bridge and the Tongjiang-Nizhneleninskoye Railway Bridge, connecting China and Russia, have opened to traffic. The China-Russia eastern natural gas pipeline is fully operational. China, Russia and Mongolia have officially launched a feasibility study on the upgrading and development of the central-route railway of the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor.

Along the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor, the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Highway is in full operation. The China-Central Asia Gas Pipeline is fully operational. The grain and oil rail transport lines between North Kazakhstan and China are operating in conjunction with the China-Europe Railway Express.

Along the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, the China-Myanmar Crude Oil and Gas Pipeline has been completed and entered service. The feasibility study on the Muse-Mandalay section of the China-Myanmar Railway has been completed, and the feasibility study on the Mandalay-Kyaukphyu section has been launched. Construction projects in Bangladesh, including the Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge and the Dohazari-Cox's Bazar rail route, have made good progress.

Panel 1 Mombasa-Nairobi Railway Promotes Kenya's Economic and Social Development

The Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway in Kenya connects Mombasa, the largest port in East Africa, and Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. It extends further northwest to Suswa. The line is 592 km long. It utilizes Chinese standards, technology, equipment, and project management. It is an important success story in BRI cooperation between China and Kenya, and is hailed as a route of friendship, of win-win cooperation, of development and prosperity, and of eco-environmental protection.

The Mombasa-Nairobi Railway is the largest infrastructure project undertaken in Kenya since independence. Since it opened in 2017, the railway has had a positive impact on Kenya's economic and social development and the people's well-being; it has also significantly reduced the logistics costs of products from the inland regions of East Africa exported through the Mombasa Port. As of August 31, 2023, the railway is operating an average of 6 passenger trains per day; a total of 11 million passengers have been carried, and the average occupancy rate is above 95 percent; an average of 17 freight trains operate daily, and a total of 28 million tonnes of goods have been transported. According to Kenyan government estimates, the railway has added 2 percent to Kenya's economic growth.

In the construction and operation of the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway, Chinese enterprises have supported technology transfer and provided training to local employees. During the construction period, more than 30,000 local employees received orientation training, and every year a number of young Kenyans were selected to participate in training and academic education in China. Since the opening of the railway, Chinese companies have adopted tailored training methods for different people, professions and posts, and have trained 1,152 professionals for Kenya.

In Africa, railways such as the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway and the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway are now operational and have become important drivers of in-depth development not only in East Africa but across the entire continent.

Maritime connectivity is steadily improving. Cooperation is expanding in shipping among the ports of partner countries, and the efficiency of cargo transportation has seen a notable increase.

The annual cargo throughput of the Port of Piraeus in Greece has increased to above 5 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), making it the fourth largest TEU port in Europe and a leading TEU port in the Mediterranean.

The Gwadar Port in Pakistan has seen major progress and is marching towards the goal of becoming a logistics center and industrial base.

Preliminary work is currently under way on the Kyaukphyu Deep-Sea Port project in Myanmar, including geological exploration and environmental and social assessment.

The annual throughput of bulk cargo at Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka has increased to 1.21 million

tonnes.

The Vado Gateway terminal has become the first semi-automatic terminal operating in Italy.

The Lekki Deep-Sea Port in Nigeria has been completed and entered service, becoming a major modern deepwater port in Central and Western Africa.

The Silk Road Maritime network has continued to expand. By the end of June 2023, it had reached 117 ports in 43 countries, and more than 300 well-known Chinese and international shipping companies, port enterprises and think tanks, among other bodies, have joined the Silk Road Maritime association.

A marine environment forecast and support system that focuses on areas along the Maritime Silk Road offers services to more than 100 cities in partner countries.

The Air Silk Road has made notable progress. The aviation route network between partner countries is expanding rapidly, and the level of air connectivity is steadily improving.

China has signed bilateral air transport agreements with 104 BRI partner countries and opened direct flights with 57 partner countries to facilitate cross-border transport.

Chinese enterprises are active participants in civil aviation infrastructure cooperation with partner countries including Pakistan, Nepal and Togo, helping to develop the local civil aviation industry.

A BRI cooperation platform proposed by the Civil Aviation Administration of China was established in August 2020, improving mechanisms and platforms of civil aviation exchanges and cooperation among partner countries.

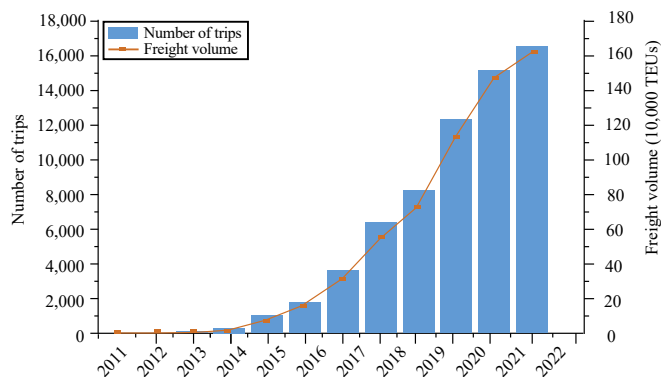
During the COVID-19 pandemic, a direct line of the Air Silk Road linking Zhengzhou in Henan Province and Luxemburg did not suspend its air or freight services, and transported a large amount of supplies. It served as an air lifeline between China and Europe, and contributed to keeping international industrial and supply chains stable.

International inter-modality transport channels continue to enjoy stable development. These channels include the China-Europe Railway Express, the China-Europe Land-Sea Express Line, the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor, and the Lianyungang-Khorgos New Eurasian Land-Sea Expressway.

The China-Europe Railway Express has now reached more than 200 cities in 25 European countries, comprising 86 routes passing through the main regions of the Eurasian hinterland at a speed of 120 km per hour. Its logistics distribution network covers the entire Eurasian continent. By the end of June 2023, the cumulative volume of the China-Europe Railway Express had exceeded 74,000 trips, transporting nearly 7 million TEUs and over 50,000 types of goods in 53 categories such as automobiles, mechanical equipment, and electronic products, to a total value of more than 300 billion US dollars.

The China-Europe Land-Sea Express Line has emerged from scratch to become the third trade channel between China and Europe, after traditional sea routes and the China-Europe Railway Express. In 2022, more than 180,000 TEUs were transported through this line, with rail trips exceeding 2,600.

The routes of rail-sea freight trains of the New International Land-sea Trade Corridor cover 18 provinces and equivalent administrative units, in central and western China, transporting goods to 300-plus ports in more than 100 countries.



Number of Trips and Freight Volume of China-Europe Freight Trains 2011–2022

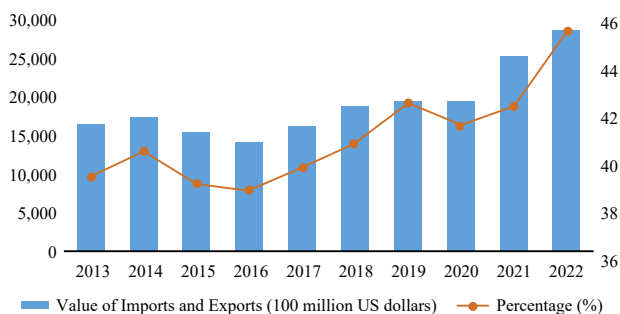
Unimpeded, Convenient and Efficient Trade

Facilitating trade and investment is a major task in building the Belt and Road. The partner countries have worked hard to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, remove investment and trade barriers, and improve the business environment within the region and in all related countries. Efforts have been made to build free trade zones, broaden trading areas, improve trade structure, expand areas of mutual investment and industrial cooperation, establish a more balanced, equal and sustainable trading system, and develop mutually beneficial economic and trade relations, so as to make the “pie” of cooperation bigger.

Trade and investment are expanding steadily. From 2013 to 2022, the cumulative value of imports and exports between China and BRI partner countries reached 19.1 trillion US dollars, with an average annual growth rate of 6.4 percent. The cumulative two-way investment between China and partner countries reached 380 billion US dollars, including 240 billion US dollars from China. The value of newly signed construction contracts with partner countries reached 2 trillion US dollars, and the actual turnover of Chinese contractors reached 1.3 trillion US dollars. In 2022, the value of imports and exports between China and partner countries reached nearly 2.9 trillion US dollars, accounting for 45.4 percent of China's total foreign trade over the same period, representing an increase of 6.2 percentage points compared with 2013; the total value of imports and exports of Chinese private enterprises to partner countries exceeded 1.5 trillion US dollars, accounting for 53.7 percent of the trade between China and these countries over the same period.

Trade and investment liberalization and facilitation are improving. BRI partner countries continue to uphold multilateralism and free trade, working hard to create a sound institutional environment for closer economic and trade relations. Positive progress has been made in the alignment of working systems, coordination of technical standards, mutual recognition of inspection results, and online verification of electronic certificates.

By the end of August 2023, more than 80 countries and international organizations had subscribed to the Initiative on Promoting Unimpeded Trade Cooperation Along the Belt and Road, proposed by China. China had signed 21 free trade agreements with 28 countries and regions. On January 1, 2022, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement entered into force, creating the world's largest free trade zone in terms of population size and trade volume. The RCEP and the BRI overlap and complement each other in terms of partner countries and regions, as well as areas and contents of cooperation, forming a new dynamic of economic and trade cooperation in Asia.



Value of China's Imports and Exports with BRI Partner Countries and Its Share in China's Total Trade 2013–2022

China also works actively towards joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement.

China has signed bilateral investment agreements with 135 countries and regions, and conventions for the avoidance of double taxation (including arrangements and agreements) with 112 countries and regions. It has achieved Authorized Economic Operator mutual recognition with 35 partner countries, and has signed third-party market cooperation documents with 14 countries.

China has established a “single-window” cooperation mechanism with Singapore, Pakistan, Mongolia, Iran and other partner countries, and signed cooperation documents on customs inspection and quarantine, effectively improving the efficiency of customs clearance at border ports.

Trade and investment platforms are playing a growing role. China International Import Expo (CIIE) is the world's first import-themed national-level expo and has been held for the past five years. It has resulted in a cumulative intended turnover of nearly 350 billion US dollars, and about 2,000 launches of new products. With diverse participants from many countries and regions, the CIIE has become a global platform for international procurement, investment promotion, cultural exchanges, and open cooperation.

The influence of key exhibitions continues to expand; these include China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair), China International Fair for Trade in Services, China International Fair for Investment and Trade, China International Consumer Products Expo, Global Digital Trade Expo, China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo, China-Arab States Expo, China-Russia Expo, China-CEEC Expo & International Consumer Goods Fair, China-ASEAN Expo, and China-Eurasia Expo. All of these have provided a strong boost to trade and investment cooperation among partner countries.

The Hong Kong SAR has held the Belt and Road Summit eight times, and the Macao SAR has held the International Infrastructure Investment and Construction Forum 14 times, which have played an important role in advancing economic, trade and investment cooperation along the Belt and Road.

Industrial cooperation is deepening. BRI partner countries have worked hard to foster a paradigm of cooperation based on coordinated development, mutual benefit, and win-win outcomes, which has given a strong boost to upgrading industrial structures and optimizing industrial chains in the countries

involved.

The partner countries have jointly promoted cooperation on industrial capacity, expanded cooperation in traditional industries including steel, non-ferrous metals, building materials, automobiles, engineering machinery, resources and energy, and agriculture, explored cooperation in emerging industries such as the digital economy, new energy vehicles, nuclear energy and technology, and 5G, and carried out tri-party and multiparty market cooperation, thus advancing mutual complementarity and providing mutual benefits to all parties.

By the end of June 2023, China had signed agreements on industrial capacity cooperation with more than 40 countries. China Mining Conference & Exhibition and China-ASEAN Mining Cooperation Forum & Exhibition serve as important platforms for partner countries to conduct mining capacity cooperation.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Demonstration Base for Agricultural Technology Exchange and Training has supported advances in agricultural science and technology under the BRI, and promoted economic and trade cooperation in agriculture among partner countries.

Jointly constructed by China and Pakistan, the K2 and K3 units of the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant have been completed and are in operation, utilizing China's Hualong One nuclear technology.

The Ulba Fuel Assembly Plant, a successful joint venture between China and Kazakhstan, is now operational.

The China-ASEAN Forum on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology has served as a bridge to establish connectivity, enabling BRI partner countries to cooperate on nuclear technology and promote growth and people's well-being.

More than 70 overseas industrial parks have been built by Chinese enterprises together with governments and enterprises in partner countries. The China-Malaysia and China-Indonesia "Two Countries, Twin Parks" projects, the China-Belarus Great Stone Industrial Park, the China-UAE Industrial Capacity Cooperation Demonstration Zone, and the China-Egypt TEDA Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone are making steady progress.

Diverse Dynamics of Financial Integration

Financial integration is an important pillar of BRI cooperation. Partner countries and relevant institutions have carried out multiple forms of financial cooperation, created new models, expanded the channels, diversified the parties involved, and improved the mechanisms for investment and financing. They have promoted policy-based finance, development finance, commercial finance, and cooperative finance to support BRI cooperation, and worked to build a long-term, stable and sustainable investment and financing system that keeps risk under control.

The financial cooperation mechanisms are maturing. China Development Bank (CDB) has promoted the establishment of multilateral financial cooperation mechanisms such as China-Central and Eastern Europe Interbank Consortium, the China-Arab Countries Interbank Association, China-ASEAN Interbank Association, the ASEAN Plus Three Interbank Cooperation mechanism, China-Africa Interbank Association, and the Association of China-LAC Development Financial Institutions. The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) has promoted the Belt and Road Interbank Regular Cooperation (BRBR) mechanism.

As of the end of June 2023, a total of 13 Chinese-funded banks had established 145 first-tier offices and branches in 50 BRI partner countries; some 17.7 million businesses in 131 partner countries had opened UnionPay services, and 74 partner countries had opened UnionPay mobile payment services. The Belt and Road Innovation and Development Center, the Research Center for Belt and Road Financial and Economic Development, and the China-IMF Capacity Development Center have been established.

China has signed bilateral currency swap agreements with 20 partner countries and established renminbi (RMB) clearing arrangements in 17 partner countries. The number of participants, business volume, and influence of the RMB cross-border payment system have gradually increased, effectively facilitating trade and investment.

Financial regulation cooperation and exchanges have continued to move forward. China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission (now National Administration of Financial Regulation), China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC), and regulatory agencies from multiple other countries have signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) for regulatory cooperation, facilitating the establishment of regional regulatory coordination mechanisms, promoting efficient allocation of funds, strengthening risk control, and creating sound investment conditions for various financial institutions and investment entities.

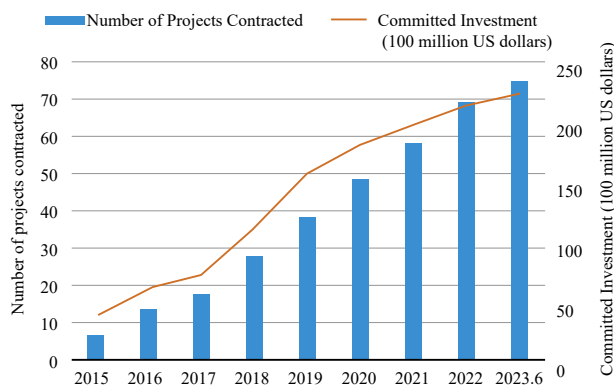
The channels and platforms for investment and financing are constantly expanding. China has funded the establishment of the Silk Road Fund (SRF) and established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) with other partner countries. The SRF specifically serves BRI cooperation. By the end of June 2023, the fund had signed agreements on 75 projects with committed investment of about 22 billion US dollars; the number of AIIB members had reached 106, and the bank had approved 227 projects with a total investment of 43.6 billion US dollars. The projects involve transport, energy, public health and other fields, providing investment and financing support for infrastructure connectivity and sustainable

economic and social development.

China has actively participated in various existing financing arrangements. It has signed memorandums of cooperation with international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, worked with international financial institutions to establish a multilateral development financing cooperation center, strengthened third-party market cooperation in investment and financing with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and carried out joint financing with the International Finance Corporation, the African Development Bank and others. These moves have effectively mobilized market capital.

China has initiated the establishment of international economic cooperation funds such as the China-Eurasian Economic Cooperation Fund, the China-LAC Cooperation Fund, the China-Central and Eastern Europe Investment Cooperation Fund, the China-ASEAN Investment Cooperation Fund, the China-LAC Industrial Cooperation Investment Fund, and the China-Africa Fund for Industrial Cooperation. These have effectively expanded investment and financing channels for partner countries.

The CDB and the Export-Import Bank of China (China Eximbank) have each set up special loans for the BRI to pool resources to increase financing support for BRI cooperation. By the end of 2022, the CDB had provided direct high-quality financial services for more than 1,300 BRI projects, playing a leading role in guiding development finance, and pooling all kinds of domestic and foreign funds for BRI cooperation. The balance of loans of China Eximbank for BRI projects reached 2.2 trillion yuan, covering 130-plus partner countries and driving more than 400 billion US dollars of investment and more than 2 trillion US dollars of trade. China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation has fully applied export credit insurance and actively provided comprehensive guarantees for building the Belt and Road.



Number of Projects Contracted and Committed Investment by the Silk Road Fund Since 2015

Innovative investment and financing methods are steadily being explored. Various models such as funds and bonds have been developed, and BRI financial cooperation is improving.

China's securities industry has set up a number of BRI-themed funds and indexes. In December 2015, the CSRC officially launched a pilot project for overseas institutions to issue RMB-denominated bonds (panda bonds) in China's exchange-traded bond market. By the end of June 2023, overseas issuers in total had issued 99 panda bonds in China's exchange-traded bond market, with a total value of 152.54 billion yuan; 46 BRI-themed bonds had been issued, with a total value of 52.72 billion yuan.

Green finance is steadily developing. In May 2019, the ICBC issued the first green BRBR bond that conformed to both international and domestic green bond standards. By the end of 2022, more than 40 large global institutions had signed the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road. In June 2023, China Eximbank issued financial bonds for promoting international cooperation in building the Belt and Road and supporting infrastructure construction of partner countries. China's domestic stock and futures exchanges have steadily promoted practical cooperation in equity, products, technology and other fields with the exchanges in partner countries, and actively supported the development of exchanges participating in or holding shares in BRI projects, such as the Astana International Exchange in Kazakhstan, the Pakistan Stock Exchange, and the Dhaka Stock Exchange in Bangladesh.

Debt sustainability has continued to improve. Based on the principle of equal participation and benefit and risk sharing, China and 28 countries approved the Guiding Principles on Financing the Development of the Belt and Road, encouraging the governments, financial institutions and enterprises of partner countries to attach importance to debt sustainability and improve their debt management capability. Drawing on the debt sustainability framework of low-income countries endorsed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, China has developed tools based on the actual conditions of partner countries, and issued the Debt Sustainability Framework for Participating Countries of the Belt and Road Initiative. All parties are encouraged to use it on a voluntary basis.

To avoid causing debt risk and financial burden to the countries where BRI projects are located,

China has prioritized economic and social benefits and provided loans for project construction based on local needs and conditions. The key areas of investment are infrastructure projects designed to increase connectivity, and projects for public well-being urgently needed in partner countries. These have brought effective investment, increased high-quality assets, and boosted development momentum.

Many think tank experts and international institutions have pointed out that almost all the BRI projects are initiated by the host countries with the goals of growing their economies and improving their people's lives. In the process, the logic of economics has taken precedence over geopolitics.

Solid Foundations for People-to-People Ties

People-to-people ties are the social foundations of BRI cooperation. The partner countries have passed on and carried forward the spirit of friendly cooperation of the ancient Silk Road, cooperated on exchanges in culture, tourism, education, think tank and the media, and promoted mutual learning among civilizations and cultural integration and innovation. A model of people-to-people exchanges characterized by dynamic interactions and diversity has underpinned public support for furthering the initiative.

Cooperation on culture and tourism is rich and colorful. By the end of June 2023, China had signed cultural and tourism cooperation documents with 144 BRI partner countries.

China has created cooperation platforms together with partner countries, including the Silk Road International League of Theaters, the Silk Road International Museum Alliance, the Network of Silk Road Arts Festivals, the Silk Road International Library Alliance, and the Silk Road International Alliance of Art Museums and Galleries. These platforms have a total of 562 members, including 326 cultural institutions from 72 partner countries.

China is steadily expanding international cultural exchanges. China has launched the Cultural Silk Road program, and organized signature events such as the Happy Chinese New Year celebrations, the Nihao China tourism promotions, and the Silk Road: Artists' Rendezvous art exhibition. It has worked with Brunei, Cambodia, Greece, Italy, Malaysia, Russia and ASEAN to co-host cultural and tourism activities at designated years. China and BRI partner countries have hosted events in a reciprocal manner, ranging from cultural relics exhibitions, film festivals, arts festivals, book fairs and music festivals, and jointly translated and promoted each other's publishing, radio, film and television programs. They have also implemented the BRI-themed theater arts creation and promotion project, the Belt and Road International Art Project, and the Belt and Road good-neighborliness cultural project, and worked to protect Asian cultural heritage. China has established 46 China cultural centers in 44 countries, of which 32 are partner countries. China has established 20 tourism offices in 18 countries, eight of which are in partner countries.

Educational exchanges and cooperation are extensive and profound. China has released the Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative to promote international education exchanges and cooperation. By the end of June 2023, China had signed agreements with 45 partner countries on the mutual recognition of higher education degrees.

China has set up the Silk Road Programme under the Chinese Government Scholarship scheme. Some of China's provinces and Hong Kong and Macao SARs, as well as universities and research institutions have also set up scholarships for students from BRI partner countries.

Chinese universities and colleges have opened 313 Confucius Institutes and 315 Confucius Classrooms in 132 partner countries. The "Chinese Bridge" Summer Camp has invited nearly 50,000 young people from more than 100 partner countries to come to China for academic visits, and supported 100,000 Chinese language enthusiasts from 143 partner countries to learn Chinese and experience Chinese culture online.

Chinese universities and colleges have worked with more than 20 counterparts in partner countries from Asia, Africa and Europe to build a number of Luban Workshops—a professional training program dedicated to the sharing of expertise by China's vocational education institutions.

China and UNESCO have jointly held the International Youth Forum on Creativity and Heritage Along the Silk Roads and relevant activities in seven consecutive years, and established the Silk Roads Youth Research Grant which has funded 24 youth research projects. The Atomic Energy Scholarship of China has funded the education of nearly 200 Master's and Doctoral students in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy for 26 BRI partner countries.

Partner countries have capitalized on the demonstration and driving role of the University Alliance and the Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO) under the BRI framework, and expanded international exchanges and cooperation in talent training and scientific research.

Media and think tank cooperation has yielded fruitful results. BRI partner countries have held the Media Cooperation Forum on Belt and Road six times, and established the Belt and Road Media Community. The China-Arab States Forum on Radio and Television Cooperation, the Forum on China-Africa Media Cooperation, the China-Cambodia Radio and Television Annual Regular Cooperation Conference, the ASEAN-China Media Cooperation Forum, the Lancang-Mekong Audiovisual Week, and other bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms have been set up. International organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union and the Arab States Broadcasting Union have become active and important platforms for building consensus among partner countries.

Media outlets in China and partner countries have jointly established the Belt and Road News Network,

which launched the Silk Road Global News Awards. By the end of June 2023, the network's members had increased to 233 media outlets in 107 countries.

Think tank exchanges have become more frequent. The Advisory Council of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was established in 2018. The Silk Road Think Tank Association has recruited 122 partners in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America. Sixteen Chinese and foreign think tanks have established the Belt and Road Studies Network.

People-to-people exchanges are constantly expanding. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) continue to strengthen cooperation with the goals of benefiting the people, improving their lives, and connecting their hearts. At the people-to-people ties sub-forum of the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, Chinese and foreign NGOs, including China NGO Network for International Exchanges, combined to launch the Silk Road Community Building Initiative, encouraging Chinese and foreign NGOs to establish nearly 600 cooperative partnership pairings and carry out more than 300 cooperation projects for improving people's lives. Of these, some brand projects have achieved a wide impact, including the Shenzhen-Lancang-Mekong Cooperation to benefit the people in the Lancang-Mekong region with Shenzhen's advanced products and technology, the Panda Pack Project to provide primary school students with learning supplies, and the Brightness Journey program to provide free cataract surgery to those in need.

Cities from 60-plus BRI partner countries have formed more than 1,000 pairs of friendly cities with their Chinese counterparts. A total of 352 NGOs from 72 countries and regions have formed a Silk Road NGO Cooperation Network, carrying out over 500 projects and various other activities, and becoming an important platform for exchanges and cooperation between NGOs in partner countries.

Steady Progress in New Areas

Leveraging their respective strengths, partner countries have continued to expand BRI cooperation into new fields and created innovative cooperation models, achieving great progress in building a healthy, green, innovative and digital Silk Road and further broadening the space for international cooperation.

Notable achievements have been made in health cooperation. To establish closer partnerships in health cooperation, partner countries are working hard to build a Health Silk Road and a global community of health for all. By the end of June 2023, China had signed an MoU with the WHO on health cooperation in BRI partner countries, inked health cooperation agreements with more than 160 countries and international organizations, and initiated or participated in nine international and regional health cooperation mechanisms, including China-Africa Health Cooperation, China-Arab States Health Cooperation, and China-ASEAN Health Cooperation.

Relying on mechanisms and platforms such as the Belt & Road Health Professionals Development Alliance, the Belt & Road Hospital Cooperation Alliance, the Belt & Road Health Policy Research Network, and the China-ASEAN Human Resources Training Programme of Health Silk Road (2020–2022), China has helped BRI partner countries to train tens of thousands of professionals in health management, public health and medical research. It has also dispatched medical teams to 58 partner countries, and provided free treatment for nearly 10,000 cataract patients in more than 30 partner countries through the Brightness Journey program. In addition, China has sent several rounds of medical aid to island states of the South Pacific, and carried out international medical cooperation with neighboring countries, including countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion, Central Asian countries, and Mongolia.

After the outbreak of COVID-19, China provided assistance to more than 120 BRI partner countries to combat the pandemic, and sent 38 expert medical teams to 34 countries. It started the Initiative for Belt and Road Partnership on COVID-19 Vaccines Cooperation together with 31 countries, delivered more than 2 billion doses of vaccines to partner countries, and conducted joint vaccine production with more than 20 countries, improving vaccine affordability and accessibility in developing countries.

In addition, China has signed documents on traditional medicine cooperation with 14 BRI partner countries; eight partner countries have taken measures to support the development of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) within the framework of their respective legal systems; 30 overseas TCM centers have been built; and 100-plus TCM drugs have been registered and marketed in partner countries.

Remarkable progress has been achieved in green and low-carbon development. China is working together with partner countries and international organizations to build a cooperation mechanism for green and low-carbon development under the BRI framework, promote green development, and address climate change.

China has issued documents such as the Guidance on Promoting Green Belt and Road and the Guidelines on Jointly Promoting Green Development of the Belt and Road, and set itself the ambitious goal of forming a basic framework of green development through BRI cooperation by 2030. China has also signed an MoU with the United Nations Environment Programme on building a green Belt and Road for 2017–2022, reached environmental cooperation agreements with more than 30 countries and international organizations, launched the Initiative for Belt and Road Partnership on Green Development together with 31 countries, formed the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition with more than 150 partners from 40-plus countries, and established the Belt and Road Energy Partnership with 32 countries.

China has pledged to stop building new coal-fired power stations overseas, and to actively build

green finance platforms and international cooperation mechanisms. It stands ready to cooperate with partner countries on research into biodiversity conservation, safeguarding the eco-environmental security of the Maritime Silk Road, building the Belt and Road Big Data Service Platform on Ecological and Environmental Protection and the Belt and Road Environmental Technology Exchange and Transfer Center, and implementing the Green Silk Road Envoys Programme.

China is actively promoting the Belt and Road South-South Cooperation Initiative on Climate Change. It has signed 47 South-South MoUs on climate change with 39 partner countries, built low-carbon demonstration zones with Laos, Cambodia, and Seychelles, carried out more than 70 climate change mitigation and adaptation projects with 30-plus developing countries, and trained more than 3,000 environment management personnel and experts from more than 120 countries.

In May 2023, China Eximbank, together with a dozen financial institutions including China Development Bank, and China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation, released the Initiative for Supporting Belt and Road Energy Transition with Green Finance, calling on all parties involved to strengthen support for green and low-carbon energy transition in BRI partner countries.

Cooperation in scientific and technological innovation is gathering speed. BRI partner countries are strengthening cooperation on innovation, facilitating technology transfer and knowledge sharing, optimizing the innovation-enabling environment, and pooling innovation resources. They are also building up their capacity for scientific and technological innovation through cooperation in major projects and talent training.

In October 2016, China released the Special Plan on Advancing Belt and Road Cooperation in Scientific and Technological Innovation. In May 2017, the Action Plan on Belt and Road Cooperation in Scientific and Technological Innovation was implemented, to increase the capacity for innovation in BRI partner countries through pragmatic measures such as joint research, technology transfer, exchanges in science, technology and culture, and cooperation between high-tech industrial parks.

By the end of June 2023, China had signed intergovernmental agreements on scientific and technological cooperation with more than 80 BRI partner countries, and 58 members had joined the ANSO. Since 2013, China has hosted more than 10,000 young scientists from partner countries in carrying out short-term research and exchanges in China, and trained more than 16,000 technicians and management professionals for partner countries; China has established nine cross-border technology transfer platforms targeting ASEAN, South Asia, Arab States, Africa, Latin America, and other regions; China has assisted 22 African countries to build 23 agricultural technology demonstration centers, and set up 50-plus BRI joint laboratories in areas such as agriculture, new energy, and health.

China has signed an agreement with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on strengthening BRI cooperation on intellectual property and additional agreements on subsequent revision and prolongation of the said agreement. China and the WIPO have jointly hosted twice the High-level Conference on Intellectual Property for Countries Along the Belt and Road, and released a joint initiative and a joint statement on strengthening cooperation on intellectual property. To date, China has established intellectual property cooperation relationships with more than 50 partner countries and international organizations, whose goal is to create an innovation and business environment in which the value of knowledge is duly respected.

Digital silk road cooperation presents numerous highlights. BRI partner countries have joined to create an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for digital development by strengthening facilitation of and cooperation on rules and standards and promoting regional policy coordination.

By the end of 2022, China had signed MoUs on building the digital Silk Road with 17 countries, MoUs on e-commerce cooperation with 30 countries, and MoUs on closer investment cooperation in the digital economy with 18 countries and regions. It has proposed and worked to launch the Global Initiative on Data Security, the Belt and Road Digital Economy International Cooperation Initiative, the initiative for building the ASEAN-China Partnership on Digital Economy Cooperation, the China-League of Arab States Cooperation Initiative on Data Security, the China + Central Asia Data Security Cooperation Initiative, and the BRICS Digital Economy Partnership Framework, among others. It also took the lead in formulating the Framework of Standards on Cross-border E-commerce.

China is active in strengthening digital infrastructure connectivity and is stepping up work on digital corridors. Several international submarine cables have made positive progress, and 130 cross-border terrestrial cable systems have been built.

China has built many 5G base stations, data centers, cloud computing centers and smart cities, and promoted digital upgrading and transformation of traditional infrastructure such as ports, railways, highways, energy networks and water conservancy facilities.

A number of key projects such as the China-ASEAN Information Harbor, and the digital platform of China-Europe Railway Express and the China-Arab Online Silk Road are making good progress, and the DBAR Big Earth Data Platform has realized multilingual data sharing.

Panel 2 Silk Road E-commerce Expands New Channels for Economic and Trade Cooperation

Thriving new business models of international trade, represented by cross-border e-commerce

and overseas warehouses, are providing better services and more choice to global consumers, and promoting global trade innovations. Silk Road E-commerce is an important means by which China can capitalize on its strengths in e-commerce technology application, model innovation and market size, expand economic and trade cooperation, and share the opportunities of digital development with BRI participants.

By the end of September 2023, China had established bilateral mechanisms of e-commerce cooperation with 30 countries on five continents; multilateral mechanisms had been built under the China-CEEC and China-Central Asia frameworks.

Activities such as the Silk Road E-commerce Platform of the Brand and Quality Online Shopping Festival and the Quality African Products Online Shopping Festival have yielded substantial results, and virtual country pavilions help partner countries to export their high-quality specialty products to the Chinese market.

The innovative Cloud Classroom program has provided livestreamed training sessions for more than 80 partner countries to reinforce their digital literacy.

Through consistently enriching the content and elevating the level of cooperation, Silk Road E-commerce has become a new platform for bilateral and multilateral economic and trade cooperation and a new strength in high-quality BRI cooperation.

The construction of the Belt and Road Initiative Space Information Corridor has been a resounding success. China has built teleports connecting South Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. The data from remote sensing satellites under the China-Brazil Earth Resources Satellite (CBERS) program is widely used in multiple countries and fields. The BeiDou navigation satellite system (BDS-3) provides comprehensive services for China-Europe Railway Express, and in maritime transport and other fields.

China and a number of BRI partner countries and regions have combined to develop and launch communication or remote sensing satellites, and constructed satellite ground stations and other space infrastructure. Through the Regional Center for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific (China) affiliated to the United Nations, China has trained a large number of space professionals for partner countries. Together with other countries and regions, China has built the China-GCC Joint Center for Lunar and Deep Space Exploration, the China-UAE Space Debris Joint Monitoring Center, the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Center for Earth Observation Data, the China-ASEAN Satellite Remote Sensing Application Center, and the China-Africa Cooperation Center on Satellite Remote Sensing Application. The CNSA-GEO platform, the Belt and Road Analysis and Early Warning Platform for Typical Meteorological Disasters, and the Natural Resources Satellite Remote Sensing Cloud Service Platform now serve many partner countries.

Injecting Positive Energy into World Peace and Development

Over the past decade, BRI cooperation has witnessed remarkable results. It has opened up new space for world economic growth, built a new platform for international trade and investment, reinforced the development capacity of relevant countries and improved people's lives, sought ways to improve the global governance system, and brought greater certainty and stability to a world fraught with turbulence and change. The BRI has boosted China's development and benefited the rest of the world.

Bringing Tangible Benefits to Partner Countries

Development is an eternal theme for humanity. The BRI has focused on the fundamental issue of development, addressing the weaker links and bottlenecks that hinder development, building new engines for economic development, and creating a new development environment and space for partner countries. This has strengthened their confidence and their capacity for development, and improved their people's lives. The initiative has contributed to addressing global development imbalance and advancing modernization in all countries.

Boosting development in partner countries. Over the last 10 years, the BRI has addressed the major bottlenecks restricting connectivity and economic growth in most of the developing countries. A large number of infrastructure projects have been built, with significant progress for partner countries in the construction of railways, highways, pipelines, shipping, energy, communications and other basic public service facilities. This has improved local living and working conditions and the development environment, and boosted their capacity for independent economic development.

Some engineering projects with a long construction cycle are like seeds sown in a field, gradually generating comprehensive benefits for the long term. Connectivity in infrastructure has effectively reduced the cost for countries to participate in international trade, increased their access to the global economy, and stimulated the potential and impetus for their development. Research by the Asian Development Bank shows that lowering a land-locked country's trade costs by 10 percent through improvement in infrastructure could increase its exports by 20 percent.

Industrial capacity cooperation has promoted industrialization, digitization, informatization, and the structural upgrading of industries in partner countries. It has helped them to form competitive industrial systems and expand the breadth and depth of their participation in the international division of labor and

cooperation, creating more opportunities and greater space for development.

China has actively conducted international cooperation in emergency management. It has sent rescue teams to Nepal, Mozambique, Türkiye and other countries to carry out humanitarian operations following earthquakes and floods, and provided emergency supplies and technical support to Tonga and Madagascar, among other countries.

Building poverty reduction capacity in partner countries. Developing countries still face the challenge of problems related to food. China has taken an active part in global food and agriculture governance. It has released the Vision and Action on Jointly Promoting Agricultural Cooperation Along the Belt and Road with partner countries, and signed more than 100 agricultural and fishery cooperation documents with almost 90 partner countries and international organizations. Its trade in agricultural products with BRI partners has reached 139.4 billion US dollars. China has sent more than 2,000 agricultural experts and technicians to over 70 countries and regions, and introduced more than 1,500 agricultural technologies such as Juncao and hybrid rice to many of these countries. It has helped with rural poverty reduction in Asia, Africa, the South Pacific, Latin America, and the Caribbean, developing modern agriculture and helping to increase farmers' incomes.

Boosting employment is an important element of poverty reduction. In the process of BRI cooperation, China has helped to construct industrial parks with partner countries and provided guidance for Chinese enterprises to create jobs for local residents through high-level industrial cooperation. The jobs provided to locals have helped to lift their families out of poverty. A McKinsey survey revealed that Chinese firms in Africa recruited 89 percent of their employees locally, contributing to local employment in an effective way.

The World Bank has estimated that by 2030, BRI-related investments could lift 7.6 million out of extreme poverty and 32 million out of moderate poverty.

Panel 3 Juncao Poverty Alleviation Wins Worldwide Acclaim

China's Juncao technology makes comprehensive and efficient utilization of three major agricultural resources—light, heat and water. It makes circular production based on plants, animals, and fungi possible, combines economic, social and environmental benefits, and supports food, energy, and eco-environmental security.

Juncao technology was first launched as an official assistance project in 2001, in Papua New Guinea. Over the last two decades, China has hosted more than 270 international training courses on Juncao technology, for more than 10,000 trainees from 106 countries. It has also established Juncao technology demonstration centers or bases in countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the South Pacific region. Today, Juncao technology is being applied in more than 100 countries, creating hundreds of thousands of green jobs for local youth and women. A former cabinet minister of Papua New Guinea named his daughter Juncao. The people of Lesotho have produced folk songs in praise of Juncao which are still popular today. In 2017, Juncao technology was listed as a key project of the China-UN Peace and Development Fund, contributing more Chinese know-how to the cause of international poverty reduction.

Delivering notable results in projects that improve people's lives. Chinese firms have repaired and maintained bridges to make it easier for local residents to travel. They have drilled wells to meet local villagers' needs for drinking water. They have installed street lamps for pedestrians to see clearly on their way home at night. Many such seemingly small projects have solved urgent problems for local people and improved their daily lives. They have brought tangible benefits to the people of partner countries, and increased their sense of gain, fulfillment and security.

Over the last 10 years, Chinese firms have launched more than 300 poverty alleviation, health care and rehabilitation, and Happy Home projects in partner countries. They have helped with the construction of the headquarters of Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the China-Pakistan Fraternity Emergency Care Center in Gwadar, Pakistan. They have also helped Cameroon, Ethiopia, Djibouti and other countries to provide clean drinking water for the local people.

Panel 4 The Sweet Spring Project Improves People's Well-Being in the Lancang-Mekong Region

In January 2020, China launched the Lancang-Mekong Sweet Spring Project, a project demonstrating rural water supply safety technology in the Lancang-Mekong region. Water supply facilities were built in rural areas of Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar, markedly improving local water supply capacity and safety. Through this project, China has helped to improve the lives of local people and played an active role in helping the Lancang-Mekong region to access clean water and sanitation, one of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

As of December 2022, 62 demonstration sites had been built in the project area, ensuring safe drinking water for more than 7,000 local people. China had also trained over 400 personnel from the region in rural water supply management and project management.

The Silk Road Community Building Initiative has promoted projects in more than 20 areas, including poverty alleviation and disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, environmental protection, and women's

exchanges and cooperation. Related activities have had an extensive impact.

Adding Vitality to Economic Globalization

Against a rising tide of de-globalization, the BRI is committed to global connectivity and interconnected development. It has further opened up the main arteries of economic globalization, facilitated the flow of information, capital, technology, product, industry and people, and promoted closer and broader international cooperation. By expanding economic globalization and distributing its benefits fairly, the BRI aims to promote global development that is balanced, coordinated, inclusive and shared by all, and that brings win-win cooperation and common prosperity.

Boosting the momentum for global development. The BRI has connected the vibrant East Asia economic circle at one end, the developed European economic circle at the other, and the countries in between with huge potential for economic development, and fostered closer economic cooperation with African and Latin American countries. It has formed a new global development dynamic in which the Eurasian continent is fully connected with the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans, and the land is integrated with the sea. It has expanded the scope and coverage of the international division of labor in a broader economic and geographical space, and enlarged the global market, which ultimately promoted new global economic growth.

At the same time, through infrastructure connectivity, the BRI has proved a catalyst for international investment and boosted global interest in and enthusiasm for investment in infrastructure, which provides economic growth and rapid development in partner countries. These efforts have effectively addressed the shortage of international public goods and provided sustained impetus for world economic growth.

Encouraging deeper regional economic cooperation. In strengthening infrastructure connectivity, the BRI promotes connectivity between countries in many directions and various fields. The BRI turns dots into lines and lines into fields, gradually amplifying the radiation effect of development. It encourages countries to coordinate economic policies, systems and mechanisms, and innovate cooperation models, conduct broader, deeper and closer regional cooperation, and jointly create an open, inclusive and balanced regional economic cooperation architecture that benefits all. It has facilitated a freer and more orderly flow of economic factors, more efficient allocation of resources, and deeper integration of markets, and upgraded economic and trade connectivity and vitality between countries and regions, and the overall position of partner countries in global industry chains, supply chains, and value chains.

Partner countries have made full use of their own factor endowments to integrate, coordinate, and upgrade their industry chains, promote industrial complementarity, and improve the efficiency of division of labor. They have broken down trade barriers and market monopolies, unleashed internal and cross-border consumption potential, and expanded the scale of regional markets. Through technology transfer and cooperation in industrial cooperation, they have established technology interaction and interdependence, strengthened capacity for innovation, and promoted leapfrog development.

Promoting global trade. The BRI supports the liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment by building transport and information infrastructure in a planned and progressive manner. It has eliminated internal, transnational, and inter-regional transport bottlenecks and barriers to trade and investment cooperation, made cross-border logistics and foreign trade easier and more convenient, and increased the efficiency of domestic and international cooperation. It has built up an all-round, multi-level and complex network of unimpeded trade, creating a new dynamic and greatly facilitating global trade.

At the same time, the BRI has made partner countries more attractive to quality global capital, and contributed to rising direct cross-border investment in these countries. In 2022, cross-border direct investment inflows in Southeast Asia accounted for 17.2 percent of the global total, 9 percentage points higher than in 2013. The inflow of FDI into Kazakhstan grew by a historical high of 83 percent year on year.

A World Bank study—"Belt and Road Economics: Opportunities and Risks of Transport Corridors"—estimates that prior to the BRI, the six corridor economies traded with each other and the rest of the world by 30 percent less on average and they fell short of their absorptive potential for FDI by 70 percent. Transport infrastructure projects under the BRI would reduce trade costs for the world by 1.8 percent, and reduce trade costs along the China-Central Asia-West Asia economic corridor by 10 percent. This has greatly facilitated global trade and boosted economic growth. The study projects that trade growth would range between 2.8 and 9.7 percent for corridor economies and between 1.7 and 6.2 percent worldwide, and global real income is expected to increase by 0.7 to 2.9 percent.

Maintaining the stability of global supply chains. An efficient and interconnected international transport corridor established under the BRI framework plays an important role in maintaining the stability and smooth flow of global supply chains.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, ports and logistics companies cancelled or reduced services for shipping and freight transport, which had dealt a hard blow to those global supply chains which were highly dependent on shipping.

Panel 5 China-Laos Railway Turns Land-Locked Laos into a Land-Linked Country

The China-Laos Railway is an electrified railway directly connecting Kunming City of China with

Vientiane City of Laos. It is the first transnational railway built under the BRI, funded mainly by Chinese investment, operated jointly by the two sides, and connected directly with China's railway network. The 1,035-km-long railway officially opened for business on December 3, 2021. On April 13, 2023, the China-Laos Railway started cross-border passenger services, with bullet trains running directly in both directions between Kunming and Vientiane.

As an important part of the central section of the pan-Asia railway network, the China-Laos Railway has helped Laos to realize its long-cherished dream of becoming a land-linked country from a land-locked one. It has promoted transport, investment, logistics and tourism, and injected new impetus into the economic development of Laos and areas along the line. By August 31, 2023, the railway had recorded a total of 20.79 million passenger trips and carried 25.22 million tonnes of cargo. It has become a safe and efficient international passageway connecting Laos with its neighboring countries and regions and generating mutual benefits.

The China-Laos Railway is a project that wins the heart of the people and an example of clean management. The leaders of China and Laos reached an important agreement on making the China-Laos Railway a clean project. The discipline inspection and supervision departments of the two countries established a government-level supervision and coordination mechanism, and the enterprises involved in construction had taken incorruptibility as a top priority from project design and deployment through to implementation and review. Effective systems were in place to enforce this principle throughout construction, and new methods of cooperation to fight corruption were tested. Through the efforts of both parties, the China-Laos Railway has become a road of friendship, integrity and happiness.

According to a World Bank study—"From Land-locked to Land-Linked: Unlocking the Potential of Lao-China Rail Connectivity"—the China-Laos Railway could raise Laos' aggregate income by up to 21 percent over the long term. The transit trade through Laos along the line is estimated to reach 3.9 million tonnes per year by 2030, which would include a shift of an estimated 1.5 million tonnes of trade from maritime transport to the railway.

As a key output of BRI cooperation, the China-Europe Railway Express effectively sustained rail connectivity on the Eurasian continent, boosted sea-rail, road-rail, air-rail, and other forms of multi-modal transport, and opened up a new transport corridor for the Eurasian continental supply chain. Together with the innovations in customs clearance such as the Customs-Train Operators Partnership for Secure and Expedited Clearance of CR Express Carried Goods (C-TOP), Rapid Customs Clearance for rail service, China made an important contribution to stabilizing the global economy.

Several well-known international logistics associations have stated publicly that the China-Europe Railway Express has provided the world with a reliable logistics solution that can effectively alleviate tensions in the global supply chain and strengthen international logistics.

Providing New Solutions for Improving Global Governance

The deficit in global governance presents a severe challenge to the whole world. The BRI supports genuine multilateralism, and cherishes shared growth through consultation and collaboration in global governance. It advocates dialogue rather than confrontation, removing walls rather than erecting walls, integration rather than decoupling, and inclusiveness rather than exclusion. This is a new paradigm for state-to-state relations that shapes the international order towards greater justice and equality.

Gaining more recognition for the concept of global governance. The BRI's core principles of "extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits" have appeared in important documents from international organizations and mechanisms, including the UN and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

The vision of a global community with a shared future has developed deep roots. A number of bilateral communities have been built between China and other countries, including Laos and Pakistan. Steady progress has been made in building multilateral communities, including those between China and Africa, the Arab States, Latin America, ASEAN, Central Asia and Pacific Island countries. Practical results have been achieved in building communities in functional areas, including cyber space, maritime cooperation, and health for all.

According to the China's National Image Global Survey released by the Academy of Contemporary China and World Studies in 2020, the BRI is the Chinese proposal with the highest level of acceptance overseas, with more than 70 percent of respondents recognizing the positive impact of the BRI on individuals, states and global governance. European think tank Bruegel released a paper titled "Global Trends in Countries' Perceptions of the Belt and Road Initiative" in April 2023, which noted that the BRI is generally positively received in the world, and Central Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, exhibit strongly positive sentiment towards the BRI.

Improving multilateral governance mechanisms. The BRI upholds the principles of mutual respect and equality, openness, inclusiveness, and win-win results. It enshrines multilateralism by securing international fairness and justice, and protecting the rights and interests of developing countries.

The BRI helps improve the existing multilateral governance mechanisms by firmly upholding the authority and status of the UN, and striving to consolidate and strengthen the stature and effectiveness of global multilateral governance platforms such as the WTO. It actively promotes new multilateral

governance mechanisms such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and works with participating parties to promote governance mechanisms in emerging areas such as the deep sea, polar regions, outer space, internet and artificial intelligence.

The BRI has strengthened the position and role of developing countries and emerging economies in the world market system, and increased their discourse power in regional and global economic governance. As a result, the aspirations and concerns of developing countries are increasingly included in the global agenda—a significant improvement in global governance.

Innovating and optimizing global governance rules. Taking into account the differences in the level of economic development, factor endowments, and cultural and religious traditions of relevant parties, the BRI has not preset any rules and standards, nor does it draw ideological lines. Instead, it formulates new rules to solve new problems through full consultation and in-depth exchanges, based on the wishes and needs of the parties involved.

BRI partner countries seek synergy in their strategies, plans, mechanisms, projects, and rules and standards, which helps to optimize the rules for BRI cooperation, and supports the transition from opening up based on the flow of goods and factors of production to opening up based on rules and related institutions. Some rules and standards with strong potential for universal application have been formulated in this process, which has effectively filled in gaps in the global governance system in these areas.

Garnering Strength for the Progress of Human Civilization

Exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations drive human progress and global peace and development. In contrast to those who persist with black and white thinking, concoct such concepts as the “clash of civilizations” and “superiority of Western civilization,” and provoke large-scale ideological confrontation, the BRI advocates equality, mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness among civilizations, and promotes the shared values of humanity. It has charted a path of exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations for all to prosper individually and collectively, in order to achieve closer ties among peoples and link up the cultures and hearts of all countries.

Improving the mechanisms for people-to-people exchanges. People-to-people exchanges cover a wide range of areas, including politics, culture, the arts, sports, and education. The global influence of various multilateral and bilateral political party exchange mechanisms has increased with the creation of mechanisms such as the CPC and World Political Parties Summit, and the CPC in Dialogue with World Political Parties High-level Meeting. The leading role of high-level inter-party exchanges garners consensus and strengths for stronger people-to-people ties.

Various BRI cooperation mechanisms have emerged, including the Silk Road Think Tank Association, the Belt and Road Initiative Tax Administration Cooperation Mechanism, the ANSO, the Belt and Road Health Professionals Development Alliance, the Silk Road International League of Theaters, and the Silk Road International Museum Alliance. The emergence of such mechanisms has facilitated people-to-people exchanges in diverse forms, promoting mutual understanding, mutual respect, and mutual appreciation among the peoples of all countries.

China, Kyrgyzstan, Iran and other Central and West Asian countries jointly launched the Alliance for Cultural Heritage in Asia—the first international cooperation mechanism regarding Asian cultural heritage—to protect cultural heritage, the tangible carriers of civilization. The projects under the framework of the alliance, for example the protection and restoration of Uzbekistan’s ancient city of Khiva, have been highly commended by UNESCO.

Creating quality brand projects and activities. Several projects and activities have become popular and attracted widespread public participation. Examples include the Silk Road (Dunhuang) International Cultural Expo, the Belt and Road/Great Wall International Folk Culture and Arts Festival, the Silk Road International Arts Festival, the Maritime Silk Road International Arts Festival, the Belt and Road Youth Story, and the Tea Road Cultural Tourism Expo.

Cultural and people-to-people exchange programs have won wide acclaim, including the Silk Road Community Building Initiative, the Kit of Love of medical supplies, Luban Workshops of technical vocational training, the Happy Spring well-drilling project, the Brightness Journey program of free cataract surgeries, the Panda Pack Project of school supplies, the Amity Torch Programme of educational assistance, the Belt and Road Tour of Acupuncture-Moxibustion promoting traditional Chinese medicine therapies, and the Confucius Classroom of cultural exchanges.

As these goodwill activities, quality brands, and signature projects continue to emerge, they have become an important means through which all parties can join to strengthen people-to-people ties. This reinforces the sense of identity and belonging of the peoples of all BRI partner countries.

Galvanizing the power of youth. The future of the BRI belongs to the youth. Over the last 10 years, young people in partner countries have engaged proactively in people-to-people exchanges and programs that create a better life. The younger generation has galvanized the tremendous power of youth for strengthening people-to-people bonds and realizing common development.

Panel 6 Luban Workshops

Lu Ban was an ancient Chinese woodcraft master and inventor. The Luban Workshop, an international

exchanges platform for vocational education named after the master, has become a well-known Chinese initiative for introducing Chinese vocational education internationally. Luban Workshops are mainly opened in ASEAN, SCO and African countries.

The workshops offer a combination of academic education and vocational training, and share the approach, technology, and standards of Chinese vocational education. The project has built training centers, provided advanced teaching equipment, and sent Chinese teachers and technicians to help train technical personnel for partner countries.

Since the first Luban Workshop opened in Thailand in 2016, Chinese universities and colleges have established dozens of Luban Workshops with more than 20 partner countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe, which offer courses in more than 70 directions, including industrial robots, new energy, and the Internet of Things. The workshops have trained tens of thousands of technical personnel for partner countries, helping more young people to find work.

Though small in scale, the workshops respond to people's desire for a better life, and facilitate the realization of the dream of common development.

The Chinese Youth Global Partnership has received a positive response from all over the world. More than 100 national youth organizations and international organizations have established ties and cooperative relations with China.

Sixteen events of the Belt and Road Youth Story have attracted more than 1,500 young people from partner countries. Focusing on poverty alleviation and reduction, climate change, and pandemic response cooperation, participants shared with the audience their stories and experience in promoting social development and their own development, which vividly demonstrated the right way to view the world from the perspective of appreciation, mutual learning, and sharing.

Other successful activities have also taken place, including the Silk Road Incubator Youth Entrepreneurship Programme and the China-Central and Eastern Europe International Forum for Young Innovators, which have become important platforms for the youth of partner countries to strengthen friendly exchanges and cooperation.

Pursuing Steady and Sustained Progress in High-Quality BRI Cooperation

Experience over the past 10 years has proved that BRI cooperation responds to the call of the times and benefits the peoples in partner countries. It thus enjoys popular support. It is a path for all partner countries to achieve modernization and a path of hope leading to a bright future. It is resilient and vigorous, and offers broad prospects.

Currently, the world is in a period of turbulence and transformation. Rivalry and competition between major countries is escalating; the geopolitical situation remains tense; global economic recovery is yet to appear over the horizon; cold-war and zero-sum mentalities are resurgent; unilateralism, protectionism and hegemonism are proliferating; populism is making a noticeable resurgence. A new round of technological revolution and industrial transformation has given rise to ever fiercer competition; the deficit in peace, development, security and governance is growing; foreseeable and unforeseeable risks are rising rapidly around the globe. All of this presents unprecedented challenges to humanity.

Certain countries overstretch the concept of national security and seek “decoupling” in the name of “derisking”; they trample international economic and trade order and market rules, and endanger the security and stability of international industrial supply chains; they also impede international humanistic and technological exchanges and cooperation. Their actions raise obstacles to the long-term development of humanity. In a world full of uncertainties and instabilities, all countries should urgently bridge differences through dialogue, oppose rifts with unity, and promote development through cooperation. Against this backdrop, the BRI becomes more meaningful and is an initiative to be welcomed.

In the long term, the trends towards multipolarity and economic globalization, the trend of our times towards peace, development, cooperation and win-win outcomes, and the desire of the people of all countries for a better life will remain unchanged. So will the momentum behind the rise of developing countries as a whole and the status and responsibilities of China as the largest developing country in the world. The BRI faces some difficulties and challenges; however, its future is promising, as long as all countries can manage threats, address challenges, and advance cooperation by considering both their own long-term interests and the overall interests of humanity.

As a large and developing country that meets its responsibilities, China will continue to promote the BRI as its overarching plan and its top-level design for opening up and win-win international cooperation. It will open up on a larger scale, across more areas, and in greater depth. It will steadily expand institutional opening up with regard to rules, regulations, management and standards, and establish new mechanisms for a more open economy. It will achieve high-quality new development through opening up, and provide new opportunities for the world with that development.

China is ready to increase its resource input in global cooperation and do its best to support and help other developing countries to progress faster. It will work to achieve a greater say for emerging

economies and developing countries in global governance, and contribute to the common development of all countries. China sincerely welcomes more countries and international organizations to join in cooperation under the BRI, and will support any initiative that can genuinely help developing countries build infrastructure and achieve shared progress, thereby promoting global connectivity and sustainable development.

All countries involved in high-quality BRI cooperation are equal participants, contributors and beneficiaries. China is willing to work with all other parties to strengthen confidence, maintain resolve, and advance BRI cooperation in the spirit of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. China hopes that all parties can consolidate the foundations, expand the reach, and optimize the projects of cooperation. Working together, all can create new opportunities, seek new drivers, create new space, and share new fruits of development. All can form closer partnerships in health, connectivity, green development, opening up, inclusiveness, innovation and clean government, and all can thereby participate in fruitful BRI cooperation and provide new and powerful impetus for building a global community with a shared future.

Conclusion

The Belt and Road Initiative has given new life to a history of cultural exchanges that dates back more than two millennia, and has inspired more than 150 countries with the zeal to realize new dreams.

In the 10 years that have passed since its launch, cooperation under the BRI framework has brought remarkable and profound change to the world and become a major milestone in the history of humanity.

The BRI is a long-term, transnational and systematic global project of the 21st century. It has succeeded in taking its first step on a long journey. Continuing from this new starting point, the BRI will demonstrate greater creativity and vitality, become more open and inclusive, and generate new opportunities for both China and the rest of the world.

In the future, the BRI will find itself confronted by new difficulties. But as long as all parties involved combine their forces, work together and persevere, we will be able to overcome these problems and raise our extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits to new heights. Cooperation will thrive, and the BRI can look forward to an even brighter future.

China stands ready to work with other countries to pursue closer and more fruitful cooperation under the BRI framework, implement the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, and build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity. Our goals are to pass on the torch of peace from generation to generation, sustain development, ensure that civilizations flourish, and build a global community with a shared future.

Outlook on China's Foreign Policy on Its Neighborhood in the New Era

Source: Xinhua
October 2023

Preface

China and its neighboring countries enjoy geographical proximity, cultural affinity and integrated interests with a shared future. The millennium-old friendly exchanges between the two sides are a vivid history of exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations. Such friendly bonds are best captured by the Chinese saying: "True friendship weathers the changing seasons without fading away and is made even stronger by hardships."

The neighborhood is where China survives and thrives and the foundation of its development and prosperity. As a member of the Asian family and a responsible major country, China attaches great importance to neighborhood diplomacy, always prioritizes the neighborhood on its diplomatic agenda, and remains committed to promoting regional peace, stability, development and prosperity.

Outlook on China's Foreign Policy on Its Neighborhood in the New Era, based on the assessment and overview of the current situation and future trends in Asia, comprehensively outlines the achievements, policies, visions and objectives of China's neighborhood diplomacy, and declares China's commitment to the path of peaceful development, to promoting development of the neighborhood through its own development, to working with regional countries to advance modernization, to jointly building a community with a shared future among neighboring countries and to realizing the vision of a peaceful, secure, prosperous, beautiful, amicable and harmonious Asia in the new era.

Asia Faces New Opportunities and Challenges

In the Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Xi Jinping,

General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee and Chinese President, pointed out that changes of our world, our times, and of historical significance are unfolding in ways like never before. The world has once again reached a crossroads in history. Asia, amidst the changes unseen in a century, stands at a new starting point towards development and revitalization and faces unprecedented opportunities and challenges.

Asia, with its vast land and abundant resources, is home to a large population with diverse cultures and development. It has remained generally stable in the past few decades. Regional countries have enjoyed growing political mutual trust and ever deepening cooperation and exchanges. As a result, Asia has doubled its share of the world economy, made the leap from a region of low income to one of middle income, and formed a momentum of cooperation, development and rapid rise in a short span of 40 years. In recent years, Asia, as an important engine driving global economic recovery and growth, has contributed more than 50 percent to global growth. Asia is the most dynamic region with the biggest development potential in the world and will remain a promising land for global development and prosperity.

Meanwhile, global governance is in dysfunction; Cold War mentality is resurfacing; unilateralism, protectionism and hegemonism run rampant; multiple risks in such fields as energy, food, finance, industrial and supply chains and climate change are having greater impact on Asia. Asia also faces challenges such as uneven economic growth, and pronounced security and governance issues. Some countries have intensified efforts to build regional military alliances; the Korean Peninsula issue remains complicated and intractable; Afghanistan faces numerous challenges in its reconstruction; terrorism, natural disasters and other non-traditional security threats persist.

There are two opposite propositions and trends concerning the future of Asia. One advocates open regionalism, true multilateralism, a development-first approach, mutually beneficial cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, integrated development, and pursuit of common development in harmony. The other represents a relapse into the Cold War mentality and exclusive clubs, and attempts to draw lines based on values, politicize economic issues, divide the region into different security blocs, and stoke division and confrontation.

Good principles keep abreast of the times. The right choice for Asia should be openness, solidarity, cooperation, justice and harmony rather than isolation, division, confrontation, hegemony and zero-sum approach. This not only hinges on the future prospects of countries in the region, but will also have a fundamental and far-reaching bearing on the future of Asia and the world. Building a community with a shared future for mankind is the sure path to a prosperous and better Asia and the world.

Significant Progress Made in China's Relations with Its Neighbors

Over the past half century and more, Asia, once plagued by poverty, weakness, turbulence and wars, has progressed successfully toward peace, stability, development, and prosperity. This is mainly accredited to the commitment of regional countries to independence, unity for strength, mutual respect, inclusiveness, mutual learning, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. In this process, China and fellow Asian countries have jointly advocated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, carried forward the Bandung Spirit of solidarity, friendship and cooperation, and kept advancing good-neighborliness and mutually beneficial cooperation. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC in 2012, China's relations with neighboring countries have been upgraded at a faster pace and produced fruitful results.

Political mutual trust has been growing. As of the date of this document's release, China has established diverse and substantive partnerships, cooperative relations and strategic relations of mutual benefit with 28 neighboring countries^[1] and ASEAN. China has reached common understandings with Pakistan, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Thailand, Mongolia, Turkmenistan, Malaysia and Kyrgyzstan on building a community with a shared future, and has agreed with the five Mekong countries^[2] to build a community with a shared future among Lancang-Mekong countries, and announced with the five Central Asian countries^[3] the decision to build a China-Central Asia community with a shared future. China has resolved historical boundary issues with 12 neighbors on land^[4] through negotiations and signed the treaties of good-neighborliness and friendly cooperation with nine neighboring countries^[5]. China has signed and ratified the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-

[1] The 28 countries that have established partnerships, cooperative relations or strategic relations of mutual benefit with China are Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Timor-Leste, Russia, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Cambodia, Laos, Maldives, Malaysia, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Japan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Brunei, Uzbekistan, Singapore, India, Indonesia and Vietnam.

[2] The five Mekong countries are Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

[3] The five Central Asian countries are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

[4] The 12 land neighbors that have resolved the boundary issues with China through negotiations are: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam.

[5] The nine neighboring countries that have signed treaties of good-neighborliness and friendly cooperation with China are Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, respects Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, became the first to join the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and is fully prepared to sign the Protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty at any time.

Mutual benefits keep deepening. China is the largest trading partner of 18 neighboring countries^[1]. In 2022, China's trade in goods with neighboring countries exceeded 2.17 trillion US dollars, up by 78 percent from 2012. The two-way investment between China and ASEAN has exceeded 380 billion US dollars in cumulative terms. China took the lead in ratifying the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and worked for its entry into force and implementation, enabling and enhancing regional economic integration.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has delivered benefits to the neighborhood. China upholds the principle of planning together, building together and benefiting together, stays committed to the philosophy of open, green and clean cooperation, strives to achieve high-standard, sustainable and people-centered cooperation. China has signed Belt and Road cooperation documents with 24 neighboring countries^[2], and worked to synergize the BRI with cooperation plans of ASEAN and the Eurasian Economic Union. China has initiated the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund to provide financial support for infrastructure projects. Thanks to the joint efforts of all parties, a general connectivity framework consisting of six corridors, six connectivity routes and multiple countries and ports has been put in place. The fruitful Belt and Road cooperation has spurred economic growth and improved people's lives in relevant countries and has injected strong impetus into economic recovery in the region.

Regional cooperation has grown in depth and substance. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), co-founded by China and neighboring countries, has become a comprehensive regional organization with the largest geographical coverage and population. The China-Central Asia mechanism established by China and the five Central Asian countries has emerged as an important platform for in-depth cooperation between the six countries. Lancang-Mekong Cooperation is a success story of mutually beneficial cooperation in the sub-region, and the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Economic Development Belt is taking shape. In a spirit of openness and inclusiveness, China actively participates in multilateral cooperation, including the ASEAN-centered East Asia cooperation mechanism, China-Japan-ROK cooperation, and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), contributing to the region's integrated development and people's well-being.

Hotspot issues have been effectively managed and controlled. China has contributed solutions to political settlement of regional hotspot issues, and proposed and put into action the Chinese approach to addressing hotspot issues. On the Korean Peninsula issue, for the sake of peace, stability, and lasting security on the Peninsula, China has put forward the innovative "suspension-for-suspension" proposal and the dual-track approach, stayed committed to political settlement and actively facilitated peace talks. On Afghanistan, China has established a mechanism for coordination and cooperation among Afghanistan's neighbors, relaunched the China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue, and issued the Tunxi Initiative on helping Afghanistan with reconstruction and development, building synergy among various parties. On Myanmar, China has encouraged the parties to bridge differences, restore social stability in the country, and launch political dialogue as quickly as possible.

Risks and challenges have been addressed effectively. China and neighboring countries have worked together in tackling such challenges as terrorism, separatism and financial crisis in the region. Since COVID-19 broke out, China and neighboring countries have come together to overcome difficulties, which reflects the spirit of a community with a shared future and provides leadership for global solidarity against the pandemic.

The remarkable progress made in Asia is attributable to the joint efforts of China and neighboring countries, and needs to be cherished. China's development would not be possible without a peaceful and stable neighboring environment. The development of China and that of neighboring countries complement and reinforce each other. China's development will bring major opportunities and long-term benefits to countries across Asia, and will make even greater contributions to peace and development in the region.

Concepts and Propositions of China's Neighborhood Diplomacy in the New Era

In the Report to the 20th CPC National Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping underscored that "China has always been committed to its foreign policy goals of upholding world peace and promoting common development, and it is dedicated to promoting a community with a shared future for mankind." Under

[1] The 18 neighboring countries whose largest trading partner is China are Pakistan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Russia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Cambodia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Japan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam.

[2] The 24 neighboring countries that have signed Belt and Road cooperation documents with China are Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, Russia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Kazakhstan, Laos, Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Brunei, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Indonesia and Vietnam.

the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, China will maintain the continuity and stability of its neighborhood diplomacy, adhere to the policy of developing friendship and partnership with neighbors, and act on the principle of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness. China is committed to good neighborliness, good faith and amity; believes in sincerity and mutual assistance; pursues mutual benefit and win-win cooperation; advocates inclusiveness and mutual learning, and seeks common ground while shelving differences. China will endeavor to further the political relations, strengthen the economic bonds, deepen security cooperation and foster even closer cultural ties with neighboring countries, in a bid to further advance the building of a community with a shared future among neighboring countries.

China will foster a new type of international relations, and work with regional countries to deepen partnerships featuring equality, openness and cooperation. China firmly defends its sovereignty, security and development interests, respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, respects the development path and social system chosen independently by the people of each country, and does not interfere in other countries' internal affairs. China upholds equality between countries regardless of their size, promotes the unity and cooperation of the Global South, upholds the common interests of developing countries, and works to raise the representation and voice of emerging markets and developing countries in global affairs. China promotes coordination and sound interactions among major countries, and pursues major-country relationships that feature peaceful coexistence, overall stability and balanced development. China and the United States should, on the basis of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, engage in sound interactions in the Asia-Pacific and contribute positive energy to regional stability and development.

China will stay committed to the principle of equality, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, and work with regional countries to advance modernization. Chinese modernization provides a new choice for developing countries to explore their modernization pathways. China will seek to develop itself while safeguarding regional peace and development, keep creating new opportunities for neighboring countries with China's new development, and follow a path of open, cooperative and win-win development together with neighboring countries.

China will stay committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and work with regional countries to maintain regional peace and stability. China rejects the Cold War mentality, unilateralism, group politics and bloc confrontation. China attaches importance to the legitimate security concerns of all countries, upholds the principle of indivisible security, seeks to build a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture, and follows a new path to security that features dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliance, and win-win over zero-sum together with regional countries.

China will firmly uphold the international system with the United Nations at its core, the international order underpinned by international law, and the basic norms governing international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. China upholds open regionalism, practices true multilateralism, and works with neighboring countries to foster Asian values centered on peace, cooperation, inclusiveness and integration and promote the unity, development and revitalization of Asia. China advocates inclusiveness, coexistence, exchanges and mutual learning among different civilizations that pursue harmony without uniformity and live together in diversity, as well as the Asian Way of mutual respect and consensus building. China upholds Asia's tradition of solidarity and mutual assistance. We firmly support ASEAN centrality in the regional architecture, and constantly work with ASEAN countries and other neighboring countries to deepen converging interests and forge a strong bond among the peoples.

China will resolutely take forward the endeavor of national reunification, firmly oppose "Taiwan independence" separatist activities in any form, and firmly safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity. We appreciate Asian countries' commitment to the one-China principle. The more unequivocal we are on upholding the one-China principle and the more forceful our measures are to forestall separation, the greater possibility there is to ensure peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and uphold peace and prosperity in the region.

When China engages with the world, it all along values good faith and good neighborliness. China was, is, and will always be a good neighbor, good friend and good partner of regional countries, and will always be a major force underpinning peace, stability, development and prosperity.

A New Vision for the "Asian Century" in the New Era

In today's Asia, peace and stability reflect the overwhelming trend, and development and prosperity represent the aspiration of the people. China and regional countries share the same continent and the same ocean. Living and thriving here together, we share a common destiny and future. China will work with regional countries in solidarity to build a peaceful, secure, prosperous, beautiful, amicable and harmonious Asian home.

We need to jointly build a peaceful and secure home. The concept of peace, amity and harmony is Asian countries' remarkable contribution to human civilization. It is important to uphold peaceful coexistence, defend the red line of peace and stability, attach importance to the legitimate security

concerns of all countries, and jointly respond to threats that undermine peace. China hopes to work with neighboring countries to cultivate long-term good-neighborliness and friendship, expand common ground while shelving and resolving differences, address differences and disputes between countries peacefully, and jointly safeguard enduring peace in the region. No matter what stage of development it reaches, China will never seek hegemony or expansion. China will continue to work with ASEAN countries to fully and effectively implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and actively advance consultations and conclusion of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), and work with parties concerned in the South China Sea to properly address maritime disagreements and differences through dialogue. We need to strengthen maritime cooperation, deepen mutual trust and security, and promote joint development, in an effort to make the South China Sea a sea of peace, friendship and cooperation.

China will work with regional countries to manage regional security affairs with a coordinated approach. We need to enhance economic and financial security cooperation, deepen macro economic policy coordination, and bolster regional financial stability. It is important to advance cooperation in such fields as counterterrorism, deradicalization and fighting cross-border crimes, and enhance security cooperation on nuclear facilities, cyberspace, outer space and polar regions. We need to enhance the region's capacity in public health security governance, and strengthen cooperation in biosecurity, prevention and treatment of dangerous communicable diseases, medical supplies, and vaccine and pharmaceutical technologies. Cooperation on food and energy security needs to be enhanced to ensure the safety and stability of production and supply chains.

We need to jointly build a prosperous and beautiful home. China will continue to firmly pursue the strategy of openness, development and mutual benefit, raise the level of trade and investment facilitation and liberalization, deepen regional economic integration, and build a more open Asian big market. China will further expand trade with regional countries, increase imports from neighboring countries, and improve customs clearance facilitation. China will continue to promote the process of joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA). China stands ready to negotiate high-standard free trade agreements with more regional countries, improve the regional free trade network, and build a common big market. To promote high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, China will give priority to connectivity corridor projects of railways and highways with neighboring countries, and accelerate the development of the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor. We need to speed up development of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement 3.0, effectively implement RCEP and work for its expansion and upgrading in due course. It is important to maintain the stable and smooth operation of industrial and supply chains to underpin open and inclusive cooperation. We need to vigorously develop the digital economy, strengthen exchange and cooperation in artificial intelligence, bio-medicine, modern energy and other fields, and translate scientific and technological innovation achievements into greater benefits to the people of regional countries.

China stands ready to work with regional countries to pursue green development and green growth model, drive economic growth with innovation, transform and upgrade economic, energy and industrial structures, and strike a fine balance between emission reduction and economic growth, in a bid to build an Asian home enjoying the concerted progress of economic growth and environmental progress. It is important to uphold the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and strengthen climate cooperation. In the process of achieving carbon peaking and carbon neutrality, China stands ready to promote mutual learning and mutual benefit with neighboring countries, strengthen cooperation in green finance and green investment, and support low-carbon, sustainable development in the region. Efforts should be made to build a blue economic partnership and promote the sustainable development of the ocean.

We need to jointly build an amicable and harmonious home. We uphold mutual respect and equality in promoting exchanges, dialogue, inclusiveness and mutual learning among civilizations. It is important to extract nutrients from the millennia-long Asian civilization, to help forge the collective identity of the Asian value, way and tradition, expand people-to-people exchanges and cooperation in the region, and cement popular support for good-neighborliness. More measures need to be introduced to facilitate traveling. China will strengthen cooperation in vocational education, higher education and mutual recognition of educational certificates, provide more government scholarships and scholarships for various universities and majors for neighboring countries, and facilitate the traveling of international students. We will continue to promote exchanges in the fields of culture, arts, youth, tourism, localities, media, think tanks and nongovernmental organizations, and strengthen cooperation on Asia's cultural and sports industry.

China stands ready to work with neighboring countries to, relying on the four pillars of connectivity, development, security and people-to-people exchanges and focusing on the six cooperation areas of the political sector, economy and trade, science and technology, security, people-to-people exchanges and global challenges, work for a community with a shared future among neighboring countries that features shared concepts, plans, benefits, security and responsibilities. We need to jointly build a demonstration area of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, and deepen "physical connectivity" of infrastructure and

“institutional connectivity” of rules and standards. We will work together to build Global Development Initiative pilot zone featuring more equitable, balanced and inclusive development partnership, Global Security Initiative pilot zone featuring an Asian pathway of security defined by planning together, building together and benefiting together, and Global Civilization Initiative pilot zone that boosts people-to-people exchanges and the mutual learning, harmonious coexistence of civilizations.

China will take an active part in East Asia cooperation, China-Central Asia mechanism, SCO, BRICS, APEC, Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and other multilateral mechanisms and organizations, and strengthen dialogue and cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum, Indian Ocean Rim Association and other regional organizations, in a bid to jointly promote the connectivity, stability and development of Asia, Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean regions.

Conclusion

Asia is poised for promising prospects and revitalization. As President Xi Jinping pointed out, when Asia fares well, the whole world benefits. In this spirit, we need to work for sound progress and development in Asia, demonstrate Asia’s resilience, wisdom and strength, and make Asia an anchor for world peace, a powerhouse for global growth and a new pacesetter for international cooperation.

One Asia, one future. We are all in an era full of both challenges and hope. Unprecedented opportunities and challenges require countries to work together in unprecedented solidarity and coordination. Only when all countries pursue the cause of common good, live in harmony and engage in win-win cooperation, will there be sustained prosperity and guaranteed security.

China is now building a modern socialist country in all respects and striving to realize the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. In this process, China stands ready as always to support the efforts of people in the region to pursue a happy life, and work hand in hand with regional countries to realize the Asian dream of lasting peace and common development, and build a community with a shared future among neighboring countries.

Ecological Protection

Persistent Organic Pollutants Control in China

Source: Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China
May 2024

Preface

Persistent organic pollutants (hereinafter referred to as POPs) refer to those organic pollutants that are persistent and bio-accumulative, have the potential for long-range environmental transport and have adverse effects to human health or to the ecological environment. POPs pollution is a common challenge for all mankind, which is related to the construction of the community with a shared future for mankind and to the sustainable development of human civilization. The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (hereinafter referred to as the Convention) was adopted at a Conference of Plenipotentiaries on May 22, 2001 in Stockholm, Sweden and entered into force on May 17, 2004.

As one of the countries that formulated the instrument of the Convention and one of the first signatories, China attaches great importance to the control of POPs. China is committed to joining hands with the international community to address this challenge and protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of POPs. Approved by the 10th Session of the 10th Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the Convention has been in force for China since 11 November 2004. After twenty years of persistence and unremitting efforts, POPs control in China has achieved remarkable results. The quality of the ecological environment continues to improve, the level of green development continues to increase, and the ability to control POPs has been significantly strengthened, providing experience for the management of POPs and other new pollutants, and charting a path of POPs control in line with China's national conditions.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), China has taken the construction of ecological civilization as a fundamental plan for the sustainable development of the Chinese nation, and has carried out a series of pioneering work, with unprecedented determination, strength and effectiveness, which has led to historic, transformative and overall changes in the construction of ecological civilization from theory to practice. China has taken major steps toward building a beautiful China. The report of the 20th National Congress of the CPC deploys the development of new pollutant management as an important task to further promote the prevention and control of environmental pollution. The CPC Central Committee and the State Council have issued guidelines to comprehensively promote the development of a "Beautiful China", in which it is clearly stated the objective that by 2035, the environmental risks of new pollutants will be effectively controlled. This indicates that the control of POPs has been fully integrated into the blueprint for the construction of a beautiful China, and has gradually entered a new stage of major transformation from passive response to proactive action, from focusing on major problems to systematic governance, and from a participant to a leader in global environmental governance. POPs control has undergone profound changes in the height of understanding, depth of practice, and intensity of innovation.

In order to comprehensively introduce China's concepts, practices and effectiveness on POPs control, and share China's experience in this regard, Persistent Organic Pollutants Control in China (2004–2024) is hereby published.

I. Uphold the Idea of Man and Nature Living in Harmony

China has always responded to the people's new expectations for a better life, stood at the height of harmonious coexistence between man and nature in planning for development, taken the construction of a beautiful China as the goal, and taken the control of POPs as an important means in guaranteeing ecological and environmental safety and people's health, as well as in realizing high levels of protection and promoting high-quality development. China follows and adheres to the road of development which is ecology-prioritized, green and low-carbon, promoting POPs control to continue to achieve new results, making its contributions to global efforts in tackling POPs pollution challenges.

Adhere to the People-Centered Approach

The control of POPs is an urgent need to effectively safeguard people's health and an important prerequisite for providing people with a higher quality, more sustainable and safer development.

It concerns the sustainable development of the Chinese nation and the fundamental interests of the broadest possible number of people. China has applied a people-centered development philosophy, given strategic priority to ensuring the people's health, focused on the new situation, new tasks and new requirements for the construction of a beautiful China, placed emphasis on serious environmental problems that pose health hazards to the people, and taken firm steps toward building a healthy China. China has coordinated the control of POPs and the management of other new pollutants, continued to promote the improvement of ecological environment quality from quantitative to qualitative change, and continuously met the people's expectations for a beautiful ecological environment, let the people use safe products, eat healthy foods and live comfortably, and constantly enhanced the people's sense of fulfillment, happiness and security, leaving a beautiful homeland with blue sky, green earth and clear water for future generations.

Adhere to Overall Coordination and Take a Systematic Approach for Governance

The control of POPs involves many industry sectors and is a long-term, complex and arduous systematic project. China has applied system thinking, taken an integrated approach, followed the laws of science, and seized the main contradiction and the main aspect of the contradiction in POPs control. Taking prevention and control of environmental and health risks as the core, China has intensified the whole-process regulation of POPs control and the prevention and control of environmental risks in the whole life cycle, and strengthened the synergy of targets, policies, sectors and regions between POPs control and the management of other new pollutants. The relationship between focusing on tough problems and coordinated governance has been integrated, and the realization of a high standard, high quality and high level of governance has been promoted.

Adhere to Promoting High-Quality Development with High-Level Conservation

China adheres to prioritizing ecology and green development, focuses on the research, development and application of green substitution and whole-process pollution control technologies for POPs, coordinates industrial structural adjustment, leads green production and manufacturing, promotes industrial transformation and upgrading, advances the prevention and control of environmental risks of POPs, saves and intensifies the utilization of resources, disseminates and applies green technologies, and pushes forward the formation of a green production and lifestyle. During the process of POPs control, China continues to shape the development of new momentum, new advantages, accelerate the formation of new quality productive forces, promote high-quality development and create a high quality of life with a high level of protection, achieving the unity of ecological, economic, and social benefits.

Adhere to Jointly Building a Clean and Beautiful World

Building a beautiful homeland is the shared aspiration of mankind. Facing global ecological challenges such as POPs pollution, all countries are in a community with destinies linked, and no country can stay immune. Given the characteristics of POPs, which have the potential for long-range environmental transport and which can spread globally, only through the unity, cooperation and joint efforts of all countries in the world can we guard the only home on which all mankind depends from the pollution and threat of POPs. For POPs control, we must uphold the concept of a human community with a shared future, jointly build a shared future for all life on Earth and a clean and beautiful world, and realize harmonious coexistence between humans and nature.

II. Improve the Effectiveness of POPs Control in China

China has resolutely declared war against POPs pollution, anchored itself in the goal of protecting human health and the environment from the harms of POPs, coordinated high-level protection and high-quality development, implemented precise measures, improved POPs control system, promoted green substitution at source, strengthened synergistic reduction of emissions in the process, deepened the management and disposal of wastes, and vigorously pushed forward the action of POPs control, thus effectively reducing the environmental emissions of POPs and continuously improving the level of environmental health. China has achieved remarkable results in POPs control.

Improve POPs Control System

Implement national strategic actions on POPs control. China attaches great importance to the control of POPs. In accordance with the process of the entry into force of the Convention and its amendment on listing new POPs, China has formulated a national implementation plan and its enlarged editions, developed a national systematic plan on POPs control in the aspects of the elimination of pesticides POPs and industrial POPs, reduction of dioxin emissions, the removal and disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and environmentally sound management of wastes and contaminated sites. It has also identified the time schedule, roadmap and working plan in stages and by region, industry and area, strengthened top-level design and guidance, pushed forward POPs control actions in all sectors, industries and regions in a lawful, targeted, and science-based way, and vigorously advanced the implementation of tasks at all stages. China has incorporated POPs control in major national strategic plans. The 12th Five-year Plan for POPs Pollution Prevention and Control was formulated to deploy POPs control actions in major industries. The 13th Five-year Plan for National Ecological Environmental Protection proposed the objective of eliminating a batch of POPs. The Outline of the 14th Five-year

Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 clearly requested to attach importance of the governance on new pollutants including POPs. In 2022, China issued an action plan on controlling new pollutants, making comprehensive and systematic deployment on the management of new pollutants including POPs.

Establish mechanisms for advancing POPs control. POPs control involves various industry sectors and covers a wide range of work. In order to strengthen coordination and form synergies, the National Coordination Group for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention (hereinafter referred to as the Coordination Group) was established in 2005, comprising the former State Environmental Protection Administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Development and Reform Commission and other ministries and commissions. With the institutional reform and the progress of POPs control efforts, the Coordination Group has been enriched in a timely manner to compose 15 relevant ministries and commissions, which have worked together to formulate the National Implementation Plan, jointly issued policy documents on Convention implementation, cooperated in joint law enforcement actions, and comprehensively pushed forward the implementation of the various work on Convention implementation. The Expert Committee for the Coordination Group was set up to provide comprehensive decision-making advice and technical support for POPs control. Local mechanisms for advancing POPs control at the provincial level were established to formulate provincial implementation plans, incorporate POPs control tasks into relevant policies, plans and actions of various sectors and fields at all levels of departments within the province, and coordinate and promote POPs control within the province. Therefore, a mechanism for advancing POPs control has been formed, with the central government responsible for coordination, provinces for the overall responsibility, cities and counties for the implementation. Within this mechanism, each department has its own responsibility, and all parties are involved in an orderly and articulated manner.

Strengthen the rule of law on POPs control. Over the past 20 years, China has issued or revised multiple related laws and regulations, including the laws on pollution prevention and control of water, air, soil, and solid wastes, on the protection of marine, the Yangtze River and the Yellow River, on cleaner production, product quality, foreign trade, management of pesticides, and pollutants discharge permit. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress ratified the Convention and its amendments, providing a solid legal guarantee for crucial actions including advancing POPs pollution prevention and control, cleaner production, banning and restricting from the source, and management and control of the import and export of POPs. China has included actions of severe pollution of the environment such as illegal discharge, dumping and disposal of toxic substances containing POPs in the scope of criminal offenses, and unswervingly intensified its efforts against illegal acts involving POPs control.

Improve policy and standard system. China has improved economic policies for green and low-carbon development, incorporated POPs into the environmental labeling product certification system and the comprehensive catalogue for environmental protection, supported enterprises to create more competitive "POPs-free" green products, and encouraged the research and development of alternatives and alternative technologies by abolishing export tax rebates and other measures; included POPs in the list of taxable pollutants and required enterprises that directly discharge POPs into the environment to pay environmental protection taxes. Focusing on POPs production, processing and use, consumption and disposal, China has formulated and revised over 200 national and industrial standards for product quality, pollutant emission, environmental quality, food residue and drinking water hygiene related to POPs control, covering a wide range of fields such as prohibition, use, and restriction, pollutant emission control and prevention of environmental health risks, taking first steps in constructing the policy and standard system in POPs control in China.

Stick to the precautionary approach in POPs control. Based on the precautionary approach in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, China sticks to the precautionary principle set in the Convention, and has established a registration system for the environmental management of new chemical substances and a registration and management system for pesticides, including new chemical substances and pesticides with the characteristics of POPs in the negative list for market access, carrying out rigorous review and approval, and exercising control over their production, importation and processing and use, in order to vigorously prevent the entry of potential POPs into the production, people's life and ecological environment. For pesticides POPs, China has prohibited the registration of 58 pesticides with high toxicity and risk.

Advance Green Substitution from the Source

Systematically construct access system at the source. China has issued five batches of policy announcements successively, clarifying POPs control requirements; strengthened the convergence with industrial policies, specified the prohibition and restriction requirements for backward processes and equipment and backward products involving POPs in the guidance catalogue for industrial restructuring; set strict environmental access to construction projects, and disapproved, in accordance with the law, the environmental impact assessment of construction projects involving the prohibited or restricted POPs; implemented precise environmental management of import and export and continuously published lists of POPs that are banned or strictly restricted from import and export. China has established a long-term mechanism to consolidate the results of POPs elimination and

substitution through the coordinated formulation of a series of environmental risk control measures, such as banning new projects, prohibiting production and use, restricting the use of applications, and strictly controlling the import and export.

Push forward the green substitution of POPs pesticides in a precise way. POPs pesticides such as endosulfan, chlordane, mirex, DDT and dicofol have been widely used in pest control in the field of agricultural production. China has developed and implemented a number of demonstration projects for the elimination and substitution of POPs pesticides in a project-oriented manner, used “one policy for one chemical” approach, systematically planned substitution plans, accurately screened and demonstrated alternative technologies, vigorously promoted the demonstration and application of green alternative technologies, compiled guidance manuals on green alternative technologies for integrated pest control and organized professional technical training for practitioners. In view of the fact that the users of POPs pesticides are mainly scattered farmers, farmers’ field schools have been set up to guide users in the scientific use of alternative technologies according to the characteristics of plant diseases and insect pests. It has also innovatively provided certification for environmental labeling product for green alternatives to incentivize the production and use of environmentally friendly alternatives; promoted the production and use of environmentally friendly anti-fouling paints for ships, for example, promoting pops-free environmentally friendly anti-fouling paints on hundreds of thousands of marine vessels nationwide, to protect the health of fishermen and the marine ecosystem. Through nationwide large-scale demonstration of alternatives, a number of green alternatives and alternative technologies such as pheromone trapping technology, insecticide lamps, and predatory mites have been widely applied, and the registration of more than a dozen POPs pesticides such as dicofol has been progressively withdrawn, and their sale and use have been banned. All POPs pesticides under the control of the Convention are fully phased out by 100%, with a win-win situation for green substitution and agricultural production in terms of quality and efficiency.

Phase Out POPs for Agricultural Use and Promote Green Agricultural Production Mode

Endosulfan can be widely used in pest control in tobacco, cotton, coffee fruit, wheat, corn, peanuts, peppers, potatoes and other crops. Dicofol is mainly used for mite control in citrus, apple and cotton. Through the implementation of integrated biological control and demonstration of alternative technologies, China has screened out a total of 19 integrated biological alternative technologies, 18 environmentally friendly pharmaceutical alternative varieties, such as releasing predatory mites, setting up natural enemy trapping bands, hanging yellow sticky traps and installing insecticidal lamps, and has carried out public outreach and guidance on alternative technologies in various forms, such as through opening field schools for farmers, broadcasting to villagers, mobile loudspeakers and easy-to-read brochures. The alternative technology has covered over 2.7 million hectares of cotton, 2.6 million hectares of citrus and 2 million hectares of apples, completely phasing out the production and use of endosulfan and dicofol, avoiding the production of nearly 700 tonnes of endosulfan and 2,800 tonnes of dicofol per year, promoting the green prevention and control of pests and diseases in related crops, and assisting in the formation of a green agricultural production mode.

Advance the safe substitution of POPs for industrial use throughout the chain. Industrial POPs such as perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and its salts, and hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD) involve a long industry chain and a wide range of industry sectors, and the task of elimination and substitution is arduous. China has developed and implemented projects to phase out and substitute a series of industrial POPs, conducted in-depth surveys on the production and use of the whole industrial chain in many sectors such as chemical engineering, fire-fighting, electronics, construction, textile, electroplating, and machinery, mapped out the situation of alternative technologies upstream and downstream of the industrial chain of each kind of POPs one by one. It has taken multiple measures to strengthen the policy guidance and clarify the requirements for elimination, promoted the adoption of green design by industrial enterprises, optimized the layout of the supply chain, stimulated the endogenous motivation of enterprises, carried out research and development and demonstration of alternative technologies, and promoted the safe substitution of industrial POPs under the control of the Convention in the whole chain in an integrated manner. Meanwhile, China has strengthened supervision and law enforcement, tightened external constraints, and gradually replaced the addition of these POPs in a wide range of products such as electrical and electronic products, building insulation materials, textile materials, medical devices, waterproof coatings, automobile interiors, fire-fighting extinguishing agents, as well as the application in production processes such as electroplating and plastics manufacturing. All industrial POPs, which have entered into force for China, have been eliminated by 100%, thus promoting the green and high-quality development of related industrial chains and supply chains.

Remarkable effects in green substitution at source. Over the past two decades, China’s actions have completely phased out the production, use, import and export of 29 kinds of POPs, reducing the production and environmental emissions of hundreds of thousands of tonnes of POPs each year and effectively eliminating the health risks of POPs in related agricultural and consumer products.

29 POPs China Has Fully Eliminated

POPs	Uses
Aldrin, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, toxaphene, chlordane, mirex, chlordecone, dicofol, technical endosulfan and its related isomers	● Pesticide, once used for pest control of fruits, vegetables, rice, coffee fruits, cotton, peanuts and tobacco.
Lindane, alpha-hexachlorocyclohexane, beta-hexachlorocyclohexane	● Pesticide, once used for pest control of fruit trees and vegetables. ● Lindane was once used for human health pharmaceutical for control of head lice and scabies.
DDT	● Pesticide, once used for pest control of fruit trees and vegetables. ● Once used for disease vector control to reduce malaria transmission. ● Chemical raw material, once used in the production of dicofol.
Pentachlorobenzene, hexachlorobenzene, pentachlorophenol and its salts and esters, hexachlorobutadiene	● Fungicide, once used for wood and plant preservation. ● Chemical raw material, once used in the production of other chemicals.
Polychlorinated biphenyls, polychlorinated naphthalenes	● Insulating oil, once used for power capacitors, and transformers.
Hexabromobiphenyl, tetrabromodiphenyl ether and pentabromodiphenyl ether, decabromodiphenyl ether present in commercial decabromodiphenyl ether, hexabromocyclododecane, Dechlorane Plus and its syn-isomer and its anti-isomer	● Flame retardant, once added to plastics and textiles, and widely used in electrical and electronic products, wires and cables, exterior insulation building materials, furniture, sofas and automobile interiors.
Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS like) and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride, perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS), its salts and PFHxS-related compounds (PFHxS like)	● Surfactants and industrial additives, once used in electrics and semiconductor production, fire-fighting foams, metal plating, textiles, leather and apparel, and pesticides.
Short-chain chlorinated paraffins	● Plasticizer or flame retardant, once used in caulking, waterproofing paints, school bags, plastic runways, automobile interiors, soft door curtains, floor mats, rubber conveyor belts, and metalworking fluids.

Strengthen Synergetic Reduction of Emissions in the Process

Improve management system on dioxin pollution. China has developed emission limits for dioxin-like POPs in key industries such as steelmaking, iron and steel sintering, secondary non-ferrous metals, pulp and paper, petrochemicals, hazardous waste incineration, and household waste incineration and incorporated them into the management of pollutants discharge permit, strictly controlling the environmental emissions of POPs; issued technical policies to strengthen the prevention and control of dioxin pollution and guided enterprises on the application of best available techniques and best environmental practices for the control of dioxin pollution; paid close attention to the phase-out of outdated production processes and equipment involving POPs to promote industrial restructuring; eliminated backward production processes and equipment involving POPs emissions that do not meet the requirements of the national ecological and environmental access list, the national mandatory standards for ecological and environmental protection, and the requirements of international environmental conventions; implemented cleaner production audits and mandatory cleaner production audits for enterprises emitting POPs to enhance the level of cleaner production in the industry.

POPs Discharge Standards in Major Industrial Sectors

No.	Pollutants discharge standards	POPs
1	Discharge standard of water pollutants for pulp and paper industry (GB 3544-2008)	Dioxins
2	Emission standard of air pollutants for sintering and pelletizing of iron and steel industry (GB 28662-2012)	Dioxins
3	Emission standard of air pollutants for steel smelt industry (GB 28664-2012)	Dioxins (electric furnace)
4	Standard for pollution control on co-processing of solid wastes in cement kiln (GB 30485-2013)	Dioxins
5	Standard for pollution control the municipal solid waste incineration (GB 18485-2014 to replace (GB 18485-2001)	Dioxins

Continued Table

No.	Pollutants discharge standards	POPs
6	Emission standard of pollutants for petroleum chemistry industry (GB 31571-2015)	Dioxins, hexachlorobutadiene, polychlorinated biphenyls
7	Emission standards of pollutants for secondary copper, aluminum, lead and zinc industry (GB 31574-2015)	Dioxins
8	Emission standard of pollutants for synthetic resin industry (GB 31572-2015)	Dioxins
9	Emission standard of air pollutants for crematory (GB 13801-2015)	Dioxins
10	Emission standard of pollutants for caustic alkali and polyvinyl chloride industry (GB 15581-2016)	Dioxins
11	Standard for pollution control on Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)-contaminated wastes (GB 13015-2017 to replace GB 13015-91)	Dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls
12	Emission standard of air pollutants for paint, ink and adhesive industry (GB 37824-2019)	Dioxins
13	Emission standard of air pollutants for pharmaceutical industry (GB 37823-2019)	Dioxins
14	Standard for pollution control on hazardous waste incineration (GB 18484-2020 to replace GB 18484-2001)	Dioxins
15	Emission standard of air pollutants for pesticide industry (GB 39727-2020)	Dioxins
16	Standard for pollution control on medical waste treatment and disposal (GB 39707-2020)	Dioxins

Implement projects on the management of dioxin pollution. China has carried out a series of dioxin-like reduction projects in key sectors such as iron and steel smelting, secondary non-ferrous metal smelting, medical waste disposal, household waste disposal and pulp and paper production, followed the principle of whole-process control, and strengthened the research and development and application of treatment facilities. The relevant industries are promoted to use alternative technologies to avoid the generation of dioxins, implement pre-treatment technologies such as raw material sorting, apply advanced, complete and reliable automatic control systems to maintain continuous and stable operation of the system, adopt pollution control technologies such as catalytic oxidation technology and optimized dust removal process to achieve stable compliance with the standards and reduce the emission of dioxins.

Advance synergistic emission reduction of air pollutants in dioxin-related industries. China continues to carry out synergistic management of coal-fired power plants, iron and steel industries, focusing on eliminating outdated processes and equipment, steadily advancing ultra-low emission transformation, encouraging the implementation of flue gas treatment technologies such as flue gas recirculation, high-efficiency desulfurization and denitrification, and advanced dust removal facilities, and promoting synergistic emission reduction of dioxins. By the end of 2023, China had completed the ultra-low emission transformation of 1.07 billion kilowatts of coal-fired power units, and completed the ultra-low emission transformation of the entire process of 430 million tonnes of crude steel production capacity, significantly reducing the emissions of major air pollutants, further lowering the environmental emissions of dioxins, and continuing to improve ambient air quality.

Achieve remarkable effects on dioxin-like emission reduction. Compared with 2004, the intensity of flue gas dioxin emissions from key industries has decreased significantly, and the total amount of dioxins emitted to the atmosphere has been on a downward trend after reaching its peak, in the face of a significant increase in the production or disposal volume of the relevant industries. Among them, the intensity of flue gas dioxin emissions from the household waste incineration and treatment industry has decreased by about 97%, and atmospheric dioxin emissions have been reduced. The intensity of dioxin emissions from the flue gas of the iron ore sintering process in the iron and steel industry has been reduced by about 70%, with an overall reduction in atmospheric dioxin emissions by about 20%.

Deepen the Management and Disposal of Wastes

Fully push forward the inspection and disposal of POPs wastes. In the national catalogue of hazardous wastes and the method standard for identification of hazardous wastes, the categories and identification methods of POPs wastes under control of the Convention have been clearly stated. Strategies on the identification of POPs wastes have been formulated, with focus on the areas of production, circulation, and use of POPs including DDT, hexachlorobenzene, chlordane, mirex, heptachlor, toxaphene, endosulfan, HBCD to have a full inspection on the conditions in these industries involving POPs. China has also intensified its efforts on POPs waste disposal, taken the holistic approach with regard to the relevant international rules and domestic standards, guidance and requirements, completed the cleaning and disposal of over 100,000 tonnes of legacy POPs wastes from over 100 storage sites, thus realizing the environmentally sound management and disposal of identified POPs by 100% and

eliminating environmental risks and hazards.

Achieve the Convention's targets on PCBs ahead of schedule. China has gradually phased out the production and use of PCBs-containing power equipment since the 1970s, and some of the PCBs-containing power equipment that is still in use online and has been removed for storage poses a relatively great risk to the surrounding ecological environment and human health. Since 2004, China has increased its efforts to investigate and dispose of PCBs-containing electrical equipment, carried out carpet mapping to identify situations on online use and removal to storage, formulated standards for PCBs-containing pollution control, constructed a center for environmentally sound treatment and disposal of PCBs wastes, upgraded disposal capacity, and promoted the removal and centralized disposal of PCBs-containing electrical equipment. In 2015, 100% use of PCBs-containing electrical equipment was removed, and in 2021, 100% of PCBs-containing waste power equipment was disposed of in an environmentally sound manner, thus achieving the Convention's targets for 2025 and 2028 ahead of schedule.

Effectively manage the environmental risks of contaminated sites involving POPs. China has developed strategies for identifying sites contaminated with POPs; incorporated POPs such as hexachlorocyclohexane and DDT into the soil pollution risk control standards for agricultural and construction land, and clarified soil pollution risk screening and control requirements; carried out soil pollution risk identification, investigation, assessment, control and remediation, and incorporated POPs with high concern into the soil pollution risk control and remediation framework to ensure the safe use of construction land. China has achieved 100% of environmentally sound management of contaminated sites with identified high-risk POPs pesticides.

Improve Environmental Health

A downward trend in the atmosphere environment and in food. After 20 years of unremitting efforts to control POPs, the concentrations of organochlorine pesticides, dioxins, PCBs and other POPs in China's atmosphere environment have shown a downward trend and are now at a relatively low level globally. The content levels of organochlorine POPs in biological samples are generally decreasing. The average dietary intake of dioxins in the general population is lower than the World Health Organization's health guideline value and is on a decreasing trend, and the health risk of dietary intake of dioxins is low.

Push forward the green transformation and upgrade of the relevant industries. China has incorporated POPs elimination and substitution and emission control requirements into the green manufacturing standard system, which continues to guide and force the industries to protect the ecological environment and optimize their green transformation; issued guidance for the construction of green manufacturing standard system, general rules for green product evaluation, general rules for green factory evaluation, general rules for green industrial park evaluation, and has developed more than 5,000 green factories, constructed more than 300 green industrial parks, over 600 green supply chain management enterprises, and more than 400 demonstration enterprises for green design of industrial products. Thus, pushing the relevant industrial sectors to develop in the direction of greening, decarbonization, and recycling. The green transformation and upgrading of industrial structure has achieved obvious results.

Guide the Structural Adjustment of the Pulp and Paper Industry and Realize the Industry's Green Development

The chlorine bleaching process of pulp and paper produces dioxins, which may be discharged to the environment through water bodies, products and residues, and the pulp and paper industry is listed as one of the key industries for the prevention and control of dioxin pollution. In 2015, the State Council issued the Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Water Pollution, which requires that by the end of 2017, the paper industry strives to complete the transformation to achieve elemental chlorine free bleaching or adopt other low-pollution pulping technologies. In 2019, the Guidance Catalogue for Industrial Structure Adjustment lists the elemental chlorine bleaching pulping process as a phase-out category and implements a complete elimination. Through a series of technology demonstration and application dissemination, the pulp and paper industry has been comprehensively transformed and upgraded, eliminating the elemental chlorine bleaching pulping process that produces dioxin emissions, and promoting the green and sustainable development of the industry.

III. Improve China's Capability in POPs Control

To realize the goal of controlling POPs, it is necessary to coordinate resources in all fields, gather strength from all sides in a holistic approach. China continues to intensify law enforcement and supervision, strengthen its scientific and technological support capacity, focus on diversified publicity and guidance, and promote a green lifestyle, so as to continuously improve its ability to control POPs.

Intensify Law Enforcement and Supervision

China has incorporated law enforcement into the list of administrative enforcement matters in accordance with responsibilities of the relevant departments, carried out regulation on key enterprises in the mode that randomly selected law enforcement inspectors are requested to carry out inspection on randomly selected objects in the regulatory process, and the situation of random inspection and investigation results are published in a timely manner to the public, so that an information sharing

and notification mechanism has been established and daily supervision and law enforcement has been strengthened. For the production and use of POPs, law enforcement manuals for on-site inspections of enterprises are formulated combining the production characteristics of the industry, and systematical on-site inspections are carried out. For the import and export of POPs, the categorization of import and export goods of POPs is refined, the supervision of prohibited and restricted POPs at ports is effectively strengthened, intelligence collection is intensified, assessment of the illegal situation is timely carried out, and a high-pressure situation in combating the smuggling of POPs is maintained. In the area of environmental emissions, law enforcement and monitoring of dioxin-emitting sectors such as waste incineration and secondary non-ferrous metal smelting are strengthened, and industrial enterprises are urged to comply with emission standards. Law enforcement methods have been innovated, by installing automatic monitoring equipment, setting up electronic screens at facility entrances to release data, and networking with ecological and environmental departments, thus promoting monitoring information disclosure and strengthening monitoring data connectivity.

Strengthen Scientific and Technological Support Capacity

Based on science and technology support programs such as National High-tech R&D Program (the 863 Program), National Basic Research Program (the 973 Program), National Key Research and Development Program of China and National Natural Science Foundation, China has carried out basic research on POPs, technology development and industrialization and application of the technology, and the relevant research results have won awards such as the State Natural Science Award, the State Science and Technology Progress Award, the State Technology Invention Award. China has implemented a series of demonstration projects and demonstrated and promoted more than 240 advanced alternative technologies. It has utilized the advantages of universities and research institutes, promoted the integration of science and education, and continuously strengthened the construction of discipline system and talent team. The POPs Committee of the Chinese Society for Environmental Sciences has been established to build a high-level exchange platform on POPs for the government, industry, academia and research, and a POPs Forum is held annually on the day of the global entry into force of the Convention, which has been successfully held for 17 sessions, with nearly 10,000 participants exchanging views on academic research, Convention implementation management and industrial progress on POPs.

Focus on Diversified Publicity and Guidance

China has continued to strengthen public outreach and education on POPs control, initially forming a new pattern of government guidance, positive response from industry and enterprises, and extensive public participation. On the official website of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, a column on China's efforts on Convention implementation has been set to provide the public with information on POPs. A series of activities were organized during the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the World Environment Day, the date of entry into force of the Convention and other important time nodes to innovate the mode of publicity. China's efforts on POPs control and its effectiveness were displayed to the public through TV programs such as Focus Today and Focus Report. Through the opening of the WeChat public account, the release of the POPs song, the production of a mobile game on POPs control, the publication of popular science books, the holding of exhibitions on the results of the implementation of the Convention, the launching of a POPs knowledge contest, as well as the organization of online classes, field schools for farmers, and on-site exchanges with enterprises, the public outreach and education targeting the government administrators, practitioners in industry and enterprises, farmers, women, and children, among other groups, efforts are widely carried out to create a good atmosphere.

Promote a Green Lifestyle

China has promoted the classification of household waste, realized that the coverage rate of household waste classification in residential areas of cities at the prefecture level and above has reached 90.2%, raised the proportion of household waste reused, and effectively reduced the dioxins produced in the process of waste incineration at the source; established green product standards, carried out green product certification, guided consumers to choose green products such as POPs-free food contact materials, outdoor sports apparel, and natural-color paper, forced the industrial chain to reduce the production and use of POPs, and promoted the development of green materials; promoted green alternative technologies for building for termite prevention and control, taking monitoring and control technologies as the core, innovated green alternative technologies for integrated termite treatment, phased out POPs such as chlordane and mirex, avoided environmental exposure to POPs of residents in residential communities, and promoted the formation of a green lifestyle.

Phase-Out of POPs Agents for Termite Control for a Healthy and Safe Human Settlement Environment

Chlordane and mirex, as highly effective and inexpensive termite control agents, were once mainly used for termite control in housing construction. China actively researches and develops green alternative technologies for integrated treatment of termite with monitoring and control technology as the core and biological control technology, physical control technology and drug barrier technology as auxiliary means, and has promoted the formation of a market of alternatives that are diversified, widely applicable, safe and environmentally friendly, which involves more than 90 products from over

40 manufacturers of termite preventive and control agent in China and has reduced the use of chemical agents by more than 99%, realizing green transformation and upgrading of termite prevention and control technology. At the same time, efforts have been made to promote termite prevention and control in traditional villages, historical and cultural cities, towns, villages, cultural relic protection sites, and educational bases of CPC. The installation and application of 690,000 sets of underground-type bait systems, 150,000 sets of above-ground-type bait systems, and 40,000 sets of monitoring and control devices have been implemented, with remarkable results, adding a green undertone to the protection of ancient buildings.

IV. Demonstrate China's Approach on POPs Control to the World

In the face of the global challenge of POPs pollution, China adheres to the concept of a human community with a shared future, firmly practices multilateralism, promotes the construction of an equitable, balanced and win-win global environmental management system for chemicals, actively participates in the control of POPs globally, pragmatically carries out international exchanges and cooperation, and displays its commitment as a major country, thus contributing to the enhancement of global POPs control.

Take Active Part in Global POPs Control

Implement the obligations of the Convention. China attaches great importance to Convention implementation and has taken a series of actions and measures to effectively reduce or eliminate environmental emissions of POPs and to protect human health and the environment from the hazards of POPs. Meanwhile, China has made continuous efforts in carrying out statistical surveys as well as effectiveness evaluation and monitoring on Convention implementation, formulated and transmitted every national report, national implementation plan, and effectiveness evaluation report with high quality. Since 2019, China has been the Party which provides the largest amount of contributions to the core budget of the Convention, giving strong backing to the operation and implementation of the Convention. China has made continuous contributions to the Global Environment Facility and has always been the largest developing country contributor, supporting global POPs control in a strong way.

Participate in rulemaking. China has successively participated in the intergovernmental negotiations and meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies, has been deeply involved in the formulation of international rules, and has constructively promoted the reaching of a number of important consensuses such as the compliance mechanism. China has actively sent representatives to participate in a number of specialized bodies or working groups under the Convention, such as on the POPs review, monitoring, effectiveness evaluation, waste guidelines, best available techniques and best environmental practices, and has taken the lead in or participated in the completion of the preparation of more than 30 technical documents, thus providing China's experience and wisdom for the promotion of global implementation of the Convention.

Promote synergy. POPs pollution has a close linkage with other global environmental issues in the chemicals and waste cluster. China supports and promotes synergy among conventions including the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, so as to play an important role in improving the global management system on chemicals and waste.

Conduct Pragmatic International Exchanges and Cooperation

China has built an international exchange and cooperation platform with POPs control as a driver, promoted global scientific and technological cooperation, South-South cooperation, as well as the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative. China has provided support for the control of POPs in more than 20 countries, including Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Iran, and organized over 100 training courses related to the Belt and Road Initiative, South-South cooperation and other regional meetings and special training, with the participation of more than 5,000 government officials or scholars from 60 countries and nearly 10,000 person-times of training. China has organized several side events on POPs actions in China on the margins of the Conference of the Parties to share technical achievements and experience in POPs control. It has also supported the Secretariat in establishing the Stockholm Convention Regional Centre for Capacity-building and the Transfer of Technology in the Asia-Pacific Region, carried out extensive technical exchanges on POPs control and shared experience. China has contributed positively to the global control of POPs and has been widely praised by the international community.

China's Efforts on POPs Control Are Widely Praised by the International Community

Mr. Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm Convention praised, "China has played and continues to play a key role in the success of the Stockholm Convention in achieving the global sound management of chemicals". "China has identified, removed and disposed of, all the PCB-containing power equipment online or temporarily stored above-ground nationwide and thus meeting ahead of time the 2025 and 2028 goals under the Stockholm Convention. This is indeed a remarkable

achievement". Ms. Beate Trankmann, United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative in China, reckons China's efforts for the implementation of the Convention have made critical contributions to environmental protection, and helped to drive forward and accelerate China's green transformation. And "it is encouraging to see how China has become a knowledge hub for exchanging POPs-related technologies, policies, and practices with other countries". Mr. Giovanni Ruta, lead environmental economist of the World Bank, stressed the fundamental role China plays in the Stockholm Convention. He said "China's strong commitment and active participation has proved to be key to its success. In many aspects, China has been a front-runner among peers, and has trailed well ahead in developing and implementing projects to pilot and demonstrate implementation of the convention in key sectors". He believes the publication of the Action Plan for Controlling Emerging Pollutants by the State Council in May 2022 will call for elevated efforts, more systematic approach, and greater inter-agency collaboration toward emerging pollutants control including the control of POPs.

Concluding Remarks

The Earth is the only home on which human beings depend for survival. In the face of the global challenge of POPs pollution, all mankind is a community with a shared future, and it is the common responsibility of all countries in the world to maintain ecological and environmental safety and human health.

At present, China has embarked on a new journey to comprehensively promote the construction of a strong nation and national rejuvenation through a Chinese path to modernization, and the construction of a beautiful China is an important goal in the comprehensive construction of a modern socialist country. On this new journey, taking the management of new pollutants as a means, China will effectively manage the environmental risks of POPs and other new pollutants, fulfil its international commitment to POPs control, unswervingly push forward the construction of an ecological civilization, realize a beautiful and healthy ecological environment, make greater efforts and contributions to the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, and push for the realization of a stronger, greener and healthier global development.

China is willing to work with all countries in the world to build the foundation of ecological civilization, follow the same path of green development, seek the way of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, jointly build a clean and beautiful world, and join hands to create a POPs-free future.

Marine Eco-Environmental Protection in China

Source: State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
July 2021

Preface

The ocean covers about 71 percent of the earth's surface. It is the cradle of life and the source of human civilization. The marine eco-environment is essential to the ecological balance of the planet, to the rational use of resources, to sustained development of human civilization, and to the present and future development of the maritime community with a shared future. Its protection is important for national eco-environmental security, sustainable maritime development, and the harmonious coexistence between humans and the ocean. It is the responsibility of all countries to protect and improve the marine environment and to conserve and use marine resources in a sustainable way.

China is a firm advocate for and an active participant in protecting the marine eco-environment, which is vital to its initiatives to build a beautiful China and a strong maritime country. Over the years, China has given priority to eco-environmental conservation and pursued systematic governance. It has coordinated development and protection efforts, and supported high-quality development with high-level protection, striving to build a marine eco-environment of harmonious coexistence between humans and the ocean.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2012, President Xi Jinping has made a series of important statements and observations on marine eco-environmental protection, highlighting the need to "care for the ocean as dearly as we treasure our lives". Under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Eco-Civilization, in order to complete new tasks and meet new requirements for marine eco-environmental protection in this new era, China has launched a series of campaigns of fundamental, pioneering, and long-term significance and has made historic transformations and progress of overarching importance.

Thanks to hard work over the years, China's marine eco-environment has shown overall improvement, with marked increase in the capacity of ecosystem services and functions in certain sea areas. Marine resources have been exploited and utilized in an orderly manner, and the system for governing the marine eco-environment has been refined. People can safely enjoy the sea, with a greater sense of satisfaction and happiness. These achievements are a testament to the country's commitment to marine eco-environmental protection.

China has demonstrated its commitment as a responsible major country by actively promoting international cooperation in protecting the marine environment, faithfully fulfilling its responsibilities and obligations under international conventions, and contributing Chinese solutions and strength to the global governance of the marine environment.

The Chinese government is publishing this white paper to present a full picture of China's ideas, actions, and achievements in marine eco-environmental protection to the international community to facilitate understanding of China's conservation efforts and advance international cooperation in this regard.

I. Improving Marine Eco-Environment for Harmonious Coexistence Between Humans and the Ocean

The ocean is crucial to the survival and development of a people and the security and prosperity of a nation. The protection of the marine eco-environment has a vital bearing on achieving harmony between humanity and nature in the modernization drive.

The Chinese government applies the new development philosophy in all fields, and attaches great importance to marine eco-environmental protection. Factoring in the basic reality and development stage of the country, China has gained a deeper understanding of marine eco-environmental protection, making ongoing efforts to improve the system for this purpose and accelerating the building of a marine eco-civilization.

After the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the country began to develop its marine areas. With this development, a number of environmental problems began to emerge. China placed emphasis on them and paid greater attention to protecting the marine eco-environment. In 1964, the State Oceanic Administration was set up, and before long a mechanism for managing China's marine eco-environment was steadily established. The Marine Environment Protection Law was promulgated in 1982, creating a legal framework for the country's marine protection, and a revision of this law in 1999 led to the addition of eco-environmental conservation in priorities alongside pollution control.

As part of its effort to implement the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Chinese government formulated the China Ocean Agenda 21 to make marine eco-environmental protection more systemic and targeted. In 2023, the Marine Environment Protection Law was revised again, representing a systemic transformation to coordinated land-sea management and overall governance of the marine environment.

To synergize land and sea pollution control and strengthen overall eco-environmental protection, China has incorporated marine protection into the national system of eco-environmental protection. It has gradually strengthened overall planning and coordination between land and sea environmental protection efforts and, on that basis, established an effective system for governing the marine eco-environment. By strengthening marine pollution prevention and control, conserving and restoring marine ecosystems, and launching intensive campaigns for the comprehensive management of key sea areas, China has seen marked improvement in the quality of its marine environment, upgraded services and functions in certain sea areas, and an accelerated pace in the orderly exploitation and utilization of resources and the green transformation of the marine economy.

While China continues to follow best practices in the past, it has been working hard on innovative new approaches to protecting the marine eco-environment and promoting harmonious coexistence between humans and the ocean.

Respecting Nature and Prioritizing Eco-Environmental Conservation

Respecting, adapting to, and protecting nature is an established notion in China. China has developed an objective understanding of the laws of marine ecosystems, and, based on the systems' succession and inherent characteristics, works to reinforce their capacity for self-regulation, self-purification, and self-restoration so as to improve their stability, services, and functions.

China has plans in place for worst-case scenarios and prioritizes eco-environmental conservation. It has included eco-environmental progress in the overall plan for marine development, built strong safeguards for marine eco-environmental protection, and utilized marine resources in a well-conceived and rational way. These measures have been put in place to promote harmony between humans and the ocean.

Integrating Conservation and Management

Marine eco-environmental protection requires systemic efforts. China adopts a holistic approach to protecting the marine eco-environment, attaching equal importance to development, protection, pollution prevention and control, and restoration. It has improved the management of the marine eco-environment through land-sea coordination, coordinating protection work for rivers and seas, mountain and sea areas, onshore and offshore areas, and upstream and downstream river basins. China has established a mechanism for collaborative protection, governance, supervision, and law enforcement across different regions and departments, in order to create a comprehensive system for governing coastal areas, river basins, and sea areas.

Enforcing Strict Supervision in Accordance with Laws and Regulations

China has placed marine eco-environmental protection under the strictest systems and laws. Upholding the principle of governing the ocean by law, it has coordinated and pressed forward with

the enactment and revision of relevant laws and regulations, put in place a legal framework for marine eco-environmental protection, and implemented the strictest system for governing the marine eco-environment. It has strengthened routine and whole-process supervision and management of the marine eco-environment, including region-specific control, monitoring and investigation, supervision and law enforcement, and assessment and inspection. Two mechanisms, Central Eco-Environmental Protection Inspection and State Natural Resources Inspection, play a supervisory role in the protection of the marine eco-environment, enforcing strict measures to combat actions that harm the marine eco-environment.

Pursuing Innovation-Driven and Tech-Led Development

China is committed to innovation-driven development. The country has strengthened innovation in marine eco-environmental protection technologies, monitoring and evaluation, and institutions and mechanisms. It has made rational decisions and implemented targeted measures to transform and advance protection through digital and smart technology. China assigns a leading role to science and technology in marine eco-environmental protection and the high-quality development of the marine economy, and is committed to overcoming the bottlenecks that hinder further progress. The country now utilizes land, sea, air, and space in its monitoring, governance, and supervision of the marine eco-environment, as well as in its emergency response capabilities and technology.

Pursuing Green Transformation and Low-Carbon Development

Blue seas and clean beaches, like lucid waters and lush mountains, are also invaluable assets. Upholding the philosophy of green development and applying it in exploring the sea, China is transforming its model of marine development into one of circular utilization. It has developed eco-tourism, eco-fisheries, and other green industries, expanded its channels for realizing the market value of green products, and promoted high-quality economic development and quality of life in coastal areas through high-standard protection of the marine eco-environment.

With a focus on reducing pollution and its carbon footprint, China has increased its carbon sink potential by developing marine ranching while reducing emissions through offshore wind power and other new models of the green, low-carbon economy. These efforts have accelerated the green, low-carbon transformation of the marine industry and green, low-carbon and sustainable development of the ocean, in line with the country's goals of achieving peak carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060.

Upholding Government-Led and Multi-partner Governance

The Chinese government plays a leading role in marine eco-environmental protection through institutional design, planning, supervision, services, and risk prevention. It has established a working mechanism under which the central leadership makes overall plans, provincial authorities assume overall responsibility, and city and county authorities take charge of implementation. Operation entities, factors of trade, and private capital are encouraged to participate in marine eco-environmental protection, to create a sustainable model for the protection and ecological restoration of the marine eco-environment. Through multi-partner governance and synergy from the whole of society, China is striving to build a modern governance system for the marine eco-environment led by Party committees and governments, and joined by enterprises, social organizations, and the general public.

Putting People First and Enabling the Broadest Participation

China is committed to pursuing environmental benefits for the people, to meet their growing aspirations for a beautiful eco-environment. It takes solid action to tackle prominent marine eco-environmental problems, making the sea more accessible to the public. It works to ensure that the people can have safe and green seafood, enjoy clean beaches, blue seas and azure sky, and safely enjoy the sea with a greater sense of satisfaction and happiness.

China promotes a marine culture that emphasizes harmonious coexistence between humans and the ocean for the people and by the people. In Chinese society, there is now a broad consensus on marine eco-environmental protection, and people are taking an active part in it on their own initiative. This has led to the development of a new protection model characterized by collaboration, participation, and shared benefits across the country.

Maintaining a Global Vision and Promoting Mutually Beneficial Cooperation

China champions the concept of a maritime community with a shared future. With an open mind and a broad vision, it is determined to work together with people around the world, through thick and thin, to tackle challenges to the marine eco-environment and safeguard the common interests of humanity, so that we can bequeath blue skies and clean waters to our future generations.

Following the principles of mutual trust, mutual assistance, and mutual benefit, China promotes international cooperation in marine eco-environmental protection and shares the fruitful results of its work in protecting the marine environment and developing the marine industry, thereby contributing Chinese insight and Chinese strength to the global initiative to make the ocean clean and beautiful.

II. Coordinating Marine Eco-Environmental Protection

China attaches great importance to building a marine eco-civilization and protecting the marine environment. The country has strengthened top-level design to plan, guide, and coordinate its work in this area, while continuing to establish and improve its legal and institutional frameworks to advance marine

eco-environmental protection.

Well-Designed Plans

To fulfill the new tasks and meet the new requirements in marine eco-environmental protection and guide relevant endeavors, China has formulated special plans for the marine environment and other plans in relevant sectors, based on its economic and social development plans and in line with its territorial space plans.

Planning systematic marine eco-environmental protection. Planning is central to the government's efforts in protecting the marine eco-environment and building a marine eco-civilization, and the national economic and social development plan outlines the tasks from a strategic perspective. National territorial space plans have been implemented to help develop marine spaces by coordinating land and sea activities and promoting harmony between humanity and the ocean. These plans provide strategic guidance for protecting the marine eco-environment in waters within China's jurisdiction. In 2022, China issued the 14th Five-year Plan for Marine Ecological and Environmental Protection. This plan shapes the direction of protection efforts in the new era by creating a comprehensive governance model for marine management at the national, provincial, city, and bay levels, with bays as the basic units of action.

The government has also published the 14th Five-year Special Plan for Scientific and Technological Innovation in Eco-Environmental Protection, the 14th Five-year Plan for the Supervision of Ecological Conservation, the 14th Five-year Plan for Eco-Environmental Monitoring, and the National Plan for Marine Dumping Sites (2021–2025). These plans provide guidance for scientific and technological innovation in marine eco-environmental protection, supervision of marine ecological protection and restoration, monitoring and evaluation of the marine eco-environment, and the management of marine dumping, laying a solid foundation for strengthening marine eco-environmental protection in all respects.

Prioritizing eco-environmental conservation in spatial planning for marine development and protection. The marine space is the primary platform for the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, marine development and utilization, and marine governance tasks. Spatial planning is an essential tool for planning marine development and protection activities as a whole.

China has published various spatial plans, including the National Marine Functional Zoning Plan, the National Plan for Main Marine Functional Zones, and the National Plan for the Protection of Offshore Islands—all of which have played a positive role in the category-specific protection and rational utilization of sea areas and offshore islands at different stages. In 2018, replacing multiple plans with a masterplan, China promulgated the Opinions on Establishing a System for Territorial Space Planning and Supervising Its Implementation, issued the Outline of the National Plan on Territorial Space (2021–2035), and compiled the Outline on Space Planning for Coastal Zones and Nearshore Waters (2021–2035), implementing territorial space plans for coastal areas at all levels.

Through this, the country has implemented a marine spatial planning system that coordinates land and sea space and development, strengthens ecosystem-based management of coastal zones, and arranges for the protection, restoration, development, and utilization of coastlines, sea areas, and islands.

Advancing protection and restoration in an orderly manner. Under the guidance of its territorial space plans, China has formulated and implemented for the first time the Plan for Major Projects on the Protection and Restoration of Coastal Zone Ecosystems (2021–2035). This plan puts in place a framework for comprehensively planning and designing the protection and restoration of coastal zone ecosystems, with a focus on improving their quality, stability, and services across “one belt, two corridors, six areas, and multiple points”^[1]. To improve the diversity, stability, and sustainability of its marine ecosystems, China has also issued the 14th Five-year Plan of Action for Marine Ecological Protection and Restoration, the Special Action Plan for Mangrove Conservation and Restoration (2020–2025), and the Special Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of *Spartina Alterniflora* (2022–2025). These plans are tailored to local conditions and adopt region- and category-specific measures, aiming to coordinate effective efforts to protect and restore China's marine ecosystems in a holistic approach.

Law-Based Governance

The rule of law is the foundation for marine eco-environmental protection. China has improved relevant laws and regulations, strengthened the judicial system, and carried out educational campaigns to promote a culture of respecting, studying, observing, and applying the law, in order to carry forward marine eco-environmental protection within the legal framework.

Establishing a sound legal framework for marine eco-environmental protection. China attaches great importance to legislation on marine eco-environmental protection, and has promulgated a series of relevant laws and regulations. The Marine Environment Protection Law was first adopted in 1982 and has since been revised twice, in 1999 and 2023, and amended three times, in 2013, 2016, and 2017, to adapt to changing

[1] The “one belt” refers to a coastal ecological safety belt comprising shelter forests and coastlines. The “two corridors” refer to two ecological corridors serving crucial functions in maintaining biodiversity. One corridor is for migratory birds and coastal wetlands, while the other is for important coastal species. The “six areas” include the Yellow and Bohai seas, the Yangtze River Delta, the west coast of the Taiwan Strait, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Beibu Gulf, and Hainan Island, all of which play essential roles in the implementation of national strategies. The “multiple points” include mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass beds, salt marshes, oyster reefs, and other ecologically sensitive points with important ecological functions. – *Tt*.

circumstances. Under this comprehensive law, China has formulated seven administrative regulations, including the Regulations on Control over Dumping of Wastes in the Ocean, along with more than 10 departmental rules and 100 normative documents. Furthermore, it has issued over 200 technical standards and specifications, creating a comprehensive legal framework for marine eco-environmental protection.

Other important laws include: the Sea Areas Administration Law and the Law on the Protection of Offshore Islands, which cover the sustainable use, protection, and improvement of the eco-environment of sea areas and islands; the Wetland Conservation Law and the Fisheries Law, which cover the protection of coastal wetlands and fishery resources; and the Yangtze River Protection Law and the Yellow River Protection Law, which cover the planning, monitoring, and restoration of estuaries. Additionally, local regulations and government rules on marine eco-environmental protection have been promulgated and implemented by coastal provinces and equivalent administrative units, including in Guangxi and Hainan, where laws have been enacted to protect coastal beaches and rare animal and plant resources.

Ensuring judicial protection of the marine eco-environment. Chinese courts have dutifully provided judicial protection for the marine environment. Since 1984, they have handled more than 5,000 civil disputes over the marine environment. Since 2015, the maritime courts have concluded more than 1,000 administrative litigation cases related to the marine environment. They have also dealt with criminal cases related to marine eco-environmental pollution, illegal sand mining at sea, and illegal harvesting of rare and endangered aquatic wildlife. Drawing on previous experience, China has established a comprehensive judicial system for marine eco-environmental protection, covering criminal, civil, and administrative litigation, and a marine eco-environmental public interest litigation system with Chinese characteristics, ensuring judicial protection of the marine eco-environment.

Popularizing laws on marine eco-environmental protection. Through press conferences, seminars and training, media communication, quizzes, and distribution of promotional materials, the Chinese government has popularized laws and regulations with regard to sea areas, islands, maritime environmental protection, and the management of fishing vessels at sea. In some regions, virtual reality experiences, interactive games, micro-films and other new forms have been used to support educational campaigns on the law, to positive effect. Public communication has been strengthened to urge local governments in coastal areas to use sea areas appropriately and ocean-related enterprises to fulfill their responsibilities, and guide the public to build awareness of maritime laws and regulations, so that more people will understand, protect, and care for the ocean.

Institutional Safeguards

China has established a series of systems for protecting the marine eco-environment, ensuring coordination and connectivity between land and sea management and steadily increasing maritime environmental governance efficiency.

Establishing the institutional framework. China attaches great importance to institutional protection of the marine eco-environment. It has established standards and exercised regulation for the exploitation and utilization of marine resources and implemented an institutional framework for marine eco-environmental protection based on standard practice and in accordance with the law.

In terms of pollution prevention and control, China has implemented a filing system for sea-entering sewage discharge outlets. It utilizes a permit system for marine dumping, and carries out environmental impact assessment before approving projects that could impact the marine eco-environment, while ensuring an emergency response system is in place as a backup for worst-case scenarios. With regard to protection and restoration, it has established the systems of marine eco-environmental red lines, protected areas, and natural shoreline control. In terms of supervision and management, it has established systems for territorial space use control and eco-environmental zoning control, for central environmental protection inspection and state natural resources inspection, for enforcing responsibility for meeting targets, and for assessment, evaluation, monitoring, and investigation. In relation to green development, it has established systems for compensating marine eco-environmental protection, managing fishing quotas and permits, and regulating the paid use of sea areas.

Forming a management system encouraging collaboration among different departments and between different levels of government. China developed its marine eco-environmental protection management system from the ground up, and has continued to strengthen it over the years. In the reform of State Council institutions in 2018, the responsibilities of marine environmental protection were incorporated into those of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, and those of marine protection, restoration, development, and utilization, into those of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Transportation, maritime affairs, fisheries, and forestry and grassland departments, coast guards, and the military all participate in marine eco-environmental protection in accordance with their respective functions, which strengthens collaboration between land and sea pollution prevention and control and ensures uniformity.

Supervisory agencies have been set up to monitor the marine eco-environment in the Haihe River Basin and Beihai Sea Area, the Pearl River Valley and South China Sea Area, and the Taihu Basin and East China Sea Area. Coastal provinces and equivalent administrative units are directly responsible for eco-environmental governance of their coastal waters, and for implementing key tasks, major projects and important initiatives to protect and manage the marine eco-environment. Over the years, a working mechanism for marine eco-environmental protection based on coordination among different departments

and between central and local governments has been established, and a comprehensive system for collaborative governance of coastal areas, river basins, and sea areas is in place.

III. Systematic Governance of the Marine Eco-Environment

China adopts a holistic approach to marine eco-environmental governance, while making extra efforts to address key points and problems. Through land-sea coordination and by increasing river-sea connectivity, it has effectively improved the marine eco-environment.

Comprehensive Governance of Key Sea Areas

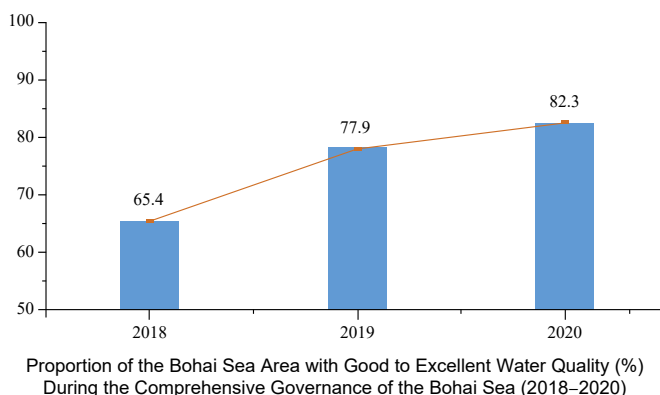
Key sea areas, such as the Bohai Sea, the Yangtze River Estuary-Hangzhou Bay, and the Pearl River Estuary, are located at the strategic intersections of China's coast where high-quality development is in full swing. These areas, which are economically developed and densely populated and whose marine ecosystem shows strong local features, face significant eco-environmental challenges arising from intensive marine development and utilization. They have thus been made the focal point for comprehensive marine eco-environmental governance.

The comprehensive governance of the Bohai Sea. The Bohai Sea is semi-enclosed and therefore has limited capacity for water exchange and self-purification.

China launched its first campaign against marine pollution in 2018, setting the comprehensive governance of the Bohai Sea a main target of pollution control during the 13th Five-year Plan (2016–2020) period. The overall plan set out to complete top-level design in one year, gather momentum in two years, and achieve preliminary progress in three years, with a focus on the “1+12” coastal cities in the Circum-Bohai Sea Region. The five core goals of this plan were to raise the proportion of nearshore sea areas with good to excellent water quality, eliminate substandard waters in seagoing rivers, identify and rectify sea-entering sewage discharge outlets, and restore coastal wetlands and coastlines. The major tasks laid out in the plan included controlling pollution, protecting the eco-environment, and guarding against risks.

Over the course of three years, China successfully completed the core goals and tasks set out by the plan for the Bohai Sea. As a result, the deterioration of the eco-environment in this region was contained, and a positive momentum sustained. In 2020, the proportion of nearshore sea areas with good to excellent water quality (Grade I and II) reached 82.3 percent—an increase of 15.3 percentage points from 2017. Additionally, all 49 seagoing rivers saw their state-monitored sections^[1] completely free from inferior Grade V water, and a total of 8,891 hectares of coastal wetlands and 132 km of coastlines were restored.

The comprehensive governance of key sea areas. In 2021, based on its achievements in the Bohai Sea, China expanded its comprehensive governance endeavors to include the Yangtze River Estuary-Hangzhou Bay and the sea areas near the Pearl River Estuary. It identified the governance of these three key sea areas as one of the signature anti-pollution campaigns during the 14th Five-year Plan (2021–2025) period, and assigned tasks to the nearby eight coastal provinces and municipalities and 24 coastal prefecture-level cities. Based on targeted, scientific and law-based pollution control, these cities have carried out comprehensive, systematic governance at the source through land-sea coordination.



The process has been smooth and notable progress has been achieved in all the major tasks. The water quality in the three key sea areas has shown marked improvement, with the proportion of sea areas with good to excellent water quality (Grade I and II) reaching 67.5 percent in 2023, an increase of 8.8 percentage points from 2020.

Synergic Governance of Land-Sourced Pollution

Marine eco-environmental problems manifest in the sea, but their root causes lie on land. In order

[1] A water-quality monitoring and sampling section is vertical to the water flow in a river or water channel. China designates state-monitored sections/points for the assessment, examination, and ranking of surface water quality.

to alleviate the impact of land-sourced pollution on the marine environment, China has adopted robust measures to coordinate land-sea pollution control and monitor the key pathways that channel land-sourced pollutants into the sea.

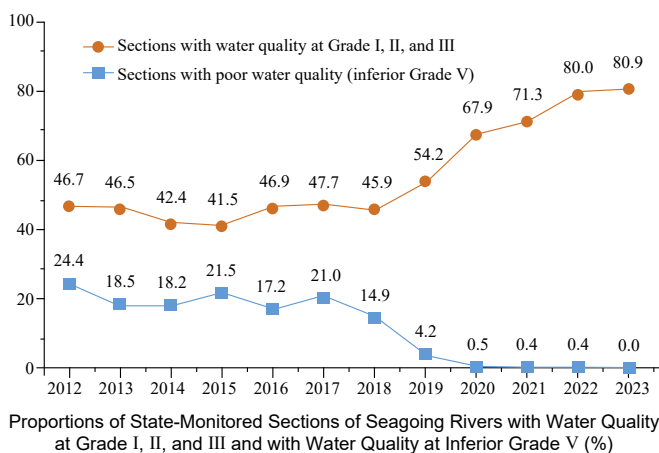
Tightening pollution control for seagoing rivers. Seagoing rivers are the primary routes for carrying land-sourced pollutants into seas.

China has significantly improved its urban sewage treatment quality and efficiency by constructing and upgrading separate pipe networks for rainwater and sewage, tightening supervision over the sewage treatment sector, and reducing the impact of urban industrial and sanitary sewage on the water quality of seagoing rivers. Since 2012, the construction of sewage treatment infrastructure in coastal areas has accelerated markedly, and sewage treatment plants in cities at or above the prefectural level have been upgraded to Grade I-A standards.

Since the beginning of the 14th Five-year Plan period in 2021, China has also initiated efforts to improve its rural environment. Coastal provinces have completed comprehensive environmental improvement for 17,000 administrative villages, enacted livestock and poultry breeding pollution control plans for 170 counties heavily involved in animal husbandry, and reached a sanitary sewage treatment rate of more than 45 percent, substantially reducing sewage discharges in agriculture and rural areas.

China has implemented a comprehensive remediation system to tackle nearshore water pollution and eutrophication caused by excessive nitrogen emissions in river basins. By forming a comprehensive management network covering coastal areas, river basins, and sea areas, China has shifted total nitrogen control to the upper reaches of seagoing rivers, and administered river-specific policy for total nitrogen management.

Between 2012 and 2017, the water quality in the state-monitored sections of China's seagoing rivers generally remained stable with slight improvement, and a substantial improvement was recorded beginning in 2018. Currently, four-fifths of all state-monitored sections have good to excellent water quality (Grade I, II, and III), while sections with very poor water quality (inferior Grade V) have been eliminated.



Strengthening the administration of key sea-entering sewage discharge outlets. Sea-entering sewage discharge outlets are major outlets through which land-sourced pollutants enter the sea. China has promulgated the Implementation Directives on Strengthening Supervision and Administration of Sewage Discharge Outlets into Rivers and Seas, which directs the identification, monitoring, source tracing, and rectification of such outlets and promotes a whole-process management system for nearshore waters, sea-entering sewage discharge outlets, sewage discharge pipes, and pollution sources.

With the goal of enforcing inspection of each and every sea-entering sewage discharge outlet, the country has identified the total number and distribution of all the sea-entering sewage discharge outlets, how sewage is discharged in each outlet and who are in charge of these outlets. Such information helps delineate responsibilities and promote rectification at the source. By the end of 2023, the government had surveyed more than 53,000 sea-entering sewage discharge outlets and rectified over 16,000 of them, amplifying its role in improving nearshore eco-environments.

A unified information disclosure platform has been built to further regulate the setup and administration of sea-entering sewage discharge outlets. The construction of new industrial sewage discharge outlets and urban sewage treatment outlets is strictly prohibited in nature reserves, key fishery waters, bathing beaches, and areas within conservation red lines.

Cleaning up and controlling marine litter. China has issued guiding documents, such as the Directives on Further Strengthening Plastic Pollution Control and the Action Plan for Plastic Pollution Control During the 14th Five-year Plan Period, to address the issue of marine plastic litter at its source.

Panel 1 Zhejiang Province's Blue Circle Project Won the UN's 2023 Champions of the Earth Award

On October 30, 2023, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) announced its 2023 Champions of the Earth award in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. The Blue Circle project, a new model of marine plastic waste management initiated by China's Zhejiang Province, stood out from 2,500 applicants globally to win the UN's highest environmental honor. This project has contributed a Chinese solution to global marine plastic litter control.

The Blue Circle is a new sustainable model for addressing marine plastic pollution. Piloted in Zhejiang in 2020, it has successfully tackled the problems in controlling marine plastic waste, including difficulties in retrieval, high processing costs, and low recycling rates. One innovative aspect of the Blue Circle model is its visual traceability. By leveraging digital technology, the model realizes whole-process visual traceability "from seas to shelves" and simplifies the identification of marine plastics. The model has been recognized and purchased by multinational corporations, which has facilitated the market-oriented recycling of marine plastic waste, turning waste into wealth.

To date, the Blue Circle project has established 80 marine waste collection sites, including the Marine Cloud Warehouse and the Little Blue Home, in Zhejiang's coastal cities such as Taizhou, Zhoushan, and Ningbo. These sites collect waste from over 10,000 seagoing fishing vessels and merchant vessels and in sections of the coastline, recycling over 10,000 tonnes of marine waste in total, including some 2,200 tonnes of plastics.

Additional measures have been put in place to monitor, intercept, collect, salvage, transport, and process marine litter. Coastal cities have enforced regular control and cleanup of marine litter from seagoing rivers and in nearshore waters through programs such as Sanitation at Sea. The Blue Circle project, a new model of marine plastic waste management initiated by Zhejiang Province, won the UN's 2023 Champions of the Earth award.

China has synergized litter control for rivers, lakes, and seas. In 2022, special actions were taken to clean up marine litter in 11 key bays, including the Jiaozhou Bay. More than 188,000 people participated in the cleanup action and removed a total of 55,300 tonnes of litter from banks, coastlines, and the sea. In 2024, to consolidate the achievements in its marine litter cleanup actions, the country expanded its targets from key bays to all coastal cities.

China has conducted systematic monitoring of marine litter and microplastics. Compared with the results of similar international surveys in recent years, the average density of China's nearshore marine litter and offshore microplastics are at medium and low levels.

Targeted Control of Marine Pollution

Placing equal emphasis on development and protection, China has continued to tighten regular supervision over industries such as marine engineering, dumping of wastes at sea, mariculture, and maritime transport, and actively responded to marine environmental emergencies, making every effort to improve marine pollution prevention and control and reduce the impact of marine development and utilization on the marine eco-environment.

Exercising strict control over the eco-environmental impact of marine engineering and dumping of wastes at sea. China is continuing to optimize its administration of environmental impact assessment (EIA), exercising management at source and tightening control on marine engineering operations such as land reclamation from the sea and marine sand and gravel mining. The country has also strengthened pollution prevention and control for marine oil and gas exploration and development, and exercised unified authority over EIA approval and pollutant discharge supervision.

China is formulating technical standards to bring marine engineering pollutants into discharge permit administration. It selects and delineates ocean dumping sites based on sound planning and with regard to cost and safety considerations. It meticulously assesses the operation of these sites to ensure eco-environmental safety and safe navigable water depths. The Chinese government enforces strict ocean dumping permits, and exercises off-site supervision through automatic vessel identification and online monitoring of ocean dumping to minimize the eco-environmental impact of waste dumping.

Enforcing systematic pollution prevention and control of mariculture. China has issued the Directives on Accelerating the Green Development of Aquaculture and the Directives on Strengthening Eco-Environmental Regulation on Mariculture. These guiding documents set standards for pollution discharge, emphasize the EIA administration, and enable category-specific rectification and tailwater monitoring for sewage discharge outlets. This helps to systematically tighten eco-environmental regulation on mariculture. Coastal provinces and equivalent administrative units have also enacted standards for mariculture tailwater discharge and have intensified their regulation efforts.

Mariculture is regulated by EIA administration, which falls under the List of Construction Projects Under Category-Specific Administration on Environmental Impact Assessment. Local governments have closed down, merged and regulated unauthorized and misplaced mariculture tailwater outfalls, while promoting pond aquaculture, industrial aquaculture, and eco-upgrading of net cages to improve aquaculture environments. Coastal provinces, municipalities and counties have released plans regarding the use of mudflats for mariculture, delineating forbidden zones, restricted zones, and designated zones for mariculture.

Intensifying pollution prevention and control for ships in ports. To comply with the Water Pollutant Discharge Standards for Vessels, China has launched special actions to address water pollution from vessels, and makes sure that environment-friendly standards have been included in shipbuilding technology laws and regulations.

The country has strengthened joint regulation of the transfer and disposal of water pollutants from vessels, and coastal provinces and equivalent administrative units have completed the construction of basic vessel pollutant receiving, transfer, and disposal facilities.

Continuous inspection of vessel fuel quality is conducted, and stricter regulations have been put in place for the provision and use of power facilities for berthed vessels to identify and eliminate hidden risks.

Establishing the marine environmental emergency response system. China has implemented the National Contingency Response Plan for Major Marine Oil Spills and the Contingency Response Plan for Oil Spills Damaging the Environment During Marine Oil Exploration and Development. These plans outline the organizational structure, procedures, information management and disclosure, and safeguard measures for handling marine oil spill emergencies in a relatively complete response system.

China has intensified its effort to identify marine environmental risks. Accordingly, Liaoning, Hebei, and Shandong provinces and Tianjin Municipality in the Circum-Bohai Sea Region have conducted assessment of risks of environmental emergencies and worked out contingency response plans for more than 5,400 key enterprises involved in hazardous chemicals, heavy metals, industrial waste, and nuclear power.

In addition, China has developed a national marine environmental emergency response command system, built a smart platform that integrates communications, monitoring, decision-making, command, and coordination, and strengthened its information technology capability for emergency response.

An “oil fingerprint” identification system has been developed, which has collected over 3,200 crude oil samples. This system allows for full-coverage sampling from marine oil exploration and development platforms and provides key evidence for resolving disputes and conducting damage assessments over marine oil spills.

Beautiful Bay Initiative

Bays are essential to sustaining the improvement of the marine eco-environment. China has launched an initiative to build beautiful bays providing clear seawater, clean beaches, and desirable habitats for fish and seabirds, and promoting harmony between humans and seas. Bay-specific policies have been adopted to coordinate nearshore pollution control, eco-environmental conservation and restoration, and environmental rectification of shores and beaches.

Specifying goals and tasks of building beautiful bays. The Outline for the 14th Five-year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 outlines the initiative of protecting and building beautiful bays. The Recommendations on Advancing the Beautiful China Initiative on All Fronts also includes building beautiful bays as part of the overall plan to build a beautiful China, designating a mid-term completion of 40 percent by 2027 and a full completion by 2035. The Plan for Marine Eco-Environmental Protection During the 14th Five-year Plan Period focuses on building beautiful bays, delineating nearshore areas into 283 bay units, and designating goals, tasks, and measures for each.

The Optimized Action Plan for Building Beautiful Bays designates more than 110 bays as key programs to be completed by 2027. The work of building beautiful bays is advancing steadily. By the end of 2023, about half of the 1,682 key tasks and construction projects had been completed, with 475 km of coastlines and 16,700 hectares of coastal wetlands improved and restored, at least 85 percent of the sea areas in 167 bays had good to excellent water quality, and the proportion of sea areas with good to excellent water quality in 102 bays had been increased from 2022.

Synergizing multiple measures for building beautiful bays. China has established the criteria for beautiful bays, emphasizing the importance of maintaining good bay eco-environments, healthy marine ecosystems, and harmony between humans and seas. Under this framework, the country has identified five categories of indicators to guide local endeavors and to encourage supplementary local indicators adapted to local conditions.

To oversee progress, an administration platform for building beautiful bays has been established. Using on-site surveys and remote sensing monitoring, the authorities trace and assess progress in smart supervision and urge all levels of government to implement comprehensive bay management in light of local conditions and complete the tasks assigned to them.

Panel 2 Excellent Examples of Building Beautiful Bays

China's initiative of building beautiful bays aims to realize “clear seawater, clean beaches, and desirable habitats for fish and seabirds, and harmony between humans and seas”.

Clear seawater, clean beaches: Fuzhou's Binhai Xincheng coastline and Xiamen's southeastern coastline in Fujian Province have developed a pollution control model for managing floating marine litter. The system utilizes drift trajectory forecasting and key-area smart visual surveillance to realize precise and efficient litter removal. Dalian's Jinshitan Bay in Liaoning Province has implemented a sea-land

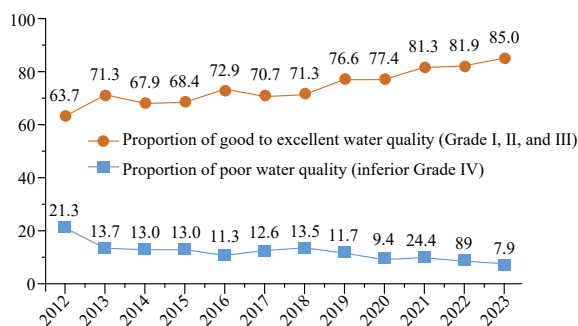
sanitation mechanism to seamlessly connect sea, coastline, and land sanitation efforts. This approach has realized closed-loop management of marine and coastline litter in three steps: collection, transfer, and centralized disposal.

Desirable habitats for fish and seabirds: Yancheng's Dongtai Tiaozini coastline and Dafeng's Chuandong Port in Jiangsu Province have prioritized eco-environmental protection and implemented control zones and isolation belts for *Spartina alterniflora*, designed to prevent the uncontrolled growth of invasive species, protect indigenous ecologies and biodiversity, and provide favorable habitats for migratory birds. As a result, these coasts have now become a haven for rare and endangered birds such as spoon-billed sandpipers and Nordmann's greenshanks.

Harmony between humans and seas: Shenzhen's Dapeng Bay in Guangdong Province has built public spaces characterized by harmony between mountains, seas, and cities. Wenzhou's Dongtou Islands in Zhejiang Province have connected villages, reefs, bays, beaches, and fishing ports to create a beautiful sea garden for the public to enjoy. Sanya Bay in Hainan Province has opened free coastal tourism sites to provide the public with access to natural scenery.

To fund these projects, a multifaceted financing mechanism has been created to amplify government guidance and incentivize the participation of operation entities and private capital. Comprehensive fiscal and financial means, such as fiscal investment, special bonds, and environment-oriented development projects have been employed to accelerate the implementation of beautiful bay projects.

Emphasis has been placed on innovation in institutions, mechanisms, and key technologies, and outstanding cases have been selected to showcase successful examples and demonstration models and elevate the overall level of beautiful bay projects. Currently, 20 state-level outstanding cases have been selected.



Proportions of China's Offshore Sea Areas with Good to Excellent Water Quality and with Poor Water Quality (%)

Through comprehensive governance of key sea areas, land-sea coordination in pollution control, and building beautiful bays, China's nearshore water quality has improved; in 2023, the proportion of sea areas with good to excellent water quality saw a 21.3 percentage points increase from 2012.

IV. Science-Based Conservation and Restoration of Marine Ecosystems

China coordinates and integrates the conservation and systematic restoration of marine ecosystems in a manner that respects and protects nature and follows its laws. It utilizes science-based decision-making and targeted measures that aim to safeguard eco-environmental security and improve the diversity, stability and sustainability of marine ecosystems.

Consolidating the Shields for Marine Ecosystems

China was the first country in the world to propose and enforce red lines for ecological conservation. It has employed multiple means to build firm protective shields for marine ecosystems, giving sufficient time and space for the ocean to recuperate.

Creating a classification and zoning system for marine ecosystems. Classification and zoning constitute a basic model of modern marine management. Since 2019, China has been engaged in establishing such a system. It has put in place a classification framework based on biogeographic and aquatic settings and involving four groups—water column, geoform, substrate, and biota, and taken a nested approach to zoning marine ecosystems, dividing its offshore waters into 3 first-level eco-environmental zones. These first-level zones are then divided into 22 second-level zones, which are then further divided into 53 third-level zones. In 2023, the 20 third-level offshore zones most impacted by human activity were further divided into 132 fourth-level zones.

Applying unified standards, China classifies ecosystems by level and scale to reflect its natural geographic layout, providing a foundation for understanding the basic conditions of its marine ecosystems and refining marine ecological evaluation, conservation, and restoration.

Evaluating the carrying capacity of marine resources and environment and the suitability of territorial space for development. In 2015, the Overall Plan for Reform of the System for Developing an Eco-Civilization was issued. For the first time, it set the requirement of evaluating the carrying capacity of resources and the environment, marking the beginning of such evaluation in China. In 2019, the Guidelines on the Establishment and Implementation of a Territorial Space Planning System was promulgated, requiring the orderly, coordinated, and scientific planning of various types of functional space based on evaluations of the carrying capacity of resources and the environment and the suitability of territorial space for development.

China subsequently developed a system of technologies and methods for this purpose, and completed evaluations of the carrying capacity of its marine resources and environment and suitability evaluation of territorial space for development at city, provincial, regional and national levels. The results were used for drawing red lines for marine eco-conservation and designating marine ecological space and areas for development and utilization.

Drawing red lines for marine eco-environmental conservation and strictly enforcing them. Red lines for eco-environmental conservation are an important institutional innovation and a major decision made by China. China has made systematic arrangements for key areas of marine eco-environmental conservation. Areas with extremely important eco-environmental functions, such as biodiversity and coastline protection, together with areas with highly vulnerable ecosystems due to factors such as coastal erosion, have been delimited within the red lines and given strict protection. These areas are distributed along “one belt and multiple spots” (see Panel 3).

The country has also published a series of documents that regulate the limited human activities allowed within the red lines and clarify requirements for regulation and control. Remaining firm in its commitment to eco-environmental security, China carries out red line monitoring, efficacy evaluation, and boundary demarcation, and continues to improve the spatial configuration of red lines and their long-term regulation and control mechanisms for the protection of vital environmental spaces.

Panel 3 China's Red Lines for Marine Eco-Environmental Conservation

To date, China has drawn red lines covering a total area of 150,000 sq km across several types of ecosystems, including mangrove forests, seagrass beds, coral reefs, coastal salt marshes, important estuaries, and important sea islands. They are distributed along “one belt and multiple spots”.

The “one belt” runs from north to south, covering the important coastal wetlands of the Liaohe River and the Yellow River estuaries, Yancheng City of Jiangsu Province, the Yangtze River estuary, the Chongming Dongtan wetlands, Hangzhou Bay, the Pearl River and Beilun River estuaries, among others. The belt contains the majority of China's typical marine ecosystems, including 99 percent of the country's mangrove forests, 91 percent of its coral reefs, and 89 percent of its seagrass beds, thus forming a blue eco-environmental shield.

The “multiple spots” cover most of the country's undeveloped and uninhabited sea islands, habitats of rare and endangered marine species and migratory birds, and spawning sites of important fishery resources, thus offering protection to the key sites for the inhabitation and migration of living organisms.

Improving the marine protected areas system. In its marine protected areas system China includes important marine ecosystems, and natural areas with concentrations of rare and endangered marine species and natural relics and landscapes, and provides them with special protection.

Over the years, the country has established 352 marine protected areas, which protect about 93,300 sq km of sea areas, and has made preparations for 5 marine national park candidate areas. These areas focus on the protection of rare and endangered marine species such as the spotted seal and the Chinese white dolphin, typical ecosystems such as mangrove forests and coral reefs, and topographies such as ancient shell dykes and sea floor ancient forest remnants, forming a multifunctional marine protected area system with a sound layout and encompassing various forms. The marine protected areas have enabled the populations of rare marine species to recover gradually. For example, over 2,000 spotted seals—a species under first-grade state protection—spend the winter at Liaodong Bay every year and this number has remained stable for many years.

Maintaining marine biodiversity. China gives effective protection to marine life by safeguarding ecological corridors, raising species' level of protection, carrying out scientific research and monitoring, imposing fishing moratoriums in key sea areas, and conducting fish stock enhancement.

Panel 4 No “Casualty or Relocation” of White Dolphins in the Construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge

On October 24, 2018, the 55-km Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge opened to traffic. The bridge runs through the Chinese white dolphin reserve at the Pearl River estuary, home to the largest population of the animal, which is under first-grade state protection.

To ensure that no white dolphins were harmed or forced away during construction of the bridge, builders utilized advanced technologies from home and abroad and applied innovative construction techniques and methods during the building process. By adjusting designs, raising work efficiency, and

reducing operation time at sea, they reduced the impact on marine creatures to the minimum. The bridge helps reduce sea traffic between Hong Kong and Macao by providing an alternative form of travel, effectively protecting the habitats of white dolphins and promoting the harmonious coexistence between humans and the ocean.

Continuous monitoring and surveying from 2017 to 2021 showed that the population of white dolphins at the Pearl River mouth stood at about 2,600 by the end of the five-year monitoring period, representing stable population growth.

Today, the number of recorded marine species in China has reached 28,000, accounting for about 11 percent of the global total. The National Germplasm Bank of Marine Fishery Species has collected and preserved some 140,000 samples of various biological resources, and the pace of its genetic resource collection and preservation continues to accelerate.

China carries out fish stock enhancement in nearshore areas and now releases around 30 billion fry of aquatic organisms annually. For key protected species like the Chinese white dolphin, sea turtles, corals, and spotted seals, the country has published special national protection action plans or programs, established national protection alliances, and carried out fruitful work that has resulted in stable growth of populations. Twenty coastal wetlands have been included on the List of Wetlands of International Importance, including the National Nature Reserve for Spotted Seals in Dalian of Liaoning Province and the National Nature Reserve for Sea Turtles in Huidong County of Guangdong Province.

Restoring Marine Ecosystems

China carries out major marine eco-environmental restoration projects by letting nature restore itself, with artificial restoration as a supplement. It has formed an initial restoration framework ranging from mountain tops to the ocean, guided by precise planning, guaranteed by systems, and supported by funding and infrastructure, laying firm marine eco-environmental foundations for building a beautiful China.

Taking comprehensive measures in a problem-oriented approach. China views marine ecosystems as a whole and makes accurate diagnoses of marine eco-environmental problems. On this base, it sets appropriate conservation and restoration goals and tasks and adopts targeted models such as protection and conservation, natural restoration, assisted regeneration, and eco-environmental reconstruction. It selects optimal area- and category-based restoration measures and technologies according to specific conditions of the place and time. For example, in terms of restoration priorities, estuary wetlands in the warm temperate zone were chosen for the Bohai Sea; coastal wetlands in the warm temperate zone for the Yellow Sea; estuaries, bays, and sea islands in the subtropical zone for the East China Sea; and typical coastal wetlands in the subtropical zone and tropical zone for the South China Sea.

Strengthening the supporting role of science and technology and encouraging standard-setting. China is strengthening research on the evolution and internal mechanisms of marine ecosystems, carrying out projects designed to achieve technological breakthroughs, and developing standards and norms to make eco-environmental restoration more holistic, science-based, and workable.

To form a system of standards for restoration technologies, it has selected a first batch of 10 innovative and applicable marine eco-environmental restoration technologies, published the Technical Guidelines for Marine Eco-environmental Restoration along with 11 technical guides for coastal eco-environmental disaster reduction and restoration, and formulated technical manuals for the restoration of typical marine ecosystems such as mangroves, coastal salt marshes, and oyster reefs.

Strengthening financial support for restoration. Since 2016, the central government has established special funds to support coastal provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities in carrying out marine eco-environmental protection and restoration projects in key areas, including sea areas, sea islands, and coastal zones that are important to eco-environmental security and offer a wide range of eco-environmental benefits.

To promote the establishment of a market-oriented investment and financing mechanism for marine eco-conservation, it has issued the Decisions on Encouraging and Supporting Private Capital to Participate in Eco-Environmental Conservation and Restoration, which encourages and supports private capital involvement in the whole process of marine eco-environmental conservation and restoration projects, including investment, design, restoration, and maintenance. It has also introduced incentive policies to grant newly-increased construction land-use quotas to entities that have met the standards for planting mangrove trees.

Panel 5 The Xiamen Approach to Marine Eco-Environmental Restoration

Xiamen, a scenic coastal city boasting green mountains as well as blue waters, inspired Xi Jinping thought on eco-civilization and is an important pilot zone for its implementation. Its work epitomizes China's marine eco-environmental restoration efforts over more than three decades.

Starting with the comprehensive environmental improvement of the Yundang Lake in 1988, Xiamen initiated a succession of comprehensive bay area improvement projects for the western sea area, the Wuyuan Bay, the Huandong sea area, the Xinglin Bay, the Maluan Bay, and others, creating beautiful shorelines and marine eco-environmental scenery, and forming broad and pleasant urban public spaces.

The city has also carried out projects to restore the Guanyinshan and Gulangyu beaches, forming

a natural barrier for local coastal protection that covers one million sq m and functions as an important area for disaster prevention and reduction, tourism and leisure, and eco-environmental services. Through city-wide inspection, full-coverage testing, and all-round tracing and whole-chain treatment, Xiamen has basically completed the rectification of 400 problematic sea-entering sewage discharge outlets across the city, fundamentally improving the water quality of its sea waters. The city has since won a number of prestigious honors, including the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honor Award, the International Awards for Liveable Communities, and the PEMSEA Leadership Award for Integrated Coastal Management, and was included in the First Batch of National Demonstration Zones for Developing Marine Eco-Civilization.

The Xiamen Approach, which coordinates eco-environmental conservation and restoration across all elements, districts, and dimensions, is a model in building a beautiful China and maintaining harmony between humanity and the sea. It provides Chinese experience, solutions, and wisdom to addressing eco-environmental governance in bay cities, a conundrum for many countries across the globe.

Implementing major marine eco-environmental conservation and restoration projects. From 2016 to 2023, the central government lent financial support to coastal cities in implementing 175 major marine eco-environmental conservation and restoration projects, including the Blue Bay environmental improvement initiative, the ecological restoration campaign in the comprehensive management of the Bohai Sea region, the coastal zone protection and restoration project, and a special action for mangrove conservation and restoration. These projects involved 11 coastal provincial-level administrative units and received a total investment of 25.258 billion yuan from the central budget, ultimately leading to the improvement and restoration of nearly 1,680 km of coastline and over 50,000 ha of coastal wetlands nationwide.

China also published the Special Action Plan for the Conservation and Restoration of Mangrove Forests (2020–2025) and, by the end of 2023, had built approximately 7,000 ha of mangrove forests nationwide and restored approximately 5,600 ha. The results of the 2022 Survey of National Land-Use Changes show that the area of mangrove forests in the country stood at 29,200 ha, an increase of about 7,200 ha from the beginning of the century, making China one of the few countries in the world with a net increase in mangrove forest area.

Through these efforts, China is continuously strengthening the service functions of marine ecosystems, raising the ocean's carbon sink capacity, and building a strong eco-environmental security shield in coastal areas. It is promoting high-quality development through high-standard marine eco-environmental conservation and restoration.

Taking Strict Precautions Against Marine Disasters

Marine disasters pose serious threats to marine ecosystems. By increasing the resilience of coastal ecosystems and strengthening the identification of, and emergency response to marine eco-environmental disaster risks, China steadily improves its capacity to prevent and mitigate marine disasters, and holds firm to the red line of marine eco-environmental security.

Strengthening coastal ecosystems against marine disasters such as typhoons and storm surges. China is among the countries most severely impacted by marine disasters. In response, it has built a three-dimensional global ocean observation network with a reasonable regional distribution, complete functions, and a complete system, achieving basic long-term operational observation of its jurisdictional waters and key waters of concern. It is progressively making marine disaster warning reporting more automatic, intelligent, precise, and cover more parts of the world, thereby providing technical support for marine disaster prevention and response.

Mangrove forests, coastal salt marshes, and other ecosystems act as natural defense lines against marine disasters, and when combined with newly-constructed eco-environmental sea dykes, they form a comprehensive protection system that synergizes ecology and disaster reduction. China now fully utilizes the disaster prevention and reduction functions of natural ecosystems and has comprehensively strengthened its coastal ecosystems against marine disasters such as typhoons and storm surges.

Increasing the capacity to prevent and control marine eco-environmental disasters. Marine eco-environmental disasters have seriously affected the social and economic development of China's coastal regions. In China, marine eco-environmental disasters are mainly local biological outbreaks such as red tides and green tides caused by *Ulva prolifera*.

China has developed an emergency plan for red tide disasters and strengthened its early warning and monitoring. It detects, tracks, and provides timely and accurate warnings of red tide disasters, and monitors the development and evolution trends of red tides to provide greater disaster prevention, control, and emergency response. It has carried out monitoring, early warning, prevention, and control of the Yellow Sea green tides caused by *Ulva prolifera*, thereby reducing their impact.

In response to population surges of bio-organisms such as jellyfish and *Acetes chinensis*, it monitors key areas during key periods and releases information in a timely manner.

Examples in Building Harmonious and Beautiful Islands

Sea islands are important platforms for protecting the marine environment and maintaining ecological balance. By focusing on individual islands or island groups, the demonstration zone creation project aims to build beautiful islands with lush vegetation, clean beaches, clear waters, bountiful resources, and

harmony between humans and the environment. The ultimate goal of this project is to promote high-level conservation and high-quality development of sea island areas.

Solid progress in building demonstration zones. The initiative to build harmonious and beautiful islands started in 2022. Focusing on “a beautiful eco-environment, enjoyable life, and clean production”, 36 indicators were created, covering seven areas: eco-environmental protection and restoration, resource conservation and intensive utilization, improvement of living environments, green and low-carbon development, development of specialty industries, cultural development, and institutional reform. The indicators were adopted as guidance for building demonstration zones. In 2023, 33 islands were selected as the first batch of harmonious and beautiful islands.

The leading role of ecological conservation in the project. By prioritizing eco-environmental protection, China has worked to restore its sea island eco-environments through ecological protection and restoration projects, including those concerning shorelines, islands, and aquatic plants. In coastal regions throughout the country, the use of mangrove forests, seagrass beds, and other blue carbon ecosystems as carbon sinks is actively promoted. In Shandong Province, efforts are underway to establish an international zero-carbon island in the Changdao Islands. These efforts involve issuing marine, seagrass beds, and seaweed beds carbon sink loans and exploring innovative approaches to turning marine carbon sink resources into assets.

China continues to enhance the living environment of its sea islands by improving infrastructure, including transportation, water supply and drainage, electricity, and communication facilities. Dongao Island in Guangdong Province has undergone large-scale planting of flowers, trees, and shrubs. A scenic green road encircling the island is now complete, and the construction of boardwalks along the coast is currently in progress.

China promotes integrated cultural and tourism development of sea islands. By utilizing the unique resources offered by its islands—including their sea access, rich histories, and eye-catching temples—the country hopes to strengthen its “tourism plus” model in these regions, including “tourism plus fishing”, “tourism plus the countryside”, “tourism plus culture”. These tourism models showcase the compelling stories attached to traditional maritime culture that have been passed down through the ages and, in turn, help preserve this way of life for future generations. On Meizhou Island in Fujian Province, for example, 33 items have been designated as intangible cultural heritage items, leading to increased awareness of the Mazu culture of the area and ensuring its protection and transmission of its intangible cultural heritage.

Building Eco-Environmental Coastal Zones

Coastal zones are special areas where land and sea meet and interact, with rich natural resources, unique environmental conditions, and intense human activity. As the intersection of coastal areas and the sea, China’s coastal zones are crucial for building a strong national eco-environmental security shield, supporting coastal economic and social development, facilitating China’s connections with other countries over land and sea, promoting high-standard construction and opening up, and facilitating high-quality development.

In 2021, China proposed the construction of eco-environmental coastal zones coordinating work on land and at sea. To carry out the comprehensive evaluation of its marine eco-environmental conditions, China has developed a system of technology and methodology for eco-environmental coastal zone evaluation. To scientifically identify eco-environmental problems in coastal zones, nine evaluation indicators have been set up, covering four areas: ecosystem stability, environmental quality, sustainable resource utilization, and human safety and health. Through measures such as eco-environmental protection and restoration, building a coastal greenway network, and improving eco-environmental sea dykes, the country is working to create healthy, clean, safe, diverse, and prosperous coastal zones.

V. Strengthening Supervision and Administration of the Marine Eco-Environment

China has mobilized its resources and expertise from all sectors to safeguard the red lines for ecological conservation, ensure basic environmental quality, and keep resource utilization within sustainable limits. In governing the marine eco-environment, the country has adopted a multipronged approach that integrates region-specific regulation and control, monitoring and surveying, regulation and law enforcement, and evaluation and inspection. To guarantee the smooth progress of marine eco-environmental governance, protection and restoration, it has strengthened its application of information, digital, and smart technologies in environmental supervision and administration.

Space Utilization Control and Region-Specific Environmental Regulation and Control

China employs a functional zoning strategy that exercises space utilization control based on territorial space planning, strengthening region-specific regulation and control of the nearshore eco-environment. In this way it delineates red lines and sets limits for development activities.

Regulating the utilization of marine spaces. Taking into consideration the location and resource endowment of its sea areas, China first implemented marine functional zoning in the 1990s and specified the zones’ major functions and the requirements for protecting their eco-environments.

In 2015, China introduced the National Plan on Marine Functional Zones, which delineated its marine

spaces into four categories: zones for optimized development, zones for key development, zones for restricted development, and zones prohibited for development. This plan also set constraints for the degree of development and protection in these zones.

In 2019, China began to integrate marine functional zoning and marine functional zone planning into its overall territorial space planning, incorporating multiple plans into one. In October 2022, China enacted the Outline of the National Territorial Space Plan (2021–2035). Coastal provincial-level governments implemented relevant measures within their administrations. Detailed and scientific plans were made to divide marine territorial space into eco-environmental conservation zones, eco-environmental control zones, and maritime development zones, each with specific functions, utilization approaches, and conservation and restoration requirements. A regulatory system has been gradually established for the utilization of marine spaces characterized by full coverage of sea areas, islands, and coastlines, and coordination of involved industries and utilization approaches.

Enforcing region-specific regulation and control for the nearshore eco-environment. China has used differentiated measures to achieve region-specific and precise regulation of the nearshore eco-environment by delineating control units and introducing a negative list of projects with potential eco-environmental impacts. These efforts align with national economic and social development plans and the national territorial plan to safeguard the eco-functions and improve the environment of nearshore waters. The focus of these regulations is to safeguard the red lines for ecological conservation, ensure basic environmental quality, and keep resource utilization within sustainable limits.

Since 2017, coastal areas have taken steps to implement region-specific regulation and control of the nearshore eco-environment. China has delineated 3,036 nearshore eco-regulation and control units and ensures that industries in these units develop within the environmental carrying capacity.

The first application system for region-specific eco-regulation was launched in Xiamen City in Fujian Province, effectively addressing difficult issues for new enterprises, including site selection, lengthy approval processes, and slow project implementation. The city divided its offshore waters into 42 control units and improved land-sea coordinated environmental governance, which has optimized the transformation and upgrading of coastal industries.

In 2024, China released the Directives on Strengthening Region-Specific Eco-Environmental Regulation and Control, which instructed coastal regions to strengthen region-specific regulation and control in nearshore areas. The document proposed the establishment of a region-specific regulation and control system for the marine eco-environment that covers all marine spaces and employs precise and scientific measures, and the formulation of systematic implementation plans, providing essential guidance for nearshore development, protection and construction activities of all kinds.

Monitoring and Surveying

The protection of the marine eco-environment is built on monitoring and surveying. China has improved its monitoring network, which features sky-space-land-sea integration and has strengthened marine monitoring, assessment, and early warning, to provide a clear factual basis for decision-making by relevant supervision and administration authorities.

Enforcing marine eco-environmental monitoring on all fronts. China has continued to optimize the configuration of its marine eco-environmental monitoring network, which covers sea areas under its jurisdiction with a focus on nearshore waters. The goal is to establish a modern marine eco-environmental monitoring network characterized by land-sea coordination and river-sea connectivity.

The country has combined national and local resources to build marine eco-environmental monitoring bases and comprehensive eco-environmental quality monitoring stations, both at the national level. With a network of 1,359 state-monitored seawater quality sites, China's marine monitoring comprises 15 tasks in four categories: environment quality monitoring, ecosystem monitoring, special monitoring, and supervisory monitoring. China has boosted its monitoring capacity in emerging hotspot areas, including marine litter, marine microplastics, marine radioactivity, new marine pollutants, and ocean carbon source and sink. It has strengthened monitoring for the health of mangrove forests and other typical ecosystems. A unified data transmission and sharing platform for marine eco-environmental monitoring has been developed, which releases seawater quality data on a regular basis and publishes the annual Bulletin of Marine Ecology and Environment Status of China.

Taking a holistic approach to marine ecosystem early warning and monitoring. In order to better understand the distribution, patterns, current conditions, and evolution trends of its marine ecosystems, and the major eco-environmental issues and risks, China has built an ecosystem early warning and monitoring system. This system prioritizes nearshore waters, covers all waters under China's jurisdiction, and extends to key polar and deep-sea areas of interest.

In nearshore waters, targeted surveys and monitoring have been carried out in areas subject to high eco-environmental risks, as well as in those characterized by typical marine ecosystems, such as key estuaries, bays, coral reefs, mangrove forests, seagrass beds, and salt marshes. In waters under China's jurisdiction, analysis and assessment have been conducted to address issues such as sea level changes, ocean acidification, and low oxygen levels. Large-scale monitoring has been conducted for all major types of marine ecosystems, and monitoring on polar and deep-sea ecosystems has been expanded.

During the 14th Five-year Plan (2021–2025) period, China plans to set up more than 1,600 offshore

eco-environmental trend monitoring stations and points and complete a national survey on the conditions of coral reefs, salt marshes and seagrass beds, and a general survey on the ecosystems of river estuaries and seaweed beds.

China released the Bulletin of China's Early Warning and Monitoring for the Marine Eco-Environment. Work has been done to build an effective early warning approach for typical marine ecosystems. Operational early warning has been basically realized for coral bleaching.

Conducting baseline survey of marine pollution. In order to have a full understanding of its marine eco-environment, China has conducted three baseline surveys of marine pollution—in 1976, 1996, and 2023, respectively. The 2023 survey covered four issues: marine pollutants, marine pollution sources, environmental pressure and impacts in coastal zones, and the refined eco-governance of bays. As well as obtaining basic marine eco-environmental data, this latest baseline survey provided scientific decision-making support for assessing China's marine eco-environment and enacting relevant protection strategies and policies.

Strict Regulation and Law Enforcement

China has built a multi-dimensional regulation and law enforcement network covering its marine areas through coordinated regulation and law enforcement, inter-departmental collaboration, and synergy in central and local efforts. Illegal and unauthorized utilization of seas and islands and destruction of the marine eco-environment are severely punished.

Improving comprehensive maritime regulation. China has continued to improve the comprehensive regulation capacity over sea areas, islands, and coastal zones by establishing a system that covers all stages and aspects of ex-ante, in-process, and ex-post regulation. This system leverages the role of comprehensive regulation in maintaining orderly utilization of seas and islands, enforcing the red lines of resource security, ensuring eco-friendly utilization of seas and islands, and underpinning high-quality development.

The country is building and operating a full range of systems, including a regulation system for sea areas and islands, a regulation system for marine eco-environmental restoration, and an information system for territorial space planning that presents all information on a single map. It employs a regulation model in which satellite remote sensing monitoring, marine monitoring, and coast-based monitoring supplement each other to collect information about the utilization of sea areas, and the spatial and resource changes and eco-environmental status in sea areas and islands.

China employs diverse means such as remote sensing monitoring and marine and coastline patrols to conduct high-frequency monitoring of sea areas, islands, and coastlines. It gives extra attention to land reclamation projects, eco-environmental restoration projects, drilling platforms, submarine cables, cross-sea bridges, and other marine utilization activities; and to key areas such as those rich in marine sand, marine oil and gas exploration and development sites, ocean dumping sites, and mariculture and fisheries sites.

Intensive monitoring and regulation have been imposed to sanction marine eco-environmental violations once they occur, and the country's marine regulation and law enforcement capacity is steadily improving.

Strengthening comprehensive law enforcement for marine eco-environmental protection. In recent years, China has strengthened all-round law enforcement in the sea areas under its jurisdiction. Regular law enforcement inspections are conducted on marine engineering, marine nature reserves, marine fisheries, and maritime transport, while a formidable deterrence for violations is provided by specialized law enforcement inspections such as the Marine Shield for coastline conservation and land reclamation regulation and control, the Green Shield for rigorous supervision over marine nature reserves, the Emerald Sea for striking out at marine eco-environmental violations of laws and regulations, and the Blue Sword and the China Fisheries Sword for fisheries resource conservation.

Between 2020 and 2022, China conducted more than 19,000 inspections on marine engineering projects, drilling platforms, islands, and ocean dumping sites, and handled over 360 cases of illegal activities involving land reclamation from the sea, ocean dumping, and island eco-environmental damage. Severe punishments have been imposed for violations and crimes in key areas of marine eco-environmental protection.

Strengthening Evaluation and Inspection

China has implemented goal-oriented responsibility and performance evaluation systems for marine eco-environmental protection. It conducts Central Eco-Environmental Protection Inspection and State Natural Resources Inspection. These measures address key issues in the marine eco-environment and encourage local authorities to fulfill their responsibilities, giving officials an incentive to improve their performance.

Implementing the goal-oriented responsibility system and performance evaluation system for marine eco-environmental protection. In 2014, China amended the Environmental Protection Law and enforced the goal-oriented responsibility system and performance evaluation system for eco-environmental protection.

In 2015, China released the Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Water Pollution, which incorporated core goals and tasks such as the proportion of nearshore sea areas with good to excellent

water quality, in the performance evaluation system for local governments in coastal areas.

In 2020, China included nearshore water quality in the performance evaluation system for the pollution control campaign, raising the standards for nearshore water quality year by year.

In 2023, China amended the Marine Environmental Protection Law to specify that coastal local governments at or above county level will bear responsibility for the environmental quality of sea areas under their jurisdiction. The performance evaluation results serve as an important basis for rewarding or punishing officials and for their promotion, and play an important role in ensuring that local governments and officials in coastal areas fulfill their responsibilities.

Zhejiang Province has initiated a comprehensive assessment system for the marine eco-environment, and incorporated the results into the Five-Aspect Water Governance^[1] performance evaluation system and the Building Beautiful Zhejiang performance evaluation system. This has proved effective in encouraging local officials to improve their performance and break new ground at work.

Enforcing supervision and inspection of eco-environmental protection. Since 2015, China has carried out three rounds of central eco-environmental inspection across 31 provinces and equivalent administrative units, relevant departments of the State Council, and relevant state-owned enterprises directly under the central government. Oceans and seas have been designated as key subjects of inspection. Incidences of marine eco-environmental violations have been disclosed and reported to provincial-level Party committees and governments. These violations include unauthorized mariculture businesses in nearshore waters, mangrove ecosystem damage, illegal land reclamation from the sea that encroaches on coastal zones, and nearshore water pollution.

With determination, the inspection teams have taken resolute measures to ensure environmental protection mechanisms are put in place at the local level. Their work has been central to problem-solving, gaining approval from the central authorities, recognition from the public, and support from all sectors.

China carries out provincial-level inspection on eco-environmental protection, with a focus on addressing acute marine eco-environmental problems. Routine inspections are conducted regularly, special inspections have been strengthened, and inspection mechanisms comprising routine inspection, regular inspection, and ad-hoc inspection have been established. Supervision and inspection of key projects, key areas, and key links has been advanced across the board, targeting marine pollution, ecosystem destruction, and other pressing problems.

Enforcing national inspection of natural resources with a focus on marine eco-environmental protection. In the Outline of the 13th Five-year Plan for National Economic and Social Development, China proposed to implement the marine inspection system and have regular marine inspections.

In 2017, the first round of marine inspection of 11 coastal provincial-level governments was launched, focusing on the local implementation of major decisions and plans of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on marine resources and the marine eco-environment, of relevant laws and regulations, and of relevant national plans, programs, and key policy measures. The inspection teams referred the problems identified to provincial-level governments, making sure that local governments fulfill their primary responsibilities in marine eco-environmental protection and reasonably allocate resources in the sea areas and islands under their jurisdiction by law.

In recent years, national natural resources inspection teams have carried out annual marine inspections of local governments in coastal areas, focusing on strict land reclamation control and coastal wetland conservation. These inspections ensure that provincial-level governments fulfill their primary responsibilities, and target new cases of illegal land reclamation, encroachment on conservation red lines, illegal approval of sea utilization projects, destruction of mangrove forests, uninhabited islands, and natural coastlines, and other pressing problems that adversely impact the marine eco-environment.

Problems identified are forwarded to the relevant provincial-level governments in the form of inspection notifications, and leaders of prefecture-level and city governments found with severe violations are summoned for questioning. Prominent problems are notified and made public. Follow-up inspection is then conducted to ensure local governments have fulfilled their duties.

VI. Advancing China's Green and Low-Carbon Maritime Development

China has always been committed to protecting the marine environment, dedicating its efforts to comprehending and managing the vast oceanic expanse. On the basis of ensuring ecological security, it has improved its efficiency in marine resource utilization and developed an eco-friendly marine economy to meet the people's diverse needs of the sea. Through high-level eco-environmental protection, China strives to foster new impetus for and new advantages in its high-quality development.

Promoting Efficient Utilization of Marine Resources

The ocean provides humanity with a treasure trove of resources that we rely on to survive and develop. So, too, does it provide a foundation to build China into a strong maritime country. China has continued to promote the economical and intensive utilization of marine resources. It coordinates and improves the

[1] The Five-Aspect Water Governance comprises sewage treatment, flood control, flood drainage, water supply, and water conservation. – *Tr.*

supply of resources and factors of production from its sea areas, and preserves the ocean's reproductive capacity. In the pursuit of these goals, the country strives to form sound dynamics between high-level resource security and high-quality development.

Promoting the economical and intensive utilization of resources from sea areas. In recent years, China has actively planned for and carried out economical and intensive marine resource utilization, and adopted tailored policies for different resources accordingly.

To assess its marine resources, China has launched a pilot scheme to inventory its marine resource assets, which will form the basis for optimal resource allocation and efficient utilization. It has selected 18 demonstration cities and counties to test pioneering methods and technologies in order to establish benchmarks for the economical and intensive utilization of marine resources that can be replicated and improved upon with practical experience. Additionally, it will encourage various resources and factors of production to better contribute to China's high-quality development.

To effectively utilize sea area resources and transition from a two-dimensional to a three-dimensional management approach, China has introduced a multi-rights system for sea areas. Measures have been taken to guarantee the supply of sea areas, address outstanding problems in land reclamation from the past, and regulate sea area utilization across various industries, including optimizing the management of mariculture and determining its scale and layout on a scientific basis. It has also issued specific policies governing the occupation of sea areas by photovoltaic projects, promoting hybrid utilization and three-dimensional development.

Strengthening the sustainable utilization of fishery resources. China is employing scientific assessment in its efforts to balance the conservation and sustainable utilization of its fishery resources in the long run. Since launching its summer fishing moratorium in 1995, China has extended the duration and scope of the ban over the years and exercised effective control over fishing intensity in order to conserve and restore fishery resources and promote the sustainable and healthy development of the fishery industry. Since 2003, China has implemented the aggregate management of marine fishery resources, a fishing licensing system, and dual control over the number and engine power of marine fishing vessels, as well as species-based and region-specific fishing quota management.

Laying a Solid Foundation for Green Development of the Marine Economy

China is committed to achieving its targets for peak carbon dioxide emissions and carbon neutrality. One way in which the country aims to reach these targets is by integrating green and low-carbon concepts into the development of its marine economy. This includes promoting sustainable fishing and the green growth of ports, shipping, and shipbuilding, as well as the sound exploitation and utilization of clean marine energy. China's marine industries have already made positive progress in embracing this green transformation.

Modern ocean ranches. Ocean ranching is an approach to preserving aquatic life resources and restoring the marine eco-environment that has played a pivotal role in the sustainable development of marine fisheries in China.

By 2023, the country had established 169 national demonstration ocean ranches, generating an annual eco-environmental benefit of nearly 178.1 billion yuan. The conservation of marine fishery resources led to a five-fold increase in the numbers of large yellow croaker, small yellow croaker, cutlass fish, and cuttlefish in Zhejiang Province in 2019 compared to the late 1990s, and the density of small yellow croaker increased by 34.1 percent.

Mariculture has expanded from offshore to deep-sea areas and high seas. The first item of fully submersible deep-sea fish farming equipment independently developed by China has been put into operation, creating a unique green mode of deep-sea and high-sea fish rearing.

Greener and more intelligent ports, shipping, and shipbuilding. China has intensified its efforts to build smart and green ports with growing clean energy utilization. The Port of Qingdao has established a cutting-edge hybrid energy supply system that integrates wind and solar power with hydrogen production and storage. Clean energy now accounts for 66 percent of the total supply at the port, and its intelligent sky rail logistics system reduces energy consumption by over 50 percent. The introduction of intelligent zero-carbon emission docks at the Port of Tianjin will contribute to carbon neutrality in production and consumption, lowering energy consumption.

China is also active in the construction of three green shipping corridors—connecting the Port of Shanghai with the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach, the Port of Guangzhou with the Port of Los Angeles, and the Port of Tianjin with the Port of Singapore. These corridors will accelerate the decarbonization of the shipping industry.

Additionally, China is making significant progress in the adoption of green ships and new energy vessels. Its first methanol dual-fueled ship can reduce carbon emissions by 75 percent, nitrogen emissions by 15 percent, and sulfur and particulate matter emissions by 99 percent. Its 700-TEU fully-electric container vessel reduces the same amount of carbon emissions as 160,000 trees can do in a year.

Booming clean marine energy. China's usage of clean marine energy continues to increase in both scope and share. By the end of 2023, the country's installed capacity of offshore wind power had reached 37.69 million kW, accounting for about half the global total capacity and solidifying its position as the global leader for the fourth consecutive year.

Renewable marine power is growing rapidly. The megawatt-class Fenjin marine current turbine generates green power that is fed into the State Grid; the Nankun, China's first independently developed deep-sea megawatt-class wave power generation platform, provides clean electricity to remote islands; and the Penghu deep-sea fish rearing platform can meet its own electricity needs using clean energy from wave and solar energy converters and energy storage devices.

Exploring Methods for Realizing the Values of Ecosystem Goods and Services

Blue seas and clean beaches, like clear waters and green mountains, are invaluable assets. China has been working to develop new systems for marine carbon sink, stimulate the business management and development of marine ecosystem goods and services, and explore mechanisms to realize their values.

Planning a compensation system for offshore eco-environmental protection. China has established a system that guides those who benefit from marine ecosystems in fulfilling their compensation obligations and motivates those involved in the protection of the marine eco-environment to perform their jobs to the highest level. By implementing this system, a positive relationship has been fostered between the two groups, ultimately promoting sustainable development of the marine economy.

The Opinions on Furthering the Reform of the Eco-Environmental Protection Compensation System, issued in 2021, stipulates the task of establishing a compensation system for offshore protection. Hainan Province, Hebei Province, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Lianyungang City in Jiangsu Province, and Xiamen City in Fujian Province have all tailored marine compensation policies to their specific local conditions and acted on these, with positive responses.

Developing new systems for marine carbon sink. Marine carbon sink will significantly contribute to the realization of China's targets for peak carbon dioxide emissions and carbon neutrality. The country has developed an action plan for blue carbon sink and has set technical standards for blue carbon surveying and monitoring. Pilot schemes have been launched to survey carbon stock and quantify carbon sinks in blue carbon ecosystems such as mangroves, salt marshes, and seagrass beds. Monitoring of sea-air carbon dioxide flux and greenhouse gas emissions reduction on oil and gas platforms is also under way.

China has published the Measures for the Administration of Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Trading (Trial) and the Methodology of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Voluntary Reduction Project: Mangrove Vegetation Creation (CCER-14-002-V01), and supported marine carbon sink projects in joining the China Certified Emission Reduction (CCER) trading market. Innovative initiatives such as incentive carbon trading, carbon sink insurance, and carbon sink mortgages, have been piloted in multiple provincial-level administrative regions, including Shandong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangxi, Guangdong, and Hainan.

Encouraging the business management and development of marine ecosystem goods and services. In 2021, China issued the Opinions on Establishing and Improving the Mechanism for Realizing the Values of Ecosystem Goods and Services and made comprehensive arrangements for its implementation. The Criteria for Crediting the Overall Values of Ecosystem Goods and Services (Trial) was published and came into effect alongside the Typical Cases for Realizing the Values of Ecosystem Goods and Services, providing the theoretical and technical underpinning for realizing the values of marine ecosystem goods and services.

Governments in coastal areas have actively sought innovation in their policies and mechanisms. In Dongtou District of Wenzhou City in Zhejiang Province, a creative model based on the government awarding funds and local budget funds was introduced to attract private capital to participate in the Blue Bay Restoration Project and the Ocean Garden Initiative. The China Oceanic Development Foundation established the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area's first eco-environmental special fund, designed to support the construction of the marine industrial parks, eco-parks, and marine engineering centers in the area and to facilitate technological innovation and industrial development of marine ecosystem goods and services.

Continuing to improve compensation for marine eco-environmental damage. China attaches great importance to compensation for marine eco-environmental damage, and defined a clear framework for its implementation in the 1999 amendment to the Marine Environmental Protection Law. Subsequently, the country promulgated the Measures of National Claims for Marine Ecological Damages and the Regulations on Several Issues in the Adjudication of Disputes Concerning Claims for Marine Ecological and Resource Damages to provide further practical guidance, leading to improved results in this area. In 2023, another amendment was made to the Marine Environmental Protection Law to further improve this system.

Launching a Nationwide Green and Low-Carbon Campaign

China has developed a variety of education and scientific outreach initiatives aimed at promoting marine culture. These programs are designed to strengthen public awareness regarding environmental and ecological preservation, advocating for simple, moderate, and healthy lifestyles that prioritize green living and low-carbon practices. They encourage people to voluntarily participate in China's green development, fostering a sense of care, protection, and personal engagement with the sea among the public.

Building public awareness of marine eco-environmental conservation. China hosts yearly themed activities celebrating World Oceans Day (also China's National Ocean Awareness Day), Earth Day, World Environment Day, and World Wetlands Day. More than 160 ocean awareness promotion centers

have been established across the country to foster public interest in ocean conservation.

A number of celebrations centered around the sea have become significant exhibition platforms for China's marine culture, including the Zhoushan Islands—China Ocean Culture Festival, the China (Xiangshan) Fishing Season Opening Festival, and renowned conferences and forums like the China Marine Economy Expo and the World Ocean Week in Xiamen. The National Maritime Museum of China, hailed as the “Forbidden City on the Sea”, has opened to the public, providing an important space for people to learn about oceanic civilization and marine resources, and to reshape their values towards the ocean.

Furthermore, the National Marine Knowledge Competition has been held for the past 14 years, attracting six million participants from the public and students from over a thousand universities and colleges. The result of these efforts has been a significant increase in public interest and understanding of the ocean, and in the public's sense of duty, responsibility, and pride regarding the governance and utilization of the sea.

Encouraging public engagement in marine eco-environmental conservation. Eco-environmental awareness is championed throughout Chinese society, and every member of society is encouraged to spread environmental awareness and be an active practitioner. In 2019, the Blue Citizen concept was introduced, along with various projects and activities to encourage residents to play a role in preserving the beauty and cleanliness of the sea, fostering a generation of “blue citizens”. Since 2017 and for seven years in a row, China has hosted the National Beach Cleanup and the Beautiful Oceans activities—two unique events that look to unite the collective efforts of all people across the country as they care for and protect the sea.

In Xiamen City, Fujian Province, chiefs of Lake Yundang are selected from the public, as a way of soliciting public opinions and suggestions regarding marine eco-environmental protection. In Hainan Province, a “garbage bank” has been established to encourage tourists to actively engage in beach cleanups, fostering a positive atmosphere through various activities that involve everyone in the conservation efforts.

Promoting a green lifestyle. It is the responsibility of every individual to preserve the marine eco-environment. A number of initiatives have been introduced to encourage voluntary public action in maintaining the well-being of the oceans. These include practicing responsible tourism, refraining from purchasing endangered marine life products, avoiding disturbance to marine creatures, and not throwing plastic waste in the sea. Additionally, more and more people are reducing their consumption of plastic bottles, bags, and meal kits by opting for reusable alternatives, thereby decreasing plastic waste from the source. They are taking action to lead a green, low-carbon, and circular lifestyle.

VII. Carrying Out All-Round International Cooperation on Marine Eco-Environmental Protection

Marine issues are global issues, and protecting the marine eco-environment is a common concern for people all over the world. In 1972, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment adopted the Declaration on the Human Environment, which included conservation of the marine environment in its 26 principles and initiated global action on marine environmental protection. In 1982, the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea adopted the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), opening a new chapter in global marine governance and providing comprehensive and systematic provisions for marine environmental protection.

The international community has steadily advanced global ocean protection by establishing a series of marine environmental protection agreements. Countries around the world are building consensus and working in synergy to address the risks and challenges facing the marine eco-environment, striving to make the oceans clean and beautiful.

China is committed to the vision of a maritime community with a shared future, and conducts in-depth mutually beneficial cooperation with the international community through multiple channels and in various forms, contributing Chinese wisdom to global marine eco-environmental protection.

Actively Fulfilling Obligations and Participating in Global Governance

To promote the well-being of humanity, China actively plays its role as a major country, and diligently fulfills its responsibilities and obligations under international maritime conventions through concrete action.

Diligently fulfilling its responsibilities and obligations under international maritime conventions. The marine eco-environment encompasses topics in a wide range of areas. China supports advancing global marine eco-environmental protection through a holistic approach, and actively promotes the implementation of UNCLOS and other international conventions concerning the sea.

In May 1996, China ratified and became a party to UNCLOS, opening a new chapter in the country's participation in global maritime governance. In addition, China has demonstrated its determination and commitment to marine protection in broader and more detailed areas by joining more than 30 multilateral treaties related to oceans, including the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, and the Antarctic Treaty.

Under the framework of international conventions, China has established a policy system surrounding marine eco-environmental protection, resource conservation, and management of polar activities. It carries out voluntary fishing moratoriums on high seas and fulfills its environmental protection obligations, including performing environmental impact assessment for its Antarctic expeditions.

China has also participated in the UN regular assessment of the state of the global marine environment, and released regular progress reports on the implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, national reports on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and national communications on climate change, presenting to the international community China's actions and progress in marine eco-environmental protection and resource conservation, and making tangible contributions by fulfilling its obligations under various conventions.

Integrating into and promoting global ocean governance. China actively participates in the establishment of global maritime governance mechanisms and promotes a more just and reasonable global maritime governance system. It works hard to integrate into multilateral governance, and actively participates in the affairs of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO-IOC), the International Seabed Authority (ISA), and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

China plays an active role in the Conference of the Parties to the UNCLOS, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM), and other agendas. Since 2012, China has submitted more than 120 proposals, independently or jointly, to relevant polar international organizations, and over 700 proposals to the IMO and other international organizations, engaging itself extensively in the formulation of relevant rules and regulations for environmental protection and resource conservation.

It has advanced the formulation of ISA's regulations on exploration and development, the negotiation of agreements and regulations on fisheries under the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO), the negotiation of an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, and other multilateral processes. China was also heavily involved in the negotiation and implementation of the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean, and contributed significantly to the negotiations on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) and its signing as a treaty, which took nearly 20 years to reach consensus. Overall, China has made an outstanding contribution to global ocean governance.

Expanding "Circle of Friends" for Maritime Cooperation

Addressing global marine eco-environmental issues remains a long-term and arduous task that requires extensive global participation and collaborative efforts. China upholds multilateralism, and has developed blue partnerships through an open and pragmatic approach. It works with the international community to build a sea of prosperity and beauty for all countries.

Building extensive blue partnerships. On a voluntary and cooperative basis, China has worked with other countries to establish a global blue partnership characterized by consultation and joint contribution. In 2017, China called for building a blue partnership at the first UN Ocean Conference, designed to promote international cooperation on "cherishing our ocean and protecting our blue home". The proposal was then made formal with China announcing the Vision for Maritime Cooperation Under the Belt and Road Initiative.

In September 2021, "actively promoting the establishment of a blue partnership" was designated by the High-level Dialogue on Global Development as one of the specific measures taken by China under the framework of the Global Development Initiative (GDI). At the 2022 UN Ocean Conference, China released the Blue Partnership Principles and launched the Sustainable Blue Partnership Cooperation Network and the Blue Partnership Fund, for joint action in the protection and sustainable utilization of the sea and its resources.

Currently, China has signed intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements on marine cooperation with more than 50 countries and international organizations participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, contributing significantly to cooperation on global marine eco-environmental protection.

Expanding platforms and mechanisms for maritime cooperation. China prioritizes marine eco-environmental protection as a key area of cooperation, taking the initiative to establish new platforms and mechanisms and build consensus among all parties. Leading cooperation with platform building as the foundation, China has taken a lead in establishing and operating the East Asia Marine Cooperation Platform and the China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Center. These platforms conduct practical cooperation with East Asian and ASEAN countries on marine scientific research, eco-environmental protection, and disaster prevention and mitigation.

It has built relevant mechanisms for international organizations in China, including the APEC Marine Sustainable Development Center and the United Nations Decade Collaborative Center on Ocean-Climate Nexus, coordinating global innovation and cooperation in the ocean and climate fields, facilitating the sharing and exchanges of beneficial experience in marine eco-environmental protection, and playing an important role in jointly protecting the marine ecosystems.

Advocating and guiding bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Championing the principle of planning together, building together and benefiting together, China has continued to expand areas of

international cooperation, conducting dialogue and exchanges on multilateral platforms.

It has held the Thematic Forum on Maritime Cooperation of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, the World Coastal Forum, the Eco Forum Global Guiyang, and the China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Forum, advancing cooperation towards new progress in eco-environmental protection and restoration, disaster monitoring and early warning, and marine plastic pollution prevention and control.

China attaches great importance to mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation between countries, and has established long-term bilateral cooperation mechanisms with many countries in many fields. It actively provides technical support to other developing countries, and has established joint marine research centers, laboratories, and observation stations with Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mozambique, and Jamaica, playing a positive role in strengthening marine eco-environmental protection in other developing countries.

China works with other countries to carry out research on endangered marine species, joint environmental surveys in the Yellow Sea, coral reef monitoring and data collection, and prevention and control of marine litter and microplastic pollution. The results from these programs have injected more impetus to regional marine eco-environmental protection.

Expanding Cooperation in Deep-Sea and Polar Scientific Expedition

Protecting deep-sea and polar eco-environments is the common responsibility of humanity. As an important participant, vigorous promoter, and active practitioner in deep-sea and polar affairs, China takes a leading role in international deep-sea and polar exploration and research, working together with the international community to promote sustainable development of these regions.

Jointly advancing deep-sea research and exploration. China actively takes part in international seabed affairs, coordinates deep-sea surveys, and strengthens the protection of the deep-sea eco-environment. It has conducted more than 80 scientific research voyages in the deep sea, going on joint scientific expeditions with Russia, Japan, Nigeria, Seychelles, and Indonesia, and contributing to a better understanding of deep-sea ecosystems.

For more than 10 consecutive years since 2011, based on its studies in the field of earth science, China has submitted seabed naming proposals to the Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN), of which 261 have been approved, contributing to a clearer understanding of the deep-sea geography. Based on the results of its investigation of deep-sea biological resources, China has also set up a marine microorganism bank that leads the world in inventory and number of species, helping humans to expand their understanding of biological life processes in the deep sea.

Jointly expanding understanding of polar regions. China is committed to protecting the natural environment of the North and South Poles in accordance with international law, and actively participates in international cooperation to address environmental challenges and climate change for these regions. At the 40th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM), China took the lead in jointly proposing the Green Expedition Initiative with more than ten countries, and the initiative was ultimately passed as a resolution to open a new chapter of Antarctic expedition.

China has built five Antarctic research stations, and two Arctic research stations in Norway and Iceland, which serve as important platforms for several thousand scientists to carry out polar observation, biological monitoring, and glacier research. Additionally, it has organized 13 scientific expeditions in the Arctic Ocean and 40 in the Antarctic, while signing memorandums of understanding or joint statements with the United States, Russia, Australia, Iceland, and New Zealand and carrying out international cooperation with more than 10 countries.

It is a key participant in the Multidisciplinary Drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate (MOSAIC)—the largest Arctic scientific research program—and plays a leading role in advancing international cooperation on the Joint Arctic Scientific Middle-Ocean Ridge Insight Expedition (JASMIInE). China works with other countries to undertake the tasks of the Antarctic RINGS (Ice Sheet Margin) Action Group under the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), and has made positive contributions to a deeper understanding of polar regions on global marine ecosystems.

Providing Extensive Foreign Assistance and Training

Facing a deteriorating marine eco-environment, all countries are members of a community with a shared future. China stands in solidarity with the international community and carries out cooperation with it. While pursuing its own development, it also brings more benefits to other countries and peoples, contributing its share to global marine eco-environmental protection.

Providing extensive foreign assistance. China has provided support and assistance to the best of its ability to other developing countries in addressing marine eco-environmental issues through various means. In 2012, it launched the Marine Scholarship of China program, which has enabled over 300 students from 45 countries, including Belt and Road partners, to obtain master's or doctoral degrees in oceanography and other related fields, helping other developing countries to cultivate professionals in marine sciences and management. It has provided technical assistance in marine spatial planning, marine economic planning, and sea level rise assessment to Thailand, Cambodia, and Cape Verde, and has held workshops on ocean dumping management technology under the London Convention and its 1996 Protocol, to help grow an awareness of the sea and provide the technology for marine eco-environmental protection for African and Latin American nations.

Actively carrying out foreign training. In order to provide a platform for marine education, training, and public awareness in developing countries, China has established several education centers, including the China-ISA Joint Training and Research Center, the China Western Pacific Center of the International Ocean Institute (IOC), the IOC Regional Training and Research Center on Ocean Dynamics and Climate (ODC), and the Tianjin Regional Training Center of the Ocean Teacher Global Academy (OTGA).

As a positive contributor to improving the technical capabilities of scientific researchers in related fields in developing countries, it hosts various events in which participants share knowledge and practical experience on integrated coastal zone management, ocean governance, and marine eco-environmental protection, and provides training in this field for about 500 people every year.

Conclusion

Oceans constitute a blue home that ensures the survival of humanity. In the face of the global challenge to the marine eco-environment, humanity forms a community with a shared future, and shares a common responsibility to protect the marine eco-environment and ensure its sustainable development.

Today, as China embarks on a new journey of rejuvenating the Chinese nation through Chinese modernization, the country's maritime endeavors have entered an era of historic opportunities. Protecting the marine eco-environment has become an essential requirement and fundamental guarantee for building China into a strong maritime country and achieving harmony between humans and the sea.

On this new journey, China will continue to champion the new development philosophy, promote eco-environmental progress, and build a marine eco-environment underpinned by harmony between humans and the sea. Embracing the vision of a better world through cooperation and mutual benefit, China contributes to a global maritime community with a shared future through concrete actions. It is ready to work with other countries to lay the foundation for a marine eco-civilization, pursue green development of the sea, and build a cleaner and more beautiful world where oceans serve as a permanent home for humans to live and thrive.

Cyberspace Governance

China's Law-Based Cyberspace Governance in the New Era

Source: State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
March 2023

Preface

The internet is one of humanity's great achievements. Although it facilitates economic and social development, at the same time it poses severe challenges in terms of administration and governance. The development and governance of the internet is a goal shared by all countries for the benefit of humanity, and the rule of law has proved to be essential to internet governance. It has become a global consensus to apply law-based thinking and approaches based on an understanding of the rule of law.

Since China was fully connected to the internet in 1994, it has committed itself to law-based cyberspace governance, ensuring that the internet develops within the confines of the law. In the new era, guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, China has made law-based cyberspace governance an essential part of the overall strategy of the rule of law and the drive to build up its strength in cyberspace.

Marked improvements have been made in ensuring law-based cyberspace governance. China has boosted cyberspace governance by developing a complete system of laws and regulations, a highly efficient enforcement system, a stringent supervision system, and an effective supporting system. With participation of the government, businesses, social organizations and netizens, cyber legislation, law enforcement, and judiciary work have advanced alongside programs to spread legal knowledge via the internet, publicize cyber laws and cultivate the public's awareness in laws. This is a pioneering approach to cyberspace governance in line with international best practices. With stronger domestic capacity in law-based internet governance, China has contributed ideas and solutions to global internet governance.

The Chinese government is publishing this white paper to introduce China's progress and experience in law-based cyberspace governance.

Upholding the Rule of Law in Cyberspace

Adapting to the developing trends of global information technology, China set out from its own realities to integrate law-based cyberspace governance into the overall national strategy of the rule of law, gaining knowledge and experience in the process. It has pioneered a distinctive Chinese approach to law-based cyberspace governance.

People-centered development. In China, the people contribute ideas and solutions and play a principal role. Their rights, interests, aspirations and well-being are the focus in every aspect of cyber legislation, law enforcement, judiciary work, public education, and all other areas of law-based cyberspace governance. China protects people's legitimate rights and interests in cyberspace, and fully respects netizens' right to express ideas and exchange views. It has strengthened law-based cyberspace governance, taking resolute action against cybercrimes to keep order in this virtual world, and striving to create a safe, fair, healthy, clean and sound cyber environment.

Further development of the internet. The purpose of law-based cyberspace governance is to guarantee the healthy and orderly development of the internet, not to hold it back. Under law-based cyberspace governance, China has guided and regulated efforts to build a high-quality digital China—improving the governance system for the digital economy, the legal framework of digital government, and the digital society initiative. Placing equal emphasis on development and security, China has consolidated its lines of defense so that the internet grows in a secure environment and further boosts cybersecurity. Cyberspace has thus been turned into a powerful engine for socioeconomic growth, rather than an area of uncertainty.

Proceeding from realities. China is the world's largest developing country and has the largest number of internet users. It boasts a large number of business platforms that offer all types of products and services. As a result, there are diverse legal subjects, relationships and situations where different laws apply. With all this in mind, China handles the relationships between development and security, freedom and order, openness and autonomy, and administration and service in an appropriate manner. It has conducted in-depth research on frontier areas of paramount importance, employing law-based thinking and approaches to break through bottlenecks in internet development and find solutions for healthy internet growth.

Innovation-driven cyberspace governance. The internet is a result of innovation and has flourished because of it. Law-based cyberspace governance cannot be achieved without innovation. With a keen understanding of the unprecedented difficulties and complications in cyberspace governance, China has been forward-looking in responding to the risks and challenges brought by new internet technologies, applications, and business forms and models, and promoted innovation in the concept, content, approach and methods of law-based cyberspace governance. By creating and improving rules on algorithm, blockchain technology, and other new technologies and domains, it has filled gaps in key areas where legislation once lagged behind. A system for comprehensive cyberspace governance is now in place, and new models of cyber judiciary work have been created. Driven by innovation, China has raised its capacity for internet governance in all areas.

Openness and cooperation. Upholding cyber sovereignty, China has drawn from the experience of other countries in cyberspace governance, planning internet development in a global context and pioneering a distinctively Chinese model of internet governance in line with international best practice. It has played an active part in working with other countries to formulate rules for cyberspace governance, and engaged in international exchanges and cooperation in law-based cyberspace governance. It is committed to building a multilateral, democratic and transparent global internet governance system together with other countries.

In the new era, China set out from its realities and learned from advanced foreign experience to explore its own approach to cyberspace regulation and governance, maintaining the right orientation while pursuing innovation. Significant achievements have been made in a range of areas, building up China's strength in cyberspace and adding momentum to law-based governance of the country, as well as contributing to national governance by the Communist Party of China (CPC) in the information age.

A guarantee of the transformation from scale to strength. China is building up its strength in cyberspace through these goals: universally available network infrastructure, significantly greater capacity of independent innovation, comprehensive development of the digital economy, guarantee of cybersecurity, and balanced ability of cyber attacks and defense. Major progress has been made in China towards these goals, as evidenced by the world's largest number of netizens, the largest and most advanced fiber-optic broadband and mobile telecommunication networks, and world-leading 5G technology, industry and applications. China's Internet of Things (IoT) now connects more cellular terminals than mobile phone users.

China's digital economy has been growing with a strong momentum. In 2021, its value reached 45.5 trillion yuan, ranking second in the world. New internet technologies are widely used in areas such as education, employment, social security, medical and health care, sports, housing, transport, support for persons with disabilities, and elderly care. Internet Plus services are running on a track of healthy development in accordance with the law. China has created the world's largest active digital society.

Law-based national governance fully implemented in cyberspace. In China, the principle of law-based governance of the country applies equally in cyberspace. The Law-Based Governance of China Initiative has been implemented, and progress has been made in law-based cyberspace governance by ensuring sound lawmaking, strict enforcement, impartial administration of justice, and the observance of the law by all. Under socialist rule of law with Chinese characteristics in cyberspace, the groundwork for cyber legislation has been laid, contributing to and improving China's socialist legal system. Cyber law enforcement has continued to strengthen. By taking tough action against illegal behaviors in cyberspace, China has fostered a sound cyber environment and maintained online order, which contributes to peace and harmony in the society as a whole. Rules of cyber adjudication have improved, more online cases have been handled, and justice is served in cyberspace as elsewhere. Knowledge of cyber laws has been further spread, and netizens have acted accordingly—respecting, learning, abiding by, and using the law. The Chinese people's awareness of and literacy in the law has increased.

Contributing ideas, experience and solutions to global internet governance. Cyberspace is a shared space for human activities; it must be developed and managed by all countries. China has formed its own approach to law-based cyberspace governance by advancing legislation, law enforcement, judiciary work, and programs to spread knowledge about cyber laws, and has shared its experience with the world. It has taken an active part in global internet governance, promoting the G20 Digital Economy Development and Cooperation Initiative and the Global Data Security Initiative, and other proposals and declarations. It has raised the principle of cyber sovereignty, and advocates that the principle of sovereign equality established by the UN Charter be applied to cyberspace, thereby contributing ideas and solutions to cyberspace governance.

Consolidating the Legal System for Cyberspace Governance

The law is a powerful tool for governing a country, and sound laws are the prerequisite for good governance. Following the trend of internet development, China has advanced the legal system for cyberspace governance through legislation that is enacted in a well-conceived and democratic way and in accordance with the law. Cyber legislation is becoming systematic, holistic, coordinated, and time-efficient.

Cyber legislation in China has undergone a long, gradual process that can be roughly divided into three stages. The first stage ran from 1994 to 1999, a period when China became connected to the internet. Internet users and devices grew steadily in number. Legislation during this stage focused on network

infrastructure security, specifically computer systems security and network security. The second stage lasted from 2000 to 2011, when personal computers (PCs) served as the main terminal for internet connection. As PCs and internet users grew rapidly in numbers, internet connection services became more affordable and web-based information services boomed. Legislation during this stage shifted to internet services and content management. The third stage, which began in 2012, is dominated by mobile internet. Legislation now is gradually focusing on comprehensive cyberspace governance by covering areas such as network information services, information technology development, and cybersecurity.

Over the years, China has promulgated more than 140 laws on cyberspace, forming a cyber legislation framework with the Constitution as the foundation, supported by laws, administrative regulations, departmental rules, local regulations and local administrative rules, endorsed by traditional legislation, and underpinned by specialized cyber laws governing online content and management, cybersecurity, information technology, and other elements. This system of laws on cyberspace governance provides a strong institutional guarantee for building up China's strength in cyberspace.

Cyber Legislation in China

Type	Examples
Law	·Electronic Commerce Law ·Electronic Signature Law ·Cybersecurity Law ·Data Security Law ·Personal Information Protection Law ·Law on Combating Telecom and Online Fraud
Administrative Regulation	·Regulations on the Security and Protection of Computer Information Systems ·Regulations on Computer Software Protection ·Administrative Measures on Internet Information Services ·Telecommunications Regulations ·Regulations on the Administration of Foreign Investment in Chinese Telecommunications Businesses ·Regulations on the Protection of the Right of Communication Through Information Networks ·Regulations on the Security and Protection of Critical Information Infrastructure
Departmental Rule	·Regulations on the Protection of Children's Online Personal Information ·China Internet Domain Name Regulations ·Measures on the Supervision and Administration of Online Transactions ·Provisions on the Administration of Internet News and Information Services ·Regulations on the Governance of Online Information and Content ·Regulations on the Management of Algorithmic Recommendations for Internet Information Services
Local Regulation	·Guangdong Provincial Digital Economy Promotion Act ·Zhejiang Provincial Digital Economy Promotion Act ·Hebei Provincial Regulations on Information Technology Development ·Guizhou Provincial Regulations on Government Data Sharing ·Shanghai Municipal Data Regulations
Local Administrative Rule	·Measures of Guangdong Province on Public Data Management ·Measures of Anhui Province on the Management of Data and Resources for Government Affairs ·Measures of Jiangxi Province on the Protection of Computer Information System Security ·Interim Measures of Hangzhou City on the Administration of Online Transactions
Total Number	Exceeding 140

Establishing a System of Laws for Protecting People's Rights and Interests in Cyberspace

China has established a sound system of laws to protect people's rights and interests in cyberspace, laying the legal groundwork for protecting both online and offline rights.

Protecting the freedom and confidentiality of correspondence. This is a prerequisite for citizens to air views and needs in cyberspace of their own volition. China enacted the Measures on Ensuring Security of Internationally Connected Computer Information Networks in 1997, to provide legal protection of the freedom and confidentiality of correspondence as enshrined in the Constitution. It formulated the Telecommunications Regulations in 2000, stipulating that citizens' freedom to use telecom services and their confidentiality of correspondence are protected by law. It revised the Regulations on Radio Administration in 2016, further strengthening the protection of the confidentiality of correspondence via radio service. Thus, this basic right enjoys full protection in cyberspace.

Protecting personal information rights and interests. China has built a line of defense in law for protecting personal information rights and interests. In 2020, the Civil Code was adopted at the Third Session of the 13th National People's Congress, which makes systemic provisions on protecting personal information in civil cases based on previous legal stipulations. In 2009 and 2015, Amendment VII and Amendment IX to the Criminal Law added provisions on the crime of infringing upon citizens' personal information, thus strengthening the protection of personal information in the Criminal Law. In terms of cyber legislation, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress issued the Decision on

Strengthening Online Information Protection in 2012, announcing clearly to protect electronic information that may reveal citizens' identity and privacy. The Cybersecurity Law enacted in 2016 further refined rules on personal information protection.

The Personal Information Protection Law, promulgated in 2021, represented an overall upgrading of personal information protection. It defined and refined principles on protecting personal information and rules on processing personal information, and specified how state agencies should process personal information in accordance with the law. It empowered the subjects of personal information with a range of rights, emphasized the obligations of personal information processors, improved the mechanism for protecting personal information, and set clear and strict legal liabilities.

Safeguarding citizens' property. China has strengthened legislation to curb infringements upon citizens' property by way of the internet. In 2018, the Electronic Commerce Law was promulgated, stipulating that products or services from e-commerce suppliers should not undermine personal safety or the security of property. The Civil Code has clear provisions on the legal liability of those who infringe upon others' property rights and interests by way of the internet. In 2022, China enacted the Law on Combating Telecom and Online Fraud, providing strong legal support for fighting crime and safeguarding people's property rights and interests.

Protecting the digital rights of special groups. Through multilevel and multifaceted legislation, China has invested a real effort to close the digital divide for minors, elderly people, and persons with disabilities, so that everybody can join in the digital society on an equal basis and enjoy the benefits of the digital age as much as possible.

As stipulated in the Cybersecurity Law, the state supports research and development on internet products and services that are beneficial to minors' healthy growth, and punishes by law those who place their physical and mental health at risk via the internet. In 2019, China issued the Regulations on the Protection of Children's Online Personal Information, prioritizing the protection of personal information for children. In 2020, the Law on the Protection of Minors was revised, to strengthen minors' education on internet literacy, online supervision and regulation of content for minors, protection of minors' personal information online, and prevention and control of internet addiction, all to safeguard minors' legitimate rights and interests in cyberspace. The Data Security Law, promulgated in 2021, stipulates that providers of smart public services should take into full consideration the needs of elderly people and persons with disabilities, and make sure they do not create obstacles to their daily life.

Improving Law-Based Governance of the Digital Economy

To transform from high-speed growth to high-quality growth, China has continued to improve institutions fundamental to data development, maintain order in the digital market, and regulate new business forms and models of the digital economy, laying a sound framework of rules for the healthy growth of the digital economy.

Creating institutions fundamental to data development. Data is a fundamental resource and an engine for innovation. The Data Security Law contains provisions on implementing the big data strategy, supporting R&D on data-related technology and business innovation, advancing data-related standards, and developing data trading markets. These provisions aim to improve data development and utilization, and promote the growth of the digital economy in which data serves as a key factor.

Regulating the operation of the digital market. China regulates and develops the digital market in accordance with the law, stands firmly against monopolies and unfair competition, and improves digital rules to ensure a market environment for fair competition.

The Electronic Commerce Law provides a full set of regulations on e-commerce operation, with clear provisions on the responsibilities of e-commerce platform operators and business owners on these platforms. It stipulates that e-commerce operators with a dominant share of the market should not abuse their position to eliminate or limit competition, so that fair competition is maintained. The Law on the Protection of Consumer Rights and Interests (2013 Revision) established a seven-day unconditional return policy for online shopping, to reinforce the primary responsibility of online business operators in consumer rights protection. The Law Against Unfair Competition (2017 Revision) has separate provisions regarding the internet, to ban unfair competition that takes advantage of technology. The Measures on the Supervision and Administration of Online Transactions, enacted in 2021, contain detailed provisions on the relevant regulations in the Electronic Commerce Law, to strengthen online trading supervision. In 2021, the Anti-monopoly Commission under the State Council issued the Anti-monopoly Guidelines for Platform Economy, to strengthen and improve anti-monopoly supervision based on the status, characteristics, and development of the platform economy. In 2022, the Anti-monopoly Law was amended to improve the anti-monopoly framework for the platform economy, banning operators from abuse of a monopoly position by leveraging their strengths in data and algorithms, technology, capital, and platform rules.

Regulating new business forms and models of the digital economy. The rapid rise of new business forms and models in the digital economy created social and economic impetus and potential, and also posed new challenges for social governance and industrial growth. Focusing on problems unique to the new forms and models in certain areas, China has advanced legislation in both the comprehensive and special laws to prevent and defuse risks.

The Civil Code improved the rules on the conclusion and execution of electronic contracts, and brought

data and virtual assets under legal protection, giving a boost to the digital economy. To expand the legal framework for governing Internet Plus services, China has introduced an array of regulations, including the Interim Measures on the Administration of Online Taxi Booking Services, Regulations on the Administration of Algorithmic Recommendations for Internet Information Services, Regulations on the Administration of Blockchain Information Services, Interim Measures on the Administration of Business Activities of Intermediary Agencies for Online Lending, and Interim Regulations on the Administration of Online Tourist Services.

Safeguarding Cybersecurity by Law

Cybersecurity is a new component of national security, and an issue of paramount importance. By formulating the National Security Law, Cybersecurity Law, and Data Security Law, China has defined the legal institutional framework for cybersecurity, to boost its defenses against cyber threats and effectively respond to cybersecurity risks.

Setting rules for cybersecurity. The Regulations on the Security and Protection of Computer Information Systems was released in 1994, designed to safeguard and supervise computer information system security. In 2000, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress issued the Decision on Ensuring Internet Security, detailing security requirements in operation and information, and establishing a framework of responsibilities for cybersecurity composed of civil, administrative and criminal liabilities.

The Cybersecurity Law specifies the systems for ensuring security of network operation, online products and services, data, and information. Some of its provisions are further elaborated in the Measures on Cybersecurity Review and the Regulations on the Management of Security Loopholes of Online Products. After years of effort, China now has a complete set of legal rules on cybersecurity, and greater capacity for ensuring cybersecurity through institutional development.

Ensuring security for critical information infrastructure. Critical information infrastructure is the nerve center of socioeconomic operation, and the top concern for cybersecurity. Its security is central to maintaining cyber sovereignty and national security, guaranteeing sound socioeconomic development, and protecting the public interest and the legitimate rights and interests of individual citizens.

In 2021, China released the Regulations on the Security and Protection of Critical Information Infrastructure, with provisions defining what constitutes critical information infrastructure and the principles and goals of protection. The procedures for identifying critical information infrastructure were improved, and the operators' responsibility for cybersecurity was clarified. There were also provisions on improving the mechanisms for network security and protection, setting up special security management agencies, conducting safety monitoring and risk assessment, and regulating the purchase of online products and services. The Regulations provide the legal ground for upgrading the country's capacity for safeguarding critical information infrastructure.

Developing the legal framework for data security management. Proceeding from reality and focusing on the outstanding problems in data security, China has strengthened its capacity for data security through legislation. The Data Security Law has clear provisions on establishing mechanisms for categorized and classified data protection, risk monitoring and early warning, emergency response, and data security review; it also contains measures to facilitate data security and development and provisions for the security and openness of government data.

Improving Regulation for a Sound Cyber Environment

Cyberspace is a public space for internet users. A clean and sound cyber environment is in accord with the people's expectations. Out of a strong sense of responsibility towards society and the people, China has introduced laws and regulations for comprehensive cyberspace governance, to clean up the cyber environment with a focus on online information and content.

Regulating the orderly dissemination of online information. To strengthen online information governance, a global challenge, China formulated the Civil Code, Cybersecurity Law, and Administrative Measures on Internet Information Services, to define the rules for the dissemination of online information and the liabilities of relevant subjects. These laid the legal groundwork for tackling illegal information that threatens national security, harms the public interest, and infringes upon the legitimate rights and interests of individuals.

Sharpening the legal weapons against cyberterrorism. China stands firm against the threat of cyberterrorism. The Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Law, and Anti-Money Laundering Law contain provisions on criminal liability for terrorist activities and judicial proceedings in the investigation of terrorist crimes, as well as on monitoring the money for funding terrorist activities. The Counterterrorism Law promulgated in 2015 has separate provisions on the targets, measures and mechanisms for combating terrorism in cyberspace.

Keeping Order in a Rule-Based Cyberspace

Strict law enforcement is a critical link in law-based cyberspace governance. China has taken rigorous measures to ensure fair and rule-based law enforcement in cyberspace, strengthening enforcement in key areas of immediate concern to the people, and protecting the legitimate rights and interests of the

individual as well as the general public. A sound, rule-based order has been created in a clean cyber environment.

Protecting Personal Information

With a thriving digital economy come a growing number of crimes, such as the illegal collection, buying and selling, use and leakage of personal information, which threaten people's personal and property security and disrupt social and economic order. Personal information protection concerns people's legitimate rights and interests, as well as public security governance and the future of the digital economy.

Targeting covert, high-frequency personal information infringements with high-tech means, China has adopted new thinking and methods of supervision, taking tougher action against illegal activities. For example, it carries out regular actions against mobile applications that illegally collect and use personal data. Since 2019, the authorities in China have inspected 3.22 million mobile applications, issuing notice of criticism to and removing about 3,000 applications that violated laws and regulations. Through these targeted actions, violations of personal information rights have been effectively curbed, as many more applications are now conforming to relevant regulations and the public has also built a strong awareness of personal data protection. Respecting and protecting personal information is recognized as essential by all.

Protecting Online Intellectual Property Rights

Strengthening online intellectual property rights (IPR) protection is central to innovation in internet technology. As new technologies and applications flourish, IPR infringements online have become cheaper and more diversified and covert, posing a severe challenge to law enforcement in terms of tracing, evidence collection, and enforcement.

Over the years, China has developed a keen understanding of online IPR creation, protection and application, and taken strong actions for online IPR protection. These include: establishing and improving supervision mechanisms, creating a new dynamic of IPR protection by all members of society, launching cross-platform cooperation for IPR protection, and punishing online infringement and piracy. Integrated online-offline law enforcement has been strengthened to enable firm action against online trademark infringements and counterfeiting of patented products. Regular targeted actions have been taken against all types of infringements and piracy, including online copyright infringement, pirated film copies and illegal dissemination, and copyright infringement in key markets and areas. During the Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics, more than 110,000 unauthorized links containing content about the Games were deleted from internet platforms. Through years of effort, China has achieved a marked improvement in online IPR protection.

Maintaining Order in the Online Market

The rapid rise of the online market has played a major role in stabilizing the economy, spurring consumption, securing employment, and serving the people's well-being. China has tried out new models of law enforcement adapted to the online market, a new business form, and supported its sound and sustainable growth by regulating the market for fair competition and taking resolute action against all forms of illegal transactions.

Ensuring fair competition in the online market. As online platforms expand in size and grow in strength, they have increasingly hampered fair competition by acquiring the best-performing startups in their sectors, deliberately blocking URL links of other platforms, compelling platform users to choose one platform over another, engaging in big data-enabled price discrimination against existing customers, and hijacking traffic.

In response to public appeal, China has taken a range of measures to address disorderly competition among online platforms, support their innovation-driven growth, and regulate and guide capital growth by law. Acts of unfair competition by major online platforms such as price cheating and dumping, monopoly abuse, and other acts of unfair competition have been redressed through regulatory means including administrative admonition, administrative guidance, and guidance on rules. Cases relating to concentration of platform operators in key areas such as finance, high-tech, media that affect people's well-being have been reviewed and handled in accordance with the law. Mergers and acquisitions that might adversely affect market competition and innovation have been prevented, and online platform businesses are advised to increase their awareness of rules and regulate their operations.

All this has contributed to an improved market environment for the platform economy, a sound business environment of fair competition, and broader space for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to grow. A unified, open, fair, competitive, and orderly online business environment is taking shape.

Cases of Unfair Competition and Monopoly Involving Online Platforms

In 2020–2021, China investigated two typical cases of compelling platform users to choose one platform over another, in e-business and online food delivery services, and imposed total fines of 21.67 billion yuan. In 2021, 1,998 cases of unfair competition online were investigated, resulting in fines of 119 million yuan. From 2020 to the first half of 2022, 56 cases of concentration of platform operators with prior notification were reviewed, and 159 cases of illegal concentration of platform operators that failed to file a prior notification were investigated in accordance with the law.

Regulating online trading and transactions. Rule-based online trading and transactions are essential to creating a sound online market environment and protecting the rights of those engaged in these activities.

China has launched Operation Wangjian to fight online sales of pirated, counterfeit, and sub-standard products, and illegal trading of wildlife and products. It has made sure that online platforms assume their due responsibilities, and strengthened supervision over internet advertisement. In response to new online trading forms such as livestreaming e-commerce and mini online stores, China has exercised strict regulation over customer soliciting by online channels, and investigated a number of websites and platform users suspected of wrongdoing. Targeted actions have been taken against online pyramid selling, particularly under the guise of e-commerce, investment and money management, and online business startups. Online trading and transactions by main market players in key areas have thus been effectively regulated.

Operation Wangjian

Since 2018, China has launched Operation Wangjian (meaning "web sword") to fight online sales of pirated, counterfeit and sub-standard products, illegal trading of wildlife and products, and illegal advertising. About 1.83 million items of illegal product information have been deleted from online trading platforms, 23,900 websites have been closed, 105,000 website and platform services have been served with cessation orders, and 119,700 internet-related cases have been handled. The operation has safeguarded the legitimate rights and interests of consumers and ensured a sound online trading order for fair competition.

Safeguarding National Cybersecurity

A strong line of defense against cyber threats is the precondition and basis for the healthy development of the internet. China has continued to carry out law enforcement in securing core internet resources, key network systems, and internet data, effectively preventing and defusing risks to cybersecurity, and creating a safe online environment in the internet age.

In the area of core internet resources, it has strengthened the management of websites, domains and IP addresses, and improved early warning systems through more sophisticated technical means to guarantee security. In the area of key network systems, it has further strengthened protection for network security and monitored cybersecurity threats, effectively guarding against large-scale denial-of-service attacks and other major security incidents. In the area of internet data, through monitoring systems and category-specific management at all levels, it has increased the ability to protect and oversee data security, and strengthened law enforcement on data security involving the Industrial Internet, Internet of Vehicles, and 5G application.

Creating a Clean Cyberspace

In response to public demand and expectations, China has acted to regulate online information dissemination and rectify disorder in cyberspace. It has launched Operation Clean Net, Operation Qinglang and other special campaigns to address outstanding problems of strong public concern on the internet, such as pornography, fake information, cyberbullying, and abuse of algorithms. Websites and platforms spreading information that violates laws and regulations have received administrative admonition, rectification orders and warnings, and punishments such as fines and temporary bans on issuing new content. In addition, websites and platforms have been urged to assume their principal responsibility, and manage the information released by their users in accordance with the law and their user agreements. A complaint and reporting system for online information security is now in place to form synergy for cyber governance. With continued improvements to the online environment, the internet has become much cleaner and netizens more civil and better-behaved.

China prioritizes special protection for minors, creating a sound, friendly online environment for them. It has cleaned up the internet through Operation Child Protector and other special programs to maintain a safe online environment for minors, with a focus on illegal and harmful information, online gaming addiction, and unhealthy online socializing. It has strengthened the education on online safety among minors, and punished online crimes that harm the physical and mental health of minors, creating a sound and safe online environment for minors supported by joint efforts from families, schools, and society.

Operation Child Protector

Since 2011, China has regularly launched Operation Child Protector for the protection of minors. Offline, law enforcement teams have conducted regular inspections of markets near campuses, removing publications for children that contain content involving porn, violence or drug-abuse, or promote cult organizations and superstitions. Online, luring yet harmful content has been cleaned up through concerted efforts. Online platforms are urged to introduce youth-friendly versions that work, and key internet businesses are encouraged to assign offices and staff for Operation Child Protector. The Operation has expanded into a franchise of programs, to provide public education and communication, build education bases, and help schools and families strictly supervise teenagers' use of mobile phones and other smart terminal devices.

Defending Fairness and Justice in Cyberspace

An impartial judiciary is the last line of defense for social fairness and justice. China has stayed committed to the principle of maintaining judicial justice and administering justice for the people. Actively responding to the needs of justice in the age of the internet, China has employed internet and information technology to empower the traditional judiciary, improved rules of cyber justice, and reformed models of cyber justice. This has allowed it to settle new types of cyber disputes in accordance with the law, combat cybercrime, safeguard the rights and interests of cyberspace players, and deliver judicial services that are more fair, just, open, transparent, efficient, accessible, inclusive, and equitable.

Defining New Rules of Cyber Justice

As new internet technologies, applications and business forms develop quickly, legal relationships in cyberspace are becoming more diverse, posing new challenges to the administration of justice in cyberspace. This calls for better-defined rules of cyber justice.

For this purpose, China has produced timely judicial interpretations of civil and criminal issues such as intellectual property rights, the right to dignity, online transactions, and unfair competition on the internet, as well as telecom and online fraud. It has handled a good number of unprecedented, complicated cases that are closely related to the internet, such as those involving internet infrastructure security, algorithms, data rights and trading, protection of personal information, and management of online platforms. In the process, it has refined the criteria for the application of the law and made the standards for adjudication consistent. This has led to increasing clarity on the rules, code of conduct, and boundaries of rights, obligations and responsibilities in cyberspace. China has formulated rules for online litigation, mediation and operation of the people's courts, refined rules on taking electronic data as evidence, and standardized the procedures for handling cybercrime cases. As a result, a system of rules and procedures for cyber justice is taking shape. This systematic development of relevant rules provides regulatory guidance and institutional safeguards for cyber justice, which is therefore becoming more rule-based.

Exploring New Models of Cyber Justice

China has been active in exploring new channels, domains and models for further integrating internet technology with judicial activities, for the purpose of speedier delivery of justice. In order to build a cyber justice model with Chinese characteristics, it has piloted measures in applying the latest technologies such as big data, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and blockchain in judicial proceedings, judgment enforcement, judicial administration, and other fields.

Local courts are encouraged to explore new mechanisms with regional features for internet-empowered adjudication, on the basis of the development of local internet industry and the characteristics of local cyber disputes. Internet courts have been established in Hangzhou, Beijing and Guangzhou, in an attempt to realize adjudication of internet-related cases via the internet. In the process of digitalizing procuratorial work, China has used big data to empower legal oversight. It has systematically integrated a wide range of case information, worked on models and platforms for big data-based legal oversight, and implemented oversight of the prosecution of individual cases and of similar cases in order to address the common problems they raise. This has helped improve the quality and efficiency of legal oversight in the new era. The emergence of these new models signifies the further development of a socialist judicial system with Chinese characteristics in cyberspace, and is becoming a salient feature of China's judicial system.

Internet Courts

Internet courts represent a success in creating new judicial models. The Hangzhou Internet Court was established on August 18, 2017, followed by the opening of two more such courts in Beijing on September 9, 2018 and in Guangzhou on September 28. These internet courts focus on 11 types of internet-related disputes in the cities under their jurisdiction, including those involving online loan contracts, online infringement, and online copyright. They have helped advance technological innovation, rule-making, and cyberspace governance.

During the period between August 2017 and October 2019, these three courts handled a total of 118,764 internet-related cases, and concluded 88,401 of them. As many as 96.8 percent of these cases were filed online, and in 80,819 of these the entire process was handled via the internet. Online hearings took 45 minutes and case processing 38 days on average, which are in turn 40 percent and half of the time needed for conventional court trials. In 98 percent of the concluded cases, litigants accepted the ruling at first instance. All this indicates the good quality, efficiency and impact of internet courts.

Judicial Protection of Online Rights and Interests

China has carried out judicial activities to combat cybercrime, so that the people can see that justice is served in every judicial case.

Strengthening judicial protection of online civil rights and interests. To protect the online civil rights and interests of all parties concerned, China handles civil and commercial cases involving personal information, intellectual property rights, online transactions, and online infringement in accordance with the law. For protection of personal information, the focus is put on online platforms that process huge

amounts of personal information. Civil public-interest litigations have been launched against online platforms suspected of abusing personal information. In adjudicating these cases, the courts have clarified the rules and limits for the commercial use of customers' personal information, and prompted companies running online platforms to collect and use data in accordance with laws and regulations. For protection of intellectual property rights in internet-related cases of high technological complexity such as those involving patents, integrated circuit designs, technological secrets, and computer software, the courts have introduced a technology investigator system. Step by step, safeguards are being set up in cyberspace to protect citizens' legitimate rights and interests there.

Intensifying punishment for cybercrime. As internet technology evolves swiftly, conventional crimes are transforming rapidly into internet-enabled, no-contact forms, leading to a rise in illicit acts such as telecom and online fraud, online gambling, and online pornography. China handles new types of cybercrime in accordance with the law. In recent years China has carried out a systematic "internet clean-up" campaign, combating cyber hacking, invasion of individual privacy, and many other criminal acts that cause strong concern to the public. It has launched a number of campaigns against telecom and online fraud, including those to hunt fugitives via cloud services and platforms, freeze the SIM cards and bank accounts used by suspects, intercept domestic recruitment by criminal groups operating from abroad, and pursue the heads and key members of criminal groups. It combats all types of predatory lending including trap loans, the student loan, reverse mortgage, and elder investment scams. It punishes in accordance with the law the shadowy businesses that provide services such as internet connection, domain registration, server hosting, mobile application development, online payment, and promotion to criminal groups behind telecom and online fraud.

China has also updated its national anti-fraud big data platform and anti-fraud app, built a national fraud database, and improved the mechanisms for quick freezing of payments and retrieval of swindled money. It takes resolute action against online gambling and delivers harsh punishments for online pornography. Through these efforts, remarkable progress has been made in combating cybercrime, giving the people a stronger sense of security and reinforcing social harmony and stability.

Going After Cybercrime

Telecom and online fraud harms citizens' immediate interests and property safety, and undermines social harmony and stability. It is therefore deeply loathed by the people. To address this global scourge, China targets all elements with in-depth measures, which have achieved good results. Between 2019 and 2021 China prosecuted 129,000 people on charges of telecom and online fraud. Between 2017 and 2021 it concluded 103,000 lawsuits of such fraud in the first instance, and convicted 223,000 criminals.

Exploring new avenues for judicial protection of minors in cyberspace. While focusing on forestalling and punishing cybercrime, China takes targeted measures against online criminal activities such as virtual sexual harassment, and has increased punishments for those preying on minors. Through law-based punishment and individualized assistance and education, the state does its utmost to rehabilitate underage people involved in cybercrime. China has strengthened the protection of minors in cyberspace, making breakthroughs in typical cases such as those concerning circulation of audio and video about narcotics, violation of minors' personal information rights and interests, and excessive livestream rewards from minor viewers. By taking action in the form of public-interest litigation, written suggestions from prosecutorial organizations, support for prosecutions, and briefings on relevant information, China is working to pool the strength of online platforms, the public, and the government to foster a healthy cyber environment for young people.

Promoting Public Awareness and Competence in Law-Based Cyberspace Governance

Public participation is necessary for spreading knowledge of the rule of law in cyberspace. China makes every effort to break new ground in the content, form and means of spreading legal knowledge via the internet. The Chinese netizens' awareness and understanding of the rule of law have generally increased, and online platforms have assumed their primary responsibility for legal compliance and the industry has embraced self-discipline. Respecting, learning, abiding by, and using the law is a shared understanding and basic principle, and the spirit of the socialist rule of law is fully manifested in cyberspace.

Internet Plus Public Legal Education

The internet has become a new space where people study, work and live; it provides a new platform for them to obtain information and access public services, which makes it a new avenue and means to spread knowledge of the law. The internet has changed the structure of legal literacy from unidirectional communication to interactive, service-based and immersive communication, and interpreted technical terms in plain everyday language. The participants have become increasingly active with better experiences and more gain.

Employing the internet to spread knowledge of the law. Government websites and WeChat official accounts set up special columns and features to spread legal knowledge regarding eco-environmental progress, food and drug safety, protecting personal information, and other matters of public concern, with

a focus on the Constitution, Civil Code, National Security Law, Cybersecurity Law, and other important laws and regulations. China makes full use of the legal publicity website (legalinfo.moj.gov.cn), its weibo account, WeChat account and app and builds a smart legal publicity platform to spread knowledge and experience of the rule of law in China, so as to inculcate the idea in the public that rights and duties are integral to each other, as are personal freedom and social responsibility, to raise legal consciousness that laws should be applied to regulate behaviors and solve problems and conflicts, and to guide the people to advocate, abide by and defend the socialist rule of law.

Strengthening legal literacy through online media. With their strengths in content, channels, and resources, internet media have created a large number of graphics, cartoons, comics, short videos, livestream, and online music products on internet forums, blogs, microblogs, WeChat official accounts, instant messaging tools, livestreaming, search engines, Q&A communities and through many other channels that are tailored to meet the different needs of various groups in spreading legal awareness and explaining laws and regulations. These give the people direct access to the government's public legal education information that has deeply penetrated businesses, communities, campuses, and villages. Legal literacy has improved significantly among all the people.

Extending real-world legal literacy efforts into the virtual world. With the widespread integration of the internet with the economy and social life, those lectures, legal literacy initiatives in communities, legal consulting services, and artistic performances on the rule of law that used to be conducted in the real world are now expanding their influence and coverage through the internet. Online legal literacy training courses, micro-video contests, and quiz games are integrating with and complementing those face-to-face activities, attracting wider participation, and benefiting a larger population.

Publicizing Cyber Laws and Regulations

Cyber laws and regulations are the main content of public legal education in cyberspace. They are becoming increasingly familiar to the public, providing the foundation for a sound and law-based cyberspace with high ethical standards.

Cyber laws and regulations are publicized during the whole legislative process. When drafting cyber laws and regulations such as the Cybersecurity Law, Data Security Law, and Personal Information Protection Law, the opinions of citizens, legal persons and other organizations are heard and can be adopted through public solicitation, deliberation, and appraisal via both online and offline channels. When these laws and regulations were promulgated, questions were explained through press conferences, answers to media questions, and expert interpretation. The public have been encouraged to learn more about cyber laws and regulations, and abide by them, which lays a solid public foundation for the law-based governance of cyberspace.

Legal literacy efforts are also being made in law enforcement and judicial activities when appropriate. To explain cyber laws, China releases information on typical cases of public concern, including online dissemination of illegal and harmful information, infringement of rights and interests relating to personal information, telecom and online fraud, and protection of minors in cyberspace. All cases relating to cyberspace are accessible to the public through four websites—adjudication procedure information (splcgk.court.gov.cn), court trial information (tingshen.court.gov.cn), judgment information (wenshu.court.gov.cn), and enforcement information (zxgk.court.gov.cn). The general public can access this information in a more direct and vivid way, and have evolved from onlookers to participants, supporters and advocates.

Raising Legal Awareness of Key Groups

The authority of the law comes from the people's firm belief and sincere support. China focuses its legal literacy efforts on key groups like teenagers and internet company employees. Teenagers are guided to adhere to laws, conduct themselves with civility, and follow cybersecurity protocols when surfing the internet. Internet companies are under supervision for their compliance with laws and regulations, and they are also required to guard against legal risks.

Improving education on cyber laws among teenagers. Teenagers are the future of the country and the hope of our nation. They are a growing demographic in China's netizen population. As the pioneers of the internet, they are the most active participants in online classes, communication, and life, but their legitimate rights and interests are also vulnerable to infringement on the internet. To protect their rights and interests and promote their healthy growth and well-rounded development, China makes every effort to improve their understanding of the rule of law in cyberspace, especially on critical concerns such as internet addiction, cyberbullying, and online pornography. Varied and vivid forms are adapted to their physical and mental development and their realities, such as story books, micro variety shows, plays for kids, radio stories, online classes, quiz games, and law classes taught in primary and secondary schools by police officers, prosecutors and judges who serve as part-time vice principals. A public legal education framework integrating government, society, schools and families has taken shape, which promotes the all-round legal awareness of juvenile netizens and builds their cybersecurity competence.

A Website for Promoting Legal Literacy Among Teenagers—qspfw.moe.gov.cn

China launched the teenagers' legal literacy website (qspfw.moe.gov.cn) in 2012, which features columns such as animated films/TV programs, real-life stories, and laws taught through pictures. More than 190,000 schools have now registered with the website, involving over 150 million users. In 2021 alone, there were 8.3 billion views on the website to learn about the Constitution.

Strengthening internet companies' compliance with the law. Internet companies are the main market players in the digital economy, and should promote its healthy development. Honesty and observing the law must be their cardinal principles. China is intensifying its efforts to promote legal literacy among internet companies, and requiring them to incorporate cyber laws into their induction and routine training. This applies especially to laws with a direct bearing on corporate operations and industry development, such as the Electronic Commerce Law, Cybersecurity Law, Data Security Law, Personal Information Protection Law, Anti-Monopoly Law, and Anti-Unfair Competition Law. Industry associations are encouraged to provide legal education in various forms for internet companies and their employees, and to ensure that the companies place equal emphasis on economic returns and social benefit. They are also required to guide—through improving industry norms, formulating industry standards, and issuing business integrity initiatives—the companies to fulfill their legal and social responsibilities. With such measures, consumers' legitimate rights and interests are fully protected, and fair competition in the market is ensured.

Strengthening Research and Education on Law-Based Cyberspace Governance

Education and professional practitioners of law-based cyberspace governance underpin a cyber power and drive innovation. Facing major theoretical problems in law-based cyberspace governance and a demand for talented people, China has established a preliminary system for cultivating professionals and conducting research that combines theory and practice, adapts to the development of cyberspace, and provides intellectual support and sufficient talented people for the country's law-based cyberspace governance.

Improving comprehensive research capabilities on law-based cyberspace governance. Universities and scientific research institutes have set up new-type think tanks to conduct relevant research and established a number of comprehensive research centers. By June 2022, China had more than 90 research institutes in this field. Serving as a bank of brain trusters, ideas, and talented people, these think tanks have conducted research in many frontier areas like data, algorithms, and platform management, and produced remarkable academic results. Experts and academics are fully engaged in relevant activities and offer constructive advice on China's major plans, legislation and reforms in law-based cyberspace governance.

Strengthening the training of personnel for law-based cyberspace governance. China integrates conventional legal studies with internet-related disciplines. Cybersecurity studies has been categorized as a primary discipline, and some universities have set up secondary disciplines like internet and information law studies, digital law studies, and artificial intelligence law studies. In line with specified regulations and procedures, institutions of higher learning, on their own initiative, have run undergraduate courses on the rule of law in cyberspace such as cybersecurity and law enforcement. Teams of research and teaching in cyber law have been organized to teach interdisciplinary courses that integrate legal knowledge with computer science and statistics, such as network and information security, laws and artificial intelligence, cyber law studies, blockchain and digital evidence, and legal analytics. A group of practical textbooks covering frontier research have been compiled for students in relevant majors, including cyber law, computational jurisprudence, data law, and personal information protection law. A large number of personnel with professional knowledge of both law and technology have been trained, providing a solid foundation for building up China's strength in cyberspace.

Increasing International Exchanges and Cooperation in Law-Based Cyberspace Governance

Cyberspace is a shared activity space for all of humanity. All countries around the globe share the same desire to develop the digital economy; all face the same challenges posed by cybersecurity threats and have the same need for strengthening cyberspace governance.

China is fully engaged in international exchanges and cooperation in the field of law-based governance of cyberspace. Upholding independence, equality, and mutual respect, it joins with other countries to reform the global cyberspace governance system, to ensure that all countries share the opportunities and fruits brought by the development of the internet, and to jointly build a community with a shared future in cyberspace.

Playing an Active Role in Rule Making

China is committed to international fairness and justice. It resolutely safeguards the international system with the United Nations at its core, and the international order with international law as its foundation, and upholds the basic norms of international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. It supports the participation of all countries in global cyberspace governance on an equal footing, and in laying down international cyberspace rules that are universally accepted.

China supports the UN's role as the main channel in international cyberspace governance. It supports the UN effort to formulate a global-level cybercrime convention, has pushed for the General Assembly to adopt a resolution to establish an open-ended ad hoc intergovernmental committee of experts, and has played a constructive role in the negotiations on a convention. It calls on the international community to reach agreement on an authoritative and universal convention at the earliest possible time to lay a legal foundation for the battle against cybercrime. China values the UN's key role in responding to international information security threats, and together with other Shanghai Cooperation Organization

member states it submitted the original International Code of Conduct for Information Security to the UN General Assembly, and an updated version in 2015. It launched the Global Data Security Initiative, and issued the China-League of Arab States Cooperation Initiative on Data Security together with the League of Arab States in March 2021, and the Data Security Cooperation Initiative of China+Central Asia together with five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) in June 2022, which provide a blueprint for developing global data security rules. China encouraged the UN to draw up a framework for responsible state behavior in cyberspace, making clear that the principles of international law—such as equal sovereignty, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-use of force, non-interference in other countries' domestic affairs—are also applicable in cyberspace, and that impartial global security standards for the supply chain of information technology products should be formulated. It has expanded its cyberspace cooperation with the UN's special organizations, taken an active part in formulating UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, and conducted extensive cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization in formulating domain name rules and settling disputes in this field.

Taking an active part in the formulation of regional cyberspace governance rules. China signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement, under which the 15 member states including China laid down regional rules regarding electronic signature and electronic authentication, online consumer protection, online personal information protection, cybersecurity, cross-border transfer of information by electronic means, and intellectual property right protection. Its e-commerce chapter is by some margin the world's most extensive and most used set of e-commerce rules. China has also taken vigorous steps to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement, in order to participate in the formulation of high-standard rules in the digital economy.

Conducting Extensive Exchanges and Cooperation

As a longstanding supporter of international exchanges and cooperation in the rule of law in cyberspace, China takes part in dialogues, negotiations, exchanges, and mutual learning with other countries. It continues to expand and strengthen the network of global partnerships based on equality, openness, and cooperation, and to promote international cyberspace governance that is driven by common progress and designed for shared benefit.

Engaging in bilateral and multilateral dialogues and exchanges in law-based cyberspace governance. China has established the Sino-Russian Information Security Consultation Mechanism, China-EU Taskforce, China-ASEAN Cyber Dialogue Mechanism, and China-Japan-ROK Trilateral Cyber Consultation Mechanism, and co-hosted the 2019 China-Germany Dialogue on the Internet Economy, China-UK Internet Roundtable, China-ROK Internet Roundtable, China-Cuba Internet Development Forum, and China-Brazil Internet Governance Seminar. Through these pragmatic exchanges, it has worked with other countries on cyber policies, laws, regulations, and governance experience. It has responded promptly to the concerns of various parties, and settled disputes through negotiation on an equal footing. It has signed cybersecurity cooperation memorandums with countries including Thailand and Indonesia to strengthen exchanges and sharing in cybersecurity policies, laws and regulations, and to jointly build capacity in cybersecurity.

Increasing international law enforcement and judicial cooperation on cybersecurity. China has reached agreements on cybersecurity with many other countries and carried out in-depth and pragmatic cooperation in fighting cyberterrorism and telecom and online fraud. To combat cyberterrorism, China has increased cooperation with other countries through joint counterterrorism maneuvers, joint border defense operations, and police and judicial cooperation to meet threats and challenges and safeguard world peace and regional stability. In fighting telecom and online fraud, China has strengthened law enforcement and judicial cooperation with other countries, investigated major cross-border cases, and achieved substantial results. Between March and June 2022, 76 countries including China took part in an operation codenamed First Light 2022 initiated by the International Criminal Police Organization, with some 2,000 suspects arrested and some 50 million US dollars worth of illicit funds intercepted, which effectively curbed transnational social engineering scams.

Jointly protecting the rights and interests of minors in cyberspace. China cooperates with the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Association of Internet Hotlines, and other international organizations, and relevant departments of the United Kingdom, Germany, the United Arab Emirates and other countries to fight online child pornography. As a member of WeProtect Global Alliance, China works with other member governments, companies and civil society organizations—totaling more than 200—to combat child sexual exploitation and abuse online and create a safer cyber environment for children.

Creating Platforms for Dialogue

As a responsible major country, China has made great efforts to build a global platform promoting connectivity between China and the rest of the world, and a Chinese platform for the global internet to be shared and governed by all. It has played an active role in promoting connections, understanding, and mutual trust in the rule of law in cyberspace between different countries.

Hosting the world internet conferences for exchanging ideas on the rule of law in cyberspace. Every year since 2014, China has hosted the World Internet Conference, attended by representatives from

governments, international organizations, internet companies, think tanks, industry associations, and technology communities. The organizing committee of the conference released a concept document named *Jointly Build a Community with a Shared Future in Cyberspace*, which calls for “respecting sovereignty in cyberspace” and points out that “the principle of sovereign equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations is a basic norm governing contemporary international relations. It covers all aspects of state-to-state relations, and should likewise apply to cyberspace.” The organizing committee also launched the Initiative on Jointly Building a Community with a Shared Future in Cyberspace, proposing that “international exchanges and cooperation should be advanced in the fields of data security, personal information protection and relevant rules and standards, and efforts should be made to promote mutual recognition among countries on rules and standards on personal information protection in line with the purposes of the UN Charter.” China has shared experience in legislation on the protection of minors, combated cybercrimes and cyberbullying targeted at minors, and further improved mechanisms for combating cybercrimes and cyberterrorism. It has supported and taken an active part in negotiations under the framework of the United Nations on the global convention against cybercrimes, and coordinated work on legislation and practices in different countries in a joint effort to tackle the threats of cybercrimes and cyberterrorism.

The International Organization of the World Internet Conference

China initiated the international organization of the World Internet Conference in 2022, with the goal of building a global internet platform featuring extensive consultation, joint contribution, and sharing of benefits. By promoting sharing of benefits through practical cooperation, it aims to identify strong points and contribute ideas to global internet governance. Institutes, organizations, enterprises, and individuals engaging in the internet from nearly 20 countries in six continents have now joined the organization as founding members.

Building multi-form, multi-channel and multi-tiered international platforms to exchange views, experience and practices on law-based cyberspace governance including legislation, law enforcement, judicial work, and public legal education. China organizes this through many multilateral platforms like the BRICS cooperation mechanism, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, and ASEAN Regional Forum. It hosted the World Forum on Rule of Law in Internet, and released the Wuzhen Declaration at the event, building a bridge for sharing experience, increasing understanding, and learning from each other in cyberspace justice. China supports industry associations of the internet to build international exchange platforms such as the China Internet Governance Forum, discussing such issues as digital inclusion and data governance. These platforms have promoted common understanding among Chinese and foreign internet communities, and facilitated joint solutions to the problems obstructing the development of the internet. China encourages Chinese experts and academics to attend academic forums and symposiums, conduct intellectual exchanges, and share research fruits with their foreign counterparts in frontier research on the digital economy, data security, governance of artificial intelligence, and other related matters.

Conclusion

Based on its own realities, and learning from other countries' experience, China has created a cyberspace governance model with distinct Chinese characteristics. On the new journey towards a modern socialist country, China will always be committed to all-round law-based governance of the country and of cyberspace. It will promote the lawful, orderly and healthy development of the internet in China, safeguard the high-quality development of a digital China under the rule of law, and provide a solid legal guarantee for building up China's strength in cyberspace.

The internet benefits the whole world. China champions the interests of the peoples of all countries in promoting the development and prosperity of cyberspace in accordance with the law. The rule of law in cyberspace is an important tool of digital governance, and a marker of digital progress. Facing the opportunities and challenges brought about by digitalization, China will follow the global governance principle of achieving shared growth through consultation and collaboration, and work together with the international community to ensure global cyberspace governance is law-based, and that digital progress will deliver greater benefit to the people. China stands ready to partner with all other countries to build a community with a shared future in cyberspace and create a better world.

China's Energy Transition

Source: State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
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Preface

Energy is essential to human survival and development, and the way we develop low-carbon energy will be of great significance to the future of humanity. Since the First Industrial Revolution, the extensive use of fossil fuels has propelled human progress, but has also caused major problems, such as resource depletion, climate change, and geopolitical tension. As a result, the international community widely recognizes the importance of transitioning to renewable energy sources and using energy in a sustainable way to promote people's well-being and drive long-term economic growth.

Over the past 75 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, China has experienced rapid growth in its energy sector, and has emerged as the largest energy producer and consumer in the world. After the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012, China's energy sector entered a stage of high-quality development. In 2014, President Xi Jinping proposed a new energy security strategy aimed at revolutionizing consumption, supply, technology, and institutions, while strengthening all-round international cooperation. This strategy has charted the course and laid out the fundamental principles for China's energy development in the new era. Guided by this strategy, China is pursuing a path of energy transition that is suited to its actual conditions, follows the general trends of global development, and meets the changing needs of our times.

Based on high-quality development, China's energy transition aims to build a clean, low-carbon, safe and efficient energy system. This initiative will provide a strong guarantee for the country's economic and social development and meet the people's growing desire for a better life.

With a view to eco-environmental progress, China's energy transition is gathering pace to develop a new model of energy consumption that is economical, efficient, green and inclusive. This will create synergies for cutting carbon emissions, reducing pollution, expanding green development, and stimulating economic growth, with the ultimate goal of building harmony between humanity and nature.

Acting on the vision of a global community with a shared future, China is committed to advancing its energy transition by strengthening international cooperation in green energy. As a strong advocate of global energy transition, China is prepared to collaborate with other countries to build a future of sustainable energy. China respects the energy transition path independently chosen by other developing countries based on their national conditions and advances its energy transition in an equitable, just and orderly fashion.

The Chinese government is publishing this white paper to document China's successful actions and historic achievements in energy transition over the past decade.

I. China's Path of Energy Transition in the New Era

The world is currently witnessing a new revolution in science, technology and industry. Green and low-carbon development, digital and intelligent technology, and sustainability have become the overwhelming trends of our times. Despite differences in development stages and available resources, all countries share the goal and challenge of securing their energy supply and achieving a green and low-carbon transition. Guided by its new energy security strategy, China has made significant progress in its energy transition, contributing its solutions to a key global issue of our time, demonstrating its approach to governance, and fulfilling its responsibility as a major country.

Energy Transition Is the Only Way Forward

The development and utilization of energy is an important aspect of the interaction between humanity and nature. When reviewing the history of human development, we see that every significant human progress is fundamentally tied to changes in energy extraction and utilization and shifts in primary energy sources.

Over the years, China has established a comprehensive energy supply system encompassing coal, oil, gas, nuclear, hydro, wind, and photovoltaic (PV) energy, providing robust impetus for the fast and sustained development of the economy and society.

China's drive towards all-round socialist modernization has brought about new requirements for high-quality energy development. Despite being the world's largest developing country, China has comparatively low per-capita energy consumption. As the country has not yet completed its industrialization and urbanization, however, its energy demand is likely to continue growing. With an industrial structure dominated by heavy industry and an energy mix primarily based on coal, China will continue to face resource and environmental constraints in the long run. Energy transition is the fundamental solution to the above challenges.

China's energy transition focuses on transforming the model and drivers of energy development by achieving the substitution of primary energy sources from fossil fuels to non-fossil fuels. This transition is essential for the country to overcome resource and environmental constraints and achieve its peak carbon and carbon neutrality goals. It is vital for the country to seize the opportunities brought about by the latest round of revolutionary changes in science, technology and industry and foster new quality productive forces. It is crucial for the country to establish green ways of production and life and realize high-quality economic and social development. It is key for the country to fulfill its responsibility as a major country and contribute to a global community with a shared future. For these reasons, China has taken proactive actions to advance its energy transition and will stay committed to this initiative as an imperative for a better future.

Accelerating Energy Transition

China respects the global trend of energy development and firmly applies its new energy security strategy. To achieve harmony between humanity and nature, and advance human progress, China has been shifting from a resource-reliant model of energy development to one driven by innovation. The country has charted a path for energy transition that is tailored to its own realities and responsive to the needs of our times.

China's energy transition abides by the following principles:

—**Putting the people first.** Energy is inseparable from daily life. By upholding a people-centered development philosophy, China has improved its energy services throughout society to secure a reliable supply of clean energy and ensure that the people have a greater sense of gain, fulfillment and security.

—**Pursuing green and low-carbon development.** Energy transition is critical for balancing economic growth and eco-environmental protection. China adheres to green and low-carbon development that prioritizes eco-environmental protection and promotes harmony between humanity and nature. Energy transition is a vital objective for economic and social development in the country. China has made energy and resource conservation a top priority and employs a comprehensive conservation strategy while raising energy efficiency by making the best use of every bit of coal, oil and electricity. Guided by its green and low-carbon philosophy, China has taken vigorous measures to substitute renewables for fossil fuels and aims to create an energy supply system dominated by non-fossil fuels.

—**Serving national development.** To ensure that it always has control over its own energy supply, China has increased its capacity to meet its domestic needs. The country has applied the practice of establishing the new before discarding the old and implemented strong overall planning to ensure that safe and reliable new energy is secure before phasing out conventional energy. China has improved its energy production, supply, storage and sale systems while shoring up the weak points in its energy reserve regulation and using fossil fuels as safeguards of energy security, thus forming an effective response strategy to energy security risks and challenges.

—**Boosting innovation as an impetus for growth.** Innovation is the key to energy transition. By applying an innovation-driven development strategy within its energy sector, China has achieved breakthroughs in core technologies and created new technologies, industries, and business models. It aims to make new energy technology and its related industries the key drivers of industrial upgrading and foster new quality productive forces. China has also advanced market-oriented reform in its energy sector by ensuring that the market plays the decisive role in resource allocation and the government better plays its role, in order to boost the vitality of all business entities.

—**Expanding opening up and cooperation.** Sustainable development and climate change are common challenges for all of humanity. Holding the vision of a global community with a shared future, China has been expanding high-standard opening up in the energy sector, strengthening all-round international cooperation, and advancing an energy transition towards green and low-carbon development through mutually beneficial cooperation. China has played an active role in the reform of global energy governance to help build a governance system based on equity, justice, balance and inclusiveness.

Making Notable Progress in Energy Transition

Over the past decade, China has furthered reform of its energy production and consumption methods, upgraded its energy supply capacity under the guidance of its new energy security strategy, and achieved historic breakthroughs in green and low-carbon energy development. These achievements have provided strong support for realizing high-quality economic and social development and better meeting the people's growing desire for a better life, and served to underpin the Beautiful China Initiative.

Fast-tracking clean energy development. In 2023, the share of clean energy consumption reached 26.4 percent of China's total energy use, up 10.9 percentage points from 2013. In the same period, the share of coal consumption dropped by 12.1 percentage points. In 2023, the total installed capacity of

power generation reached 2,920 GW, of which clean energy accounted for 1,700 GW, or 58.2 percent. In the same year, electricity generated from clean energy was about 3,800 TWh, accounting for 39.7 percent of the country's total electricity generation, up by around 15 percentage points from 2013. Over the past decade, electricity generated from clean energy has accounted for more than 50 percent of the increase in total electricity consumption, marking a growing share of green energy in China's energy mix.

Underpinning high-quality economic and social development. China has realized greater control over its own energy supply. Over the past decade, its capacity for primary energy production has grown by 35 percent, providing a strong basis for steady and sound economic growth. In the same period, investment in fixed assets in the energy sector totaled about 39 trillion yuan, which has stimulated the growth of investment in upstream and downstream industrial chains and related industries. A series of key energy projects have been completed and put into operation, and a complete industrial chain for energy equipment manufacturing has been built. Technological innovation in new energy, hydropower, nuclear power, power transmission and transformation, and novel energy storage has accelerated, and the clean energy industry has become a new pillar of China's modern industrial system.

Meeting the people's need for a better life. Over the past decade, China's energy demand and supply have remained balanced. Energy prices have also remained generally stable, ensuring energy security for more than 1.4 billion people. Per-capita electricity consumption has doubled from about 500 kWh to nearly 1,000 kWh over this period, and the total number of natural gas users has reached 560 million. China rose to a rank of 12 in Getting Electricity, an indicator of the global business environment by the World Bank.

The energy sector has helped to facilitate poverty alleviation and rural revitalization. Over 100 billion yuan from the central budget has been invested into upgrading rural power grids, stimulating local governments and enterprises to increase investment and enabling all areas of the country to have access to electricity by 2015. The scale of household PV power installations in rural areas has reached 120 GW, across more than 5.5 million households. This has led to an income increase of 11 billion yuan for farmers and the creation of around 2 million jobs per year.

Measures have been taken to meet the growing demand for green energy. By the end of 2023, the proportion of clean energy heating in northern China approached 80 percent; the total number of charging facilities for new energy vehicles nationwide increased from less than 100,000 in 2013 to almost 8.6 million.

Synergizing with high-standard eco-environmental protection. Over the past decade, average coal consumption of coal-fired power generation has reduced to 303 grams of standard coal per kilowatt-hour, with SO₂ and NO_x emissions of advanced coal-fired power generation units now comparable to the upper limits for natural gas power units. From 2013 to 2023, energy consumption per unit of GDP decreased by more than 26 percent, and the quality of China's refined oil products consistently improved to reach advanced international levels. The number of coal-fired boilers and power plants has decreased by more than 80 percent nationwide, and almost all bulk coal has been replaced with clean energy for winter heating in and around the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and in the Fenhe-Weihe River Plain.

Green and intensive development of energy and resources has been realized, green technology for energy and resource development has been widely applied, and the eco-environment of mines has seen significant improvement. The PV-based environmental restoration model has been successfully introduced in desert and coal mining subsidence areas. The average concentration of PM_{2.5} has fallen by 54 percent over the past decade, and the number of days with heavy pollution has decreased by 83 percent, serving to underpin the Beautiful China Initiative.

Contributing to global energy transition and a clean and beautiful world. In 2023, China's investment in energy transition reached 676 billion US dollars, making it the world's largest investor in this field. Over the past decade, China has provided premium clean energy products and services to the international market. The country has also doubled its efforts in technological innovation to upgrade new energy technology at a faster pace, contributing enormously to a sharp reduction in the costs of wind power and PV power worldwide.

Through expanding opening up and cooperation, China has worked with more than 100 countries and regions on green energy projects. A large number of signature projects involving nuclear power, hydropower, and new energy have been completed. In 2023, China's exports of wind power and PV products helped other countries reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 810 million tonnes. China's new energy industry has added to the global energy supply, eased global inflation pressures, and contributed to the global effort to combat climate change and transition to green development.

II. Promoting Green Energy Consumption

Green development is a defining feature of an eco-civilization. China firmly believes that clear waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, and acts accordingly. It therefore plans to transition its development model to one that achieves harmony between humanity and nature as a major focus. China is moving away from the traditional path of heavy dependence on energy and resources, as the country looks to promote a green transformation in every aspect of its economic and social development.

Strengthening Institutional Constraints for Energy Conservation and Carbon Reduction

Staying committed to prioritizing energy conservation and reining in irrational energy use, China focuses its efforts on changing the way resources are used and improving its resource efficiency.

Maximizing the policy of dual control over energy use. Controlling both the volume and intensity of energy use is a crucial institutional measure in accelerating eco-environmental progress and pursuing high-quality development. To keep up with the dynamics in its economic and social development, China has set a binding target of lowering energy intensity and has shifted its focus from controlling the volume and intensity of energy use to controlling the volume and intensity of carbon emissions. Over the past decade, through industrial restructuring and upgrading, China has introduced energy-saving and carbon reduction technologies and industries, and raised its energy efficiency across the board. As a result of these efforts, the country's energy intensity has decreased steadily, leading to energy savings equivalent to about 1.4 billion tonnes of standard coal and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by about 3 billion tonnes.

Building a multi-dimensional energy conservation management system. China fully enforces relevant laws and regulations such as the Energy Conservation Law and the Circular Economy Promotion Law. It works to establish and improve related institutional systems, including energy-saving reviews and supervision over fixed assets investment projects. Clear requirements for energy conservation management of key industries and enterprises have been set, and the energy-saving management of major energy consumers has been strengthened. China has also adopted an energy efficiency pacesetter system to incentivize various entities to conserve energy and raise efficiency. It has leveraged the role of taxation, financial and other policies to steer the entire society towards higher investment into energy conservation and efficiency improvements.

Promoting market-based approaches to energy conservation. China has improved its management of energy efficiency standards and labels, and made consistent efforts to formulate and revise standards on energy conservation, using such standards to guide players in various sectors to conserve energy and raise energy efficiency. By the end of 2023, it had released 335 national standards on energy consumption limits and the energy efficiency of products. The energy efficiency labeling system covers 44 categories of energy-using products across five major energy-consuming sectors. Additionally, China has actively applied market-oriented mechanisms such as energy performance contracting, and promoted "one-stop" comprehensive services, including energy conservation consultancy, diagnosis, engineering, financing, transformation and outsourcing. In 2023, the total output value of the energy conservation service industry exceeded 500 billion yuan, doubling that of 2013.

Improving Energy Conservation and Efficiency in Key Sectors

To conserve energy and increase energy efficiency, China must focus on key sectors such as industry, construction, transport, and public institutions. These sectors are major energy consumers and will therefore be fundamental in improving energy conservation and efficiency. By fully applying energy conservation standards, promoting advanced energy-efficient products, and phasing out outdated production capacity, China is continuing to raise energy efficiency in these key sectors.

Tapping into the potential of industry in conserving energy. Since the industrial sector plays a pivotal role in conserving energy and raising energy efficiency, China has made lasting efforts to replace outdated production capacity and drive energy-saving technological transformation. It has promoted innovation in production techniques, process reengineering, and digital and intelligent upgrading, and provided guidance for key enterprises to refine their energy management practices. Over the past decade, the energy consumption per unit of added value of industrial enterprises of designated size—with an annual revenue of 20 million yuan and above—has dropped by more than 36 percent. Comprehensive energy consumption per unit of product in the steel, electrolytic aluminum, cement, glass, and other industries has decreased by more than 9 percent on average.

Panel 1 Faster Progress in Energy Conservation and Efficiency in Industry

Highlighting the benchmarking role of energy efficiency, China has raised its energy efficiency benchmarks and standards in key industries. It has renewed its advanced energy efficiency standards, energy-saving standards, and entry-level standards for key energy-consuming equipment, and promoted large-scale upgrading of equipment and trade-in of consumer goods. In order to establish role models, it has released a list of 164 pacesetter enterprises in key industries and advanced energy efficiency standards, and a list of 196 national green data centers.

Launching industry- and sector-specific energy conservation and carbon reduction campaigns, China has carried out in-depth energy efficiency diagnoses of key energy-consuming entities and accelerated the energy-saving and carbon-reducing transformation of the steel, nonferrous metals, petrochemicals, building materials, and other key industries. Additionally, efforts have been made to upgrade boilers, electric machinery, and transformers.

Conducting supervision and diagnosis on industrial energy conservation. Since 2016, special national supervision on energy conservation has been carried out in more than 30,000 industrial enterprises to encourage rational energy use. Energy conservation diagnosis services have been provided to more than 20,000 industrial enterprises, with 37,000 transformation measures being proposed.

Promoting green, energy-efficient buildings. China is currently undergoing the world's largest urbanization process. To avoid carbon lock-in, the country has implemented higher energy-efficiency standards for new buildings and is steadily advancing the energy-saving retrofit of existing buildings. China is also accelerating the development of buildings with ultralow or near-zero energy consumption. By the end of 2023, the floorage of energy-efficient buildings had surpassed 32.68 billion square meters, accounting for more than 64 percent of the total floor space of urban buildings, up nearly 30 percentage points from 2013. The floorage of buildings with ultralow or near-zero energy consumption has now surpassed 43.7 million square meters.

Developing a clean and efficient transport system in an all-round way. As logistic and travel needs continue to grow with economic and social development, energy consumption in the transport sector will also increase. China is accelerating the development of multimodal transport, and increasing the share of railways and waterways within its integrated transport system. The country has continued to prioritize the development of urban public transport, optimize its green transport service systems, and promote new energy vehicles in urban passenger transport. It has adopted motor vehicle emission standards that align with advanced international levels, phasing out vehicles that do not meet the National IV or higher level emission standards. As a result, energy intensity in transport has fallen. The comprehensive energy consumption per unit load for railway transport in 2023 dropped by some 19 percent compared with 2013. Efforts have also been made to develop an electric vehicle charging infrastructure network and improve the distribution of hydrogen and natural gas fueling stations and related service facilities. By the end of 2023, there were almost 8.6 million charging facilities and over 450 hydrogen fueling stations nationwide.

Panel 2 Faster Development of a Charging Infrastructure Network

China has the world's largest charging facility network, providing the most complete types of services covering the broadest areas. By the end of 2023, there were 8,596,000 electric vehicle charging facilities across the country, of which 2,726,000 were public and 5,870,000 were private; the overall vehicle-charger ratio reached 2.37:1. With a total of 21,000 charging piles in expressway rest stops or parking areas, the network of charging facilities along expressways has become increasingly extensive, allowing the public to enjoy safer, more convenient, and more efficient green travel. In Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Jiangsu, Hubei and seven other provincial-level administrative units, charging stations can be found in every county, and charging piles can be found in every township.

Promoting energy conservation in public institutions. China has formulated the Regulations on Energy Conservation in Public Institutions and has initiated efforts to promote energy conservation in government departments and other public institutions. It has introduced energy efficiency retrofits through energy performance contracting and promoted the electrification of final energy consumption in public institutions. It encourages green office work and green travel, and gives priority to green, energy-efficient products in procurement. By the end of 2023, 90 percent of government departments at or above the county level had met the energy-saving standards, and 5,114 public institutions had been cited as exemplars in energy conservation. By 2023, the per capita comprehensive energy consumption in public institutions across the country had dropped by 20.4 percent compared with 2013.

Fostering Green Models of Energy Consumption

The Chinese government actively guides the public to prioritize green energy and carry forward the nation's traditions of diligence and thrift. It promotes the shift towards green and low-carbon ways of life and consumption that are simple, moderate and healthy.

Encouraging the consumption of renewable energy. China has adopted a system of setting annual renewable electricity consumption targets for provincial-level administrative units, and monitoring and evaluating their performance. In addition, it has established a green electricity certification system for the consumption of renewable electricity, and uses the green electricity certificates as sole proof of an entity's green electricity consumption and environmental-friendliness. It uses the consumption of green electricity as an important basis for assessing, certifying, and labeling green products. In this way, the government encourages the entire society to prioritize the use of green energy and purchase of green products and services. It also encourages competent enterprises to form low-carbon or even zero-carbon models of energy consumption. Both the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games and the Hangzhou Asian Games in 2023 utilized 100 percent green electricity.

Advancing the electrification and low-carbon transition of final energy consumption. In the industrial sector, there has been a shift from traditional fuels to electricity for processes such as heating, drying, and steam supply. This has been achieved through the use of high-temperature heat pumps, electric heating, and other technologies. Additionally, efforts have been made to promote the demonstration and application of renewable hydrogen production in the chemical and metallurgical industries.

In the construction sector, there has been widespread adoption of solar water heaters and electric cooking appliances. In northern China, clean heating has been actively advanced, replacing coal with clean and low-carbon energy such as electricity, natural gas, biomass, geothermal energy, and industrial exhaust heat. In 2023, the share of clean heating reached nearly 80 percent in northern China.

In the transport sector, there has been a strong push for new energy vehicles, increased electrification

of railways, and the use of shore power for anchored ships and parked aircraft. By the end of 2023, China had over 20.4 million new energy vehicles; the electrification rate of its railway system reached 73.8 percent; and the electrification rate of society-wide final energy consumption stood at 28 percent, an increase of about 7 percentage points from 2013.

Panel 3 Remarkable Effect of Clean Winter Heating in Northern China

To support localities in advancing clean heating in accordance with their own conditions, the central government has invested a total of 120.9 billion yuan, which has stimulated various local investments amounting to more than 400 billion yuan. By the end of 2023, the floor space of clean heating in northern China had increased by 10.7 billion square meters over the end of 2016, and the clean heating rate of the region had risen by 46 percentage points. In and around the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, PM_{2.5} concentration had dropped by 41.1 percent over 2016 and the number of days with heavy pollution had decreased by 61.2 percent. The corresponding figures for the Fenhe-Weihe River Plain were 30.6 percent and 41.8 percent. The replacement of bulk coal with clean energy in heating had contributed 30 percent to the improvement of ambient air quality in northern China, giving a great boost to the quality of life.

Adopting green and low-carbon ways of life. Energy conservation and carbon reduction have been promoted throughout society. China has been actively encouraging green and low-carbon lifestyles, and has intensified its efforts to promote green living and raise the public's consciousness of the need to conserve resources. It has made greater efforts to promote green and low-carbon products and has carried out public awareness events such as the National Ecology Day, the National Energy Conservation Publicity Week, the National Low Carbon Day, and the World Environment Day, to comprehensively promote awareness and understanding of energy conservation. Green travel is promoted as the public are encouraged to make public transport, cycling, and walking their first choices for getting around. Additionally, the government has organized a green travel campaign, in which 97 of the 109 participating cities have met the standards, with their green travel rates exceeding 70 percent.

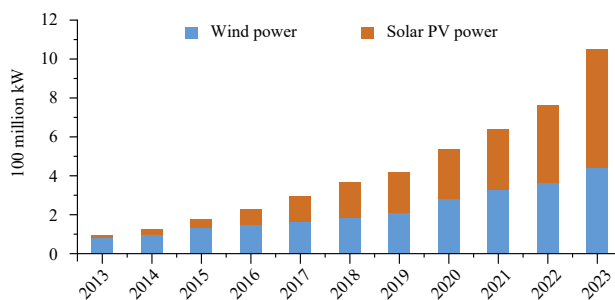
III. Moving Faster to Build a New Energy Supply System

China is committed to striking a balance between traditional and new energy sources in order to facilitate its energy transition while ensuring a stable energy supply tailored to the country's national conditions and development stage. The country has been working to improve the reliability of non-fossil fuels as alternative energy sources and leverage the supporting and balancing role of fossil fuels, as it moves towards building a clean, diversified, secure and resilient energy supply system.

Promoting High-Quality Development of Non-Fossil Energy

Accelerating the development of non-fossil energy is a necessary step in pursuing eco-environmental progress, promoting green and low-carbon economic and social development, and achieving the peak carbon and carbon neutrality goals. It is essential to increase green productivity.

Realizing a boom in wind and solar PV power. China has abundant wind and solar resources, making them the predominant sources of clean energy generation in the country. Construction has been advanced in steps on large-scale wind and PV power bases centered around the Kubuqi, Ulan Buh, Tengger, and Badain Jaran deserts, expected to reach a total installed capacity of 450 GW. China has seen large-scale and cluster development of offshore wind farms, with a cumulative installed capacity of 37,280 MW. Distributed new energy production has also made rapid progress. Wind and PV energy projects have been piloted in rural areas featuring the "PV plus agriculture" models, including agrivoltaic farming, fishery-solar hybrid systems, and animal husbandry-solar solutions, which has opened up broad spaces for new energy production. By the end of 2023, China's cumulative installed capacities of wind and PV power stood at 441 GW and 609 GW, an elevenfold increase over the past decade. The installed capacity of distributed PV power exceeded 250 GW, accounting for more than 40 percent of the total installed capacity of PV power.



Cumulative Installed Capacities of China's Wind and Solar PV Power 2013–2023

Panel 4 “PV Plus” Models Expand Green Development

China has explored innovative ways to use solar PV power and launched a number of “PV plus” models that integrate PV power generation with activities including agriculture, transport, and desertification control and prevention. These models broaden the potential uses of solar PV power and contribute to green development throughout society.

The large power station in Tunli Town, Linfen City, Shanxi Province, has an installed capacity of 30 MW. The station adopts a “PV plus agriculture” model and utilizes agrivoltaic farming, growing oil-yielding peonies in greenhouses fitted with power-generating solar panels to increase land use efficiency.

Provinces such as Shandong, Jiangsu, Shaanxi, Anhui and Sichuan have installed distributed PV systems at highway rest areas and toll stations, and on building rooftops and facades. They provide low-carbon services and integrate PV systems with transport and the surrounding landscape.

China’s desertification control PV project in the Kubuqi desert, Ordos City, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, combines PV power generation with a desert greening model. The project has an installed capacity of 2,000 MW and utilizes the space under its solar panels to grow plants and rear livestock. It is expected to restore about 6,670 hectares of desert and reduce annual sediment transport to the Yellow River by about 2 million tonnes.

Developing hydropower as conditions permit. Sound measures have been taken to coordinate hydropower development and eco-environmental conservation. Construction of large hydropower bases is underway, while existing large hydropower stations have been upgraded. By the end of 2023, the regular installed hydropower capacity in China stood at 370 GW. The green transformation and modernization of small hydropower stations have been steadily advanced, with nearly 4,000 such stations upgraded by the end of 2023 to improve their green capabilities.

Panel 5 The World’s Largest Clean Energy Corridor

In December 2022, the Baihetan Hydropower Station, with all its generating units put into operation, became the sixth mega cascade hydropower station on the mainstream of the Yangtze River, alongside the Wudongde, Xiluodu, Xiangjiaba, Three Gorges, and Gezhouba stations. With more than a hundred hydropower units working along the river, these stations form the world’s largest clean energy corridor.

Extending 1,800 km and with a height difference of over 900 meters, this clean energy corridor has a total installed capacity of over 70,000 MW, about three times that of the Three Gorges station. In 2023, the six stations produced over 276 TWh of electricity, equivalent to saving approximately 83 million tonnes of standard coal. This clean energy corridor has helped to improve China’s energy mix and contribute to the realization of its peak carbon and carbon neutrality goals.

Pursuing robust, safe and orderly development of nuclear power. Nuclear power is an efficient and high-quality clean energy source. China maintains that nuclear safety is essential for the development of nuclear power. The country has adopted the most advanced technologies and strictest standards to ensure that the nuclear power units in operation remain safe and stable over a long period of time. A number of coastal nuclear power projects are now in progress: The first units of the domestically developed third-generation nuclear reactor, Hualong One, have already entered operation; the Guohe One demonstration project, another independently designed third-generation nuclear reactor, is currently under construction; and the world’s first fourth-generation nuclear power plant with a high-temperature gas-cooled reactor has also officially entered commercial operation. Breakthroughs have been made in the comprehensive use of nuclear energy for clean heating and heat supply, which has expanded the scope of nuclear energy utilization. By the end of 2023, the total installed capacity of nuclear power plants in operation across China stood at 56,910 MW, 3.9 times the figure at the end of 2013. The total installed capacity of nuclear power plants under construction and in operation in China had totaled 100.33 GW by the end of 2023.

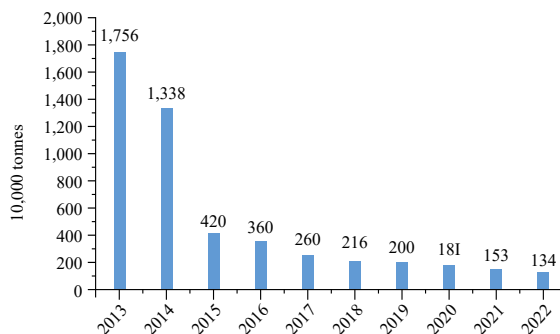
Boosting the development of biomass, geothermal and ocean energy. China has diversified the use and development of biomass energy in accordance with local conditions. It has been steadily advancing electricity generation from agricultural and forestry biomass, biogas, and urban domestic waste incineration. By the end of 2023, the installed capacity of biomass energy plants had reached 44,140 MW. In line with local conditions, China has also been promoting the use of biomass energy for clean heating and increasing the use of livestock and poultry waste to produce biogas. Additionally, it is promoting the application of clean liquid fuels such as bioethanol and biodiesel. New breakthroughs have been made in exploring mid-to-deep geothermal energy, and centralized heating projects mainly powered by geothermal energy have been built. Progress has also been made in the large-scale utilization of ocean energy.

Coordinating the Development of Traditional Energy and New Energy

Traditional energy and new energy constitute a relationship of complementarity and substitution. While making great efforts to boost the development of new energy, China also fully utilizes the supporting and safeguarding role of traditional energy so that new energy and traditional energy can work in synergy.

Promoting clean and efficient exploration and utilization of coal. China has established a long-term mechanism for green coal mining and built modern coal mines that are safe, intelligent and eco-friendly. It has implemented comprehensive management and ecological restoration of mining areas,

resulting in continuous improvement to the eco-environment in these areas. Over the past decade, the national raw coal washing rate, the comprehensive utilization rate of mine water, and the land reclamation rate have all increased by more than 10 percentage points. The country has strengthened comprehensive management and safe utilization of coal mine gas, and the benefits of gas extraction on safe production, resource utilization, and environmental protection are increasingly visible. Over the past decade, outdated coal-fired power facilities, with a combined capacity of more than 100 GW, have been decommissioned across the country. Coordinated measures have been taken to realize energy-saving and carbon-reducing transformation of remaining coal-fired power units, increase their flexible load regulation capabilities, and upgrade their heat supply capacity. By the end of 2023, more than 95 percent of coal-fired power units had achieved ultra-low emissions, and more than 50 percent had deep peak-shaving capabilities, reducing the discharge of pollutants in the power industry by more than 90 percent.



Significant Reduction of Pollutant Discharges in China's Power Industry 2013–2022

Promoting the transition towards green oil and gas production. The annual output of crude oil has stabilized at about 200 million tonnes, and the output of natural gas has experienced an annual increase of more than 10 billion cubic meters for seven consecutive years. China has actively promoted the construction of green oil and gas fields, made significant progress in carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) technology, and built near-zero emission oil and gas demonstration areas. Additionally, the country has promoted the transformation and upgrade of its crude oil refining and petrochemicals industry, and strengthened R&D and application of technologies to produce hydrogen from renewable energy and produce chemical products through carbon dioxide hydrogenation. It has implemented sound plans to steadily upgrade the quality of refined oil and raise its light-duty vehicle emission standard from National III to National VI. It has taken China less than 10 years to upgrade the quality of its refined oil to advanced international levels, two decades quicker than in developed countries.

Panel 6 Piloting CCUS Technology in Fossil Energy Utilization

Sinopec's Qilu Company and Shengli Oilfield have completed China's first million-tonne CCUS project. The project is designed to capture carbon dioxide from industrial exhaust gas and transport it to the Shengli Oilfield through pipelines for the flooding process. While achieving long-term safe storage of carbon dioxide, CCUS technology also improves the oil recovery rate of low permeability reservoirs, increasing the oil displacement efficiency by more than 25 percent and the recovery rate by more than 12 percent.

CHN Energy has built Asia's largest CCUS facility for the coal-fired power generation sector, with a capture capacity of 500,000 tonnes per year. The project is independently designed, manufactured, and installed by China. An absorbent with low energy consumption, high capacity, and high stability has been developed to achieve high-purity capture of carbon dioxide from the flue gas of coal-fired power units, for use in industrial and other settings.

Coordinating the development of traditional and new energy. China has been transforming traditional energy industries into integrated energy systems. It has taken steps to implement wind-solar-hydro (plus storage) and wind-solar-coal (plus storage) hybrid systems in resource-rich areas. New energy power generation projects have been built in places such as coal mine industrial sites, coal mining subsidence areas, idle spaces at power plants, and oil and gas mining areas. By developing offshore wind farms to provide green power for oil and gas platforms, China is supplying clean energy for the production, development, processing and conversion of traditional energy. The country is also working on hydrogen transportation by pipeline, and building integrated energy service stations supplying oil, gas, electricity and hydrogen on the basis of traditional oil and gas fueling stations.

Panel 7 Integrating Traditional and New Energy

PetroChina Jilin Oilfield has built a 150 MW wind and PV power project on the site of abandoned well

stations and the surrounding vacant land. Designed to supply electricity to the oilfield, this project is connected to the oilfield's power grid nearby. In its first year of operation, it has generated a cumulative output of 380 GWh, meeting 22 percent of the oilfield's electricity needs.

Sinopec has built China's first 10,000-tonne photovoltaic hydrogen project in Kuqa, Xinjiang. The project has an installed PV power capacity of 300 MW, a hydrogen production capacity of 20,000 tonnes per year, and a hydrogen storage capacity of 210,000 standard cubic meters. The hydrogen is supplied to Sinopec's local refining and chemical enterprises nearby.

CNOOC's Haiyou Guanlan is China's first deep-sea floating wind power platform, with an installed capacity of 7 MW. It is connected to the Wenchang Oilfield power grid via submarine cables. The annual power generation capacity can reach 22,000 MWh, meeting 7 percent of the electricity needs of the oilfield.

Improving the Resilience of the Energy System

With the large-scale development of new energy and changes in power load characteristics, China's energy and power system is facing more operational uncertainties. Therefore, it is important that the country should increase the regulation ability of the system, keep improving its capacity for safe operation and strengthening its resistance to risk.

Boosting energy network connectivity. In order to optimize the allocation of resources and increase its large-scale and long-distance energy transmission capacity, China has accelerated the construction of a cross-country energy network. It has built three west-to-east power transmission corridors across provinces and regions in northern, central, and southern China, with a capacity of about 300 GW, and has completed 20 ultra-high-voltage direct current (UHVDC) transmission channels. It has also improved the function of major regional power grids and formed a grid framework centered on a number of regional power grids, with effective interconnection between regions. A unified national pipeline network has taken shape to optimize and coordinate oil and gas allocation and supply across regions. By the end of 2023, the total length of the long-distance oil and gas pipeline network in China was about 190,000 km. This includes 33,000 km of crude oil pipelines, 33,000 km of refined oil pipelines, and 124,000 km of natural gas pipelines.

Panel 8 West-to-East Power Transmission Optimizes Cross-Country Resource Allocation

The west-to-east power transmission project is an effective means for China to ensure a safe and reliable supply of electricity, transition towards green and low-carbon energy, and optimize the allocation of its power resources.

The project has strengthened China's capability for energy security. In 2023, China's west-to-east power transmission capacity was about 300 GW, an increase of around 130 percent from 2013. During the decade from 2013 to 2023, the cumulative amount of electricity transmitted through the project exceeded 9,000 TWh.

The project has boosted China's green and low-carbon transition. The proportion of renewable energy transmitted through the country's UHVDC transmission channels exceeded 55 percent in 2023, optimizing the nationwide allocation of clean energy resources from the western region.

The project has promoted economic growth by capitalizing on energy resources. It has reinforced energy cooperation between eastern and western regions, effectively converting the energy resource strengths of the western region into a driver for economic and social development in central and eastern regions.

The project has improved power technology and equipment. China has largely mastered the manufacturing and engineering technology of UHV core equipment. The country has quickened its steps in implementing a large number of power technology innovation demonstration projects with the assistance of the west-to-east power transmission project, effectively advancing power generation and transmission technology throughout the country.

Improving energy reserves for emergency response. China has further improved its coal reserve system, with corporate reserves as the mainstay, government reserves as a supplement, and a proper combination of product reserves and capacity reserves. An oil reserve system that integrates government and corporate reserves, and develops both strategic and commercial reserves is in place. Faster progress has been made in building a multilevel natural gas storage and peak-shaving system, with local governments, gas suppliers, pipeline transportation enterprises, and urban gas services fulfilling their respective responsibilities. Over the past decade, China's natural gas storage capacity has doubled. The country has expanded its capacity for energy emergency response by establishing a prediction and early warning mechanism, formulating emergency plans, and improving the drill system and energy dispatch mechanism to guard against emergencies.

Panel 9 Exploring V2G Technology

China is actively exploring two-way charging between new energy vehicles (NEVs) and the power grid. This technology utilizes charging and swapping facilities connected to the power supply network to leverage the flexible regulation capabilities of NEV batteries.

The China RE Center V2G Demonstration Station in Beijing is China's first commercial V2G project. The nine DC charging and discharging piles, each with a power capacity of 15 kW, discharge electricity

to the Center through the V2G technology, helping to increase NEV users' income while reducing the peak power load of the Center and contributing to the stable operation of the power grid.

The V2G pilot project in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, is the largest of its kind in China. It is a PV-powered storage and charging station equipped with 50 DC charging and discharging piles, each with a power capacity of 60 kW, to discharge megawatt-level electricity during peak demand hours.

Increasing the regulation capacity of the energy system. China has upgraded its coal-fired power units to have flexible load regulation capabilities. It has also built natural gas peak-shaving power stations and accelerated the construction of pumped-storage hydropower stations as part of the effort to diversify novel energy storage. By the end of 2023, the installed capacity of coal-fired power units with flexible load regulation capabilities was close to 700 GW, and that of pumped-storage hydropower stations 50,940 MW. The novel energy storage projects in China have a maximum output power of 31,390 MW and a total energy storage capacity of 66,870 MWh, with an average storage time of 2.1 hours. The country has strengthened complementarity and mutual assistance between grid networks and tapped into demand-side response, by means such as expanding adjustable power load and improving vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology.

IV. Developing New Quality Productive Forces in the Energy Sector

The rapid transition to green and low-carbon energy across the globe highlights the importance of technology. Technological innovation is the accelerator of energy transition leading the development of new quality productive forces in the energy sector. China has been intensifying its efforts to implement an innovation-driven development strategy in the sector. By leveraging its competitive industries, transforming and upgrading its traditional industries, and accelerating the cultivation of industries of the future, China has better coordinated the development of its industrial and innovation chains, and spurred innovation in its energy transition.

Improving the System for Innovation in Energy Technology

China is improving top-level design and overall plans to establish innovation as a primary driver in energy technology. It has accelerated efforts to build a synergetic and market-oriented innovation system which boosts the role of enterprises as the main players and expands coordination between production, education, research and application.

Strengthening synergetic technology innovation. China has improved top-level design and formulated plans for technological innovation, with the focus on key national nuclear power, oil and gas projects, and key research and development programs for advanced renewable energy technology, energy storage, smart power grids, hydrogen energy, and clean and efficient coal usage. Efforts have also been made to establish and improve key national energy laboratories, national engineering research centers, and R&D innovation platforms under the National Energy Administration. Through major energy projects, China has expedited technological innovation and the application of technological advances, and optimized collaboration models for breakthroughs in key energy technology and equipment, involving coordinated efforts between central and local governments, between government and enterprises, between universities and enterprises, and among research institutes.

Energizing innovators. China has strengthened the primary role of energy enterprises in technological innovation. It has encouraged leading enterprises to build innovation consortia to act as both sources of innovation and leaders of modern industrial chains. The country adopts an open competition mechanism for selecting the best candidates to undertake key energy technology projects and a multi-team research mechanism for finding the best pathways and achieving optimal results, with the purpose of motivating key R&D players in innovation. Policies have been improved to incentivize whoever makes the first breakthroughs in key technology and equipment, and pilot application of major technologies and equipment has been expedited. Innovative enterprises are also supported with preferential policies and better public services to grow into hubs of innovation.

Accelerating Technological Innovation in Energy Transition

Focusing on the cutting-edge technologies, key fields and strategic needs in the energy sector, China has been increasing its efforts to achieve breakthroughs in technology, develop new energy technologies and industries, and facilitate the transition to green energy from traditional sources.

Developing green energy technologies. China has built complete industrial chains for the R&D, design, and integrated manufacturing of wind and solar PV equipment. The high conversion efficiency of crystalline silicon/perovskite PV cell technology has established multiple world bests, and the conversion efficiency of advanced crystalline silicon PV cells in mass production has exceeded 25 percent. The maximum single-unit capacity of onshore wind turbines now exceeds 10 MW, and offshore wind turbines with a single-unit capacity of 18 MW have rolled off the production line. China has also become a front-runner throughout the hydropower industrial chain, from design and construction to equipment manufacturing. The world's largest hydropower generating units, each having an installed capacity of 1,000 MW, are in operation at the Baihetan Hydropower Station. The country has mastered the nuclear power technologies of third-generation pressurized water reactors (PWRs) as represented by Hualong One and Guohe One, as well as fourth-generation high-temperature gas-cooled reactors. Work has begun

on Linglong One, a small modular PWR demonstration project. The country is also a world leader in smart grid technology, and has built a number of flexible DC transmission projects. Additionally, the development of novel energy storage and hydrogen energy technologies is accelerating.

Panel 10 Accelerated Development of Novel Energy Storage and Hydrogen Energy Technologies

Novel energy storage: Since 2016, China's novel energy storage has been transitioning from research and development into commercial application. The technology in these systems is becoming increasingly diverse. Lithium-ion batteries still have the largest installed storage capacity, but physical energy storage technologies—including compressed air energy storage and flywheel energy storage—as well as electrochemical energy storage technologies, including flow batteries and sodium-ion batteries, are undergoing rapid development. A number of novel energy storage technologies are now at the demonstration stage and are steadily advancing, including 300 MW compressed air energy storage, 100 MW flow battery energy storage, standalone MW-class flywheel energy storage, and gravity energy storage. The installed capacities of independent energy storage and shared energy storage are increasing, and industrial and commercial energy storage is currently experiencing a boom in development.

Hydrogen energy: China is a world leader in the technology for producing hydrogen from alkaline water electrolysis. An alkaline electrolyzer capable of producing 3,000 standard cubic meters of hydrogen per hour has been developed, while an MW-class proton exchange membrane (PEM) electrolyzer is undergoing thorough engineering validation testing.

Improving the clean and efficient utilization of traditional energy sources. China is applying supercritical and ultra-supercritical power generation and deep peak-shaving technologies in the coal-fired power industry to raise its environmental and energy efficiency indicators to world-leading standards. Advanced oil and gas exploration and production technologies have been industrialized, such as carbon dioxide flooding, horizontal drilling, and shale gas development, and significant progress has been made in deep-sea oil and gas exploration technologies. Shenhai-1, the world's first 100,000-tonne deep-sea semi-submersible oil production and storage platform, is operational, to help advance the green transformation and upgrading of the oil and gas industry.

Creating New Growth Points to Upgrade the Energy Sector

China is actively integrating digital technology into the energy sector and fostering new technologies, business forms and models to upgrade the energy sector and modernize industrial chains.

Transforming and upgrading the energy sector with digital and intelligent technologies. China has accelerated the application of digital and intelligent technologies to upgrade energy infrastructure for power plants, oil and gas fields, and coal mines, and to improve decision-making, operational efficiency, and service quality of enterprises. It has fast-tracked the construction of a new power system that allows information sharing among all entities across the generation-grid-load-storage chain. This enables panoramic perception, overall controllability, effective coordination between transmission and distribution grids, and real-time regulation of power supplies, which in turn improve the efficiency of power resource allocation and operational safety of the system. Plans are in place to create a digital end-use ecosystem, to build smart energy cities and communities, to improve the coordinated regulation and intelligence level of energy consumption systems, to unlock new models for smart energy use, and to upgrade green consumption with the digital economy.

Panel 11 Faster Digital and Intelligent Transformation in Energy

Digital and intelligent transformation in energy has helped energy enterprises improve production efficiency, lower production costs, and secure a reliable supply of energy.

Smart coal mines. China has accelerated the construction of smart coal mines adapted to local conditions. Smart mine technology has been applied in various scenarios and a number of model smart mines have been established. By the end of 2023, more than 2,500 smart mining sites had been built.

Smart oil and gas fields. PetroChina has constructed 245,000 digital wells and 26,100 digital field stations. Changqing Oilfield has built China's largest internet of things platform for oil and gas production. The digitalization rates of oil and gas wells and field stations have reached 98.2 percent and 100 percent, and more than 83 percent of field stations are unmanned.

Smart power plants. Major power generation groups have developed cloud platforms. Intelligent equipment and technology are now widely used in the monitoring, operation, and inspection of power generators, as well as in fuel management and safety management. Most new generators and some existing generators have been equipped with intelligent infrastructure.

Smart grids. An intelligent power dispatching system is now in full operation. Most substations are now unmanned and managed through remote control, with power distribution automation exceeding 90 percent. Robots and drones are widely used in grid inspection. The world's largest system for wide-area dynamic monitoring of grids has been built, and platforms such as new energy cloud and power demand-side management continue to be improved in support of the digital, automation, and informatization needs of the new power system.

Fostering new business forms and models in the energy sector. China has optimized and integrated its resources for electricity generation, grid infrastructure, and load management to build a new model of power supply based on close connectivity, coordination and interaction across the generation-grid-load-storage chain. Smart microgrids have been built for a variety of scenarios in the industrial, transport, construction and other sectors, allowing the local consumption of new energy. Virtual power plants have been created to increase the regulation capacity of the power system, and new integrated energy service models have been introduced to improve comprehensive energy efficiency, such as combined cooling, heating and power systems for natural gas utilization, geothermal power, distributed new energy, novel energy storage, and waste heat utilization.

Panel 12 Growing New Business Forms and Models in the Energy Sector

The grid-friendly green power station in Ulan Qab, Inner Mongolia, has a generating capacity of 1,700 MW of wind power and 300 MW of PV power, and an electrochemical energy storage system with a maximum output power of 550 MW and a total energy storage capacity of 1,100 MWh. Through leveraging energy storage regulation and intelligent control, the station has realized controllability and adjustability, and provided support for the overall power supply. While fully accommodating new energy, the station has improved its peak regulation performance and explored pathways for a safe and reliable transition to new energy.

The intelligent dispatching and management cloud platform of Shenzhen's virtual power plant has realized regular and market-oriented operation through its management center, enabling effective interaction between electricity generation, grid, and load. It has access to about 2,050 MW adjustable electricity loads and 450 MW distributed PV power with a regulation capacity of over 500 MW. In 2023, this platform regulated about 1,300 MWh of electricity.

The green microgrid project in ABB Xiamen Hub has built a full-factor DC microgrid system based on smart power solutions, and designed an off-grid operation model to improve the energy efficiency and reliability of the Hub. Connected to the Xiamen virtual power plant operation platform, this project can manage up to 20 percent of the electricity demand through flexible load control. The project has lowered the overall cost of electricity consumption by 23 percent.

V. Modernizing Energy Governance

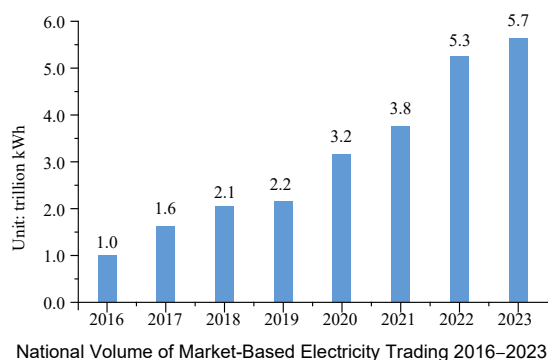
High-quality development in China's energy sector requires a significant effort to modernize energy governance and establish a new energy-producing dynamic in tandem with this effort. Through deeper reform, improved policies, strategic plans, and the rule of law as guarantee, China has been able to fully leverage the decisive role of the market in resource allocation while ensuring that the government better plays its role. This has created an enabling environment for the green and low-carbon energy transition.

Building a Fair and Open Energy Market with Effective Competition

China has furthered market-oriented reform in the energy sector. It has accelerated the development of a market structure and system allowing effective competition, and has improved the mechanism for having energy prices determined primarily through market forces. The country has also focused on building a unified national market, removing barriers within the energy market, and facilitating smooth and efficient market operations. These efforts are designed to create a business enabling environment that is stable, fair, transparent and predictable.

Advancing market-oriented reform in the energy sector. The monopoly held by power grid enterprises in the purchase and sale of electricity has been largely eliminated, and market competition has been introduced into power generation and sale. Private investment is now welcome in power distribution, and as a result, new market entities are thriving in the energy sector, including integrated energy service providers, virtual power plants, and new energy storage enterprises. Private enterprises have become the main force in China's new energy sector, making up about 60 percent of all wind turbine manufacturers and almost all photovoltaic equipment manufacturers. The reform of oil and gas institutions is making further progress. A national oil and gas pipeline network corporation has been established, gradually creating a landscape wherein oil and gas are supplied by multiple entities through diverse channels, transported via a unified, highly efficient network of pipelines, and sold in a fully competitive market.

Developing a unified national energy market. China has accelerated progress on a unified national electricity market system that efficiently coordinates trade within and between provinces and regions and integrates medium- and long-term trade, spot trading, and trade in ancillary services. Trading centers for electricity, oil and gas, and coal have been established to create open and transparent energy trading platforms with complete functions. The share of market-traded electricity as part of the national total electricity consumption increased from 17 percent in 2016 to 61.4 percent in 2023. The share of market-traded wind and photovoltaic power accounted for 47 percent of total wind and photovoltaic power generation in 2023. These developments have contributed to a better allocation of electricity and a more efficient utilization of renewable energy.



Panel 13 Faster Progress in Building a Unified National Electricity Market System

A multitiered electricity market system has taken shape. The development of provincial markets is advancing in China, with full coverage of medium- and long-term trade and trade in ancillary services. Electricity spot markets in Shanxi, Guangdong and Shandong provinces have commenced full operation, and those in Gansu and the western part of Inner Mongolia have successfully completed trial operations with long-cycle settlement. Other regions are currently exploring the formation of spot markets. Cross-provincial and cross-regional market-based trade is expanding. A regional electricity market in southern China is conducting trial operations with settlement.

Market coverage is expanding. Enterprises generating electricity from coal, natural gas, nuclear, and renewable energy sources participate in market trading in an orderly manner. Market entities have now expanded to include virtual power plants, independent power storage enterprises, and other novel entities. The number of entities registered with electricity trading institutions has grown from 42,000 in 2016 to 743,000 in 2023.

Improving energy price formation mechanisms. Market-based energy pricing reform is furthering in China. The country encourages the orderly market trading of electricity from various energy sources and works consistently to improve its feed-in tariff policies for new energy. It has completely removed price controls over electricity for industrial and commercial use. China has established a capacity tariff mechanism for coal-fired power to transition coal from being the primary power source into serving a supporting and balancing role. The country has issued policies on tiered electricity pricing for energy-intensive industries to help conserve energy and reduce emissions. It has improved its pricing policy based on time of use to guide power users to reduce peak demand and shift their energy use to off-peak hours. It has established a price regulation system for natural monopolies that is based on authorized costs plus reasonable profits, and places equal emphasis on both incentives and constraints. Additionally, the country has improved its refined oil pricing mechanism to better reflect changes in international crude oil prices and domestic supply and demand dynamics. Advances have also been made in the market-oriented reform of natural gas citygate prices, as well as in the medium- and long-term contract system and market-based price formation mechanism of coal.

Strengthening Government Guidance and Services

China has been accelerating the transformation of government functions and bringing into full play the strategic guiding role of national development plans. It has strengthened the coordination of fiscal, taxation, investment, financing, and other macroeconomic policies, reinforced market regulation, and improved its public services, in order to ensure both efficiency and fairness in its energy transition.

Boosting the guiding role of development plans. China has been promoting a strategy to optimize energy production and consumption. It has formulated medium- to long-term and five-year overall plans for the energy sector as well as special plans for the development of renewable energy. All of them are overarching plans for green and low-carbon development of the energy sector. They guide the directions for energy transition, the deployment of major energy projects, the allocation of public resources, and the use of private investment. China has strengthened coordination of its plans on energy with those on eco-environmental protection and territorial space utilization so as to provide essential safeguards for the green and low-carbon transition.

Panel 14 Developing a System of Energy Standards for Green and Low-Carbon Transition

Improving the policy system for energy standards. In order to achieve China's high-quality development goals in the energy sector and to align with the clean use of fossil fuels, the extensive use of non-fossil fuels, the digital and intelligent transformation of energy systems, and the green transition of energy consumption, China has strengthened the planning and development of a system of energy standards. More than 130 technical committees for standardization in the energy sector have been

established, encompassing all areas of the industry.

Raising the efficiency of standardization. To date, China has published about 4,000 national standards and over 11,000 industry standards in the energy sector. It has built an information platform for standardization in the sector and achieved full life-cycle management of energy standards.

Intensifying international cooperation on standardization. China encourages its energy enterprises, research institutions, and social organizations to participate in the formulation of standards by the International Electrotechnical Commission, International Organization for Standardization, International Telecommunication Union, and other organizations. It has published foreign language editions of more than 500 energy standards. As part of Belt and Road Initiative's international cooperation on energy, it engages in international exchanges and cooperation on standardization in fields such as new energy, power transmission and transformation, oil and gas, and nuclear power.

Bolstering policy support. China has taken steps to accommodate the green and low-carbon transition of its energy sector by establishing a system of standards for clean energy. It has introduced a catalogue of industries that support the transition, and has formulated and improved industrial support policies accordingly. Additionally, increasing support from the central budget, local government special bonds, and the National Green Development Fund has been given to clean and low-carbon energy projects. The country is creating a green financial system to guide financial institutions in increasing green loans under market principles in accordance with the rule of law, while also supporting enterprises in issuing green bonds. Furthermore, the country has optimized the approval and registration process for clean and low-carbon energy projects, and streamlined the management procedures for distributed energy investment projects.

Raising the efficacy of oversight and regulation. China has worked to improve its regulation of natural monopolies in the energy sector. The country promotes non-discriminatory and fair access to power grid and oil and gas pipeline facilities by third parties. It has been strengthening regulation of market transactions, pricing mechanisms, and information disclosure. Actions that disrupt market order are swiftly rectified to ensure that market rules are observed. Oversight on the implementation of major plans, policies, and projects has also been strengthened, and renewable energy integration and consumption, the construction and operation of electricity balancing facilities, and the consolidation and upgrading of power grids in rural areas are also subject to better regulation. New methods of oversight and regulation in the energy sector have been adopted, as a new credit-based regulation mechanism has been established and the internet-based model has been widely promoted. An electricity safety oversight and regulation framework covering risk control of large power grids, power emergency response, dam safety, and cybersecurity risk control has been established and improved to ensure the safe and stable operation of power systems and a reliable supply of electricity.

Reinforcing the Rule of Law in Energy Transition

China ensures sound lawmaking, strict law enforcement, and impartial administration of justice. It applies the rule of law in consolidating the foundations of the energy sector, stabilizing public expectations, and delivering long-term benefits. The goal is to reinforce the rule of law in energy governance.

Developing a complete legal system. China has established a comprehensive legal framework to support its energy transition. This legal framework mainly comprises the Energy Conservation Law and the Renewable Energy Law, supplemented by the Cleaner Production Promotion Law, the Circular Economy Promotion Law, the Interim Regulations on the Administration of Carbon Emissions Trading, and others. China is also working to establish an eco-environmental code, and to accelerate the formulation of an energy law. There are also plans to revise the Renewable Energy Law and the Electric Power Law. These efforts aim to better promote green production and consumption, and to strengthen incentives and constraints that encourage energy conservation, non-fossil fuel development, renewable energy prioritization, and green energy use.

Advancing law-based government administration. China has made further efforts to improve its law-based government administration. The country ensures that the rule of law is integrated throughout the formulation, implementation, supervision and management of its energy strategy and related plans, policies and standards. It has applied a system for disclosing information on administrative law enforcement, a recording system for the whole process of law enforcement, and a legal review system for major law enforcement decisions. It has established a system of benchmarks for administrative discretion to promote strict, procedure-based, impartial, and non-abusive law enforcement. Additionally, China is moving forward with the reform of its administrative review system to improve the procedures for accepting administrative review applications, rules on evidence, and review mechanisms, to protect the lawful rights and interests of enterprises and citizens in energy production and consumption. The country is also carrying out in-depth legal awareness activities in the energy sector and has implemented a responsibility program in which law enforcement departments are responsible for raising public awareness of the law to ensure that the entire society fulfills its obligations of green consumption.

Improving judicial services. China has made all-round efforts to improve judicial services to support high-quality development of the energy sector and to achieve its peak carbon and carbon neutrality goals

through impartial administration of justice. The Supreme People's Court has established an Environment and Resources Division to handle cases related to the rule of law in the eco-environmental field, and nationwide there are 2,800 special institutions and organizations where such lawsuit cases are heard. The authorities have published judicial interpretations and guidelines to provide clear guidance for courts in applying the law and adjudicating cases related to energy transition.

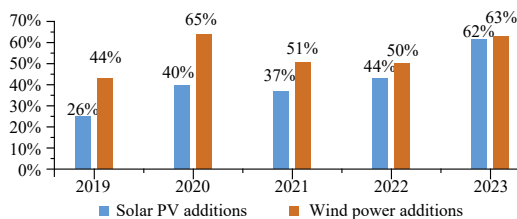
VI. Contributing to a Global Community with a Shared Future

Maintaining energy security and addressing climate change are common challenges the world faces, and accelerating the development of green and low-carbon energy is a common opportunity for the world. By advancing its own energy transition, China is actively contributing to the global energy transition. Through its commitment to the principle of planning together, building together, and benefiting together, China is working with other countries to promote sustainable global energy development and build a global energy governance system based on equity, justice, balance and inclusiveness.

Providing New Drivers for Global Green Development

China has actively promoted green development by transforming its own development models and engaging in extensive energy cooperation worldwide. Through its efforts, China has provided new drivers for global green development.

China's green energy development has become an engine for global energy transition. Since 2013, China has been responsible for over 40 percent of the annual additions to global renewable energy capacity. In 2023, the newly installed capacity in China accounted for more than half of the world's total. According to the Renewables 2023 released by the International Energy Agency (IEA), China is a front-runner in the global renewable energy sector and a major driving force behind the world's rapid expansion of renewable energy capacity. From 2014 to 2023, the global share of non-fossil fuels in energy consumption rose from 13.6 percent to 18.5 percent, with China contributing 45.2 percent to this increase.



China's Share of Additions to Global New Energy Capacity 2019–2023

China's new energy industry provides green power for the world. Through sustained technological innovation, a sound system of industrial and supply chains, sufficient market competition, and the advantages of a super-scale market, China's new energy industry has developed rapidly. This has enriched global supply, eased global inflationary pressures, and contributed to coordinated international efforts to combat climate change and improve people's lives. China-made PV modules and wind power equipment have enabled the widespread economic use of renewable energy in an increasing number of countries. According to a report from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), over the past decade the average cost per kilowatt-hour of global wind power projects has decreased by more than 60 percent, and PV power projects by more than 80 percent. The reductions are largely attributable to China's efforts.

China's further opening up creates new opportunities for deeper international cooperation on clean energy. China has been building a world-class business environment that is market-oriented, law-based and internationalized, promoting energy trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and providing opportunities for foreign-funded enterprises to share the dividends of the country's energy transition. It has implemented a foreign investment management system based on pre-entry national treatment and a negative list, and removed restrictions on foreign investment in all energy industries except nuclear power plants. Additionally, China has introduced a catalogue of encouraged industries for foreign investment and stepped up policy support for foreign investment in clean energy. Multinational companies such as GE, BP, and Siemens are steadily expanding their investment in China's energy sector, and many foreign investment projects are well underway across the country, including EDF's offshore wind power project, Tesla's electric vehicle project in Shanghai, and LG Energy Solution's battery project in Nanjing.

Promoting Belt and Road Cooperation in Green Energy

Under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, China follows the principle of planning together, building together, and benefiting together in energy cooperation. It is committed to open, green and clean cooperation that pursues high-standard, people-centered, and sustainable development. It works together with partner countries to deepen the energy transition, advance green cooperation in the energy sector, and achieve sustainable development.

Advancing green energy cooperation among Belt and Road countries. China has issued a number

of policy documents directed at expanding its cooperation with Belt and Road countries in the field of green energy, including the Guidelines on Jointly Promoting Green Development of the Belt and Road. In 2021, China pledged to stop building new coal-fired power plants overseas, and began to focus on green and low-carbon energy projects in its energy cooperation with partner countries. Today, China is collaborating with over 100 countries and regions on green energy projects and has launched a significant number of signature energy projects and “small yet smart” people-centered programs that effectively solve accessibility and affordability problems of electricity supply in those countries and regions, and provide them with clean, safe and reliable energy supply solutions.

Panel 15 Outstanding Examples of Green Energy Cooperation Among Belt and Road Countries

Pakistan's Karot Hydropower Station is a priority project for energy cooperation under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It is built and operated by Chinese enterprises. With a total installed capacity of 720 MW, it generates an annual average of 3,200 GWh of clean electricity, meeting the power demand of over 5 million people.

Ethiopia's Adama Wind Farm is the first wind power project in Ethiopia and the first intergovernmental new energy cooperation project between China and Africa. Using concessional loans from the Chinese government, it was built by Chinese enterprises. With a total installed capacity of 204 MW, it generates an annual average of 630 GWh of clean electricity, substantially improving local power supply.

UAE's Al Dhafra Solar PV Plant is the world's largest single-site solar power plant. It was built by a Chinese contractor. With a total installed capacity of 2,100 MW, it can meet the electricity needs of about 200,000 homes in the UAE, and has helped to increase the share of clean energy in the UAE to more than 13 percent.

Argentina's Cauchari Solar PV Park is the highest solar power plant in South America with the largest installed capacity. It was built by a Chinese enterprise. With a total installed capacity of 315 MW, it generates about 650 GWh of electricity annually, providing clean energy for 250,000 homes and helping to realize local self-sufficiency in electricity.

Jointly building platforms for high-level energy cooperation. Initiated by China, the Belt and Road Energy Partnership includes 33 member countries from across the world. Within this partnership, six major regional energy cooperation platforms have been formed—the China-ASEAN platform, the China-League of Arab States platform, the China-African Union platform, the China-Central and Eastern Europe platform, the China-Central Asia platform, and the APEC Sustainable Energy Center. A mechanism has been established for regular meetings between the energy ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states. Focusing on energy security, energy transition, energy access, and sustainable energy development, China contributes its solutions to the reform of global energy governance.

Jointly Promoting Global Sustainable Energy Development

In recent years, the international situation has become increasingly complex, with various forms of green barriers on the rise. This has made it more challenging to keep global energy industrial and supply chains stable and maintain energy security in an open environment. In response to these new challenges, China is prepared to fulfill its responsibility as a major developing country by working alongside other countries to improve the industrial and supply chains of clean energy, share knowledge and experience, advance the transition to green and low-carbon energy, and contribute to global sustainable energy development and a global community with a shared future.

—**Expanding pragmatic cooperation on energy transition.** China upholds open and mutually beneficial cooperation and promotes the fruition of the Global Development Initiative. It is committed to improving bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms in the energy sector, strengthening the exchange of policy ideas and best practices in energy transition, and advancing cooperation and capacity building on green and low-carbon technologies, in an effort to build a beautiful world with green energy. China opposes overstretching the concept of national security and imposing baseless restrictions on normal international development cooperation. It is ready to work with the international community to explore new types of energy across more fields and create a future of sustainable energy for the benefit of humanity.

—**Keeping global energy industrial and supply chains open and stable.** As a firm advocate of true multilateralism, China opposes all forms of unilateralism and protectionism. It rejects all forms of decoupling, any severing of industrial and supply chains, and the “small yard and high fence” approach, as it endeavors to keep global energy industrial and supply chains open and stable. China is ready to work with other countries to strengthen dialogue and communication, promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and build secure, stable and efficient global energy industrial and supply chains that are open, inclusive, and mutually beneficial. Major countries should focus more on the future of the earth and humanity and act in a responsible manner by ensuring global energy security, promoting green development, and maintaining market order, thus fulfilling the responsibilities commensurate with their status.

—**Improving global energy access.** Poverty eradication is the common responsibility of the

international community, and ensuring the supply of electricity and other energy sources is one of the basic conditions allowing underdeveloped areas to eliminate poverty and narrow the gap. China has successfully eradicated extreme poverty in the largest and most challenging battle against poverty that benefits the greatest number of people in human history. It is prepared to work with other countries to implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aiming to help less developed countries and regions in strengthening their energy supply capacities while supporting their efforts to promote clean and renewable energy. Thus, they will be able to achieve the goal of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

—**Tackling challenges posed by global climate change.** The earth is the home of all humanity, and climate change is a common challenge facing all countries. China has implemented a proactive national strategy on climate change, defined its peak carbon and carbon neutrality goals, and contributed to the global climate change response with concrete actions. It is ready to work with other countries to uphold the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, while working towards the targets outlined by the Paris Agreement, as it helps to build a fair and rational global climate governance system directed towards cooperation and mutual benefit. Developed countries should provide funding, technology, and capacity-building support for renewable energy deployment in developing countries, and help address the dual challenges of energy supply security and the green and low-carbon energy transition, as all nations move together towards a greener, more inclusive, and sustainable future.

Conclusion

Over the past decade, China has achieved remarkable success in its resolute transition to green and low-carbon energy. However, energy transition is a systemic socio-economic transformation of broad and profound significance and a long-term strategic initiative that requires steady progress and sustained efforts, guided by the new energy security strategy.

China has formulated a medium- and long-term development plan. By 2035, it aims to have achieved basic socialist modernization, to have in place eco-friendly ways to produce and consume energy, to expedite the transition to non-fossil fuels as its main energy sources, to have established a new power system to support this transition, and to have largely reached the goal of building a beautiful China. By the middle of the century, China will have become a great modern socialist country with a clean, low-carbon, safe, and efficient energy system. Its energy efficiency will be among the world's highest, with non-fossil fuels as its main energy sources, as the country looks to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

The earth is our shared home, and a clean and beautiful world with bluer skies, greener mountains, and clearer waters is the common aspiration of everyone in this global village. To address the challenge of climate change and achieve the sustainable use of energy, the world must accelerate the pace of the global energy transition. The green revolution concerns the well-being of everyone and future generations. All countries should work together to protect our planet for the sake of human survival.

China is committed to respecting nature, following its ways, and protecting it, and stands for the vision of building a global community with a shared future. It continues to accelerate its green and low-carbon energy development, and promote a global energy governance system characterized by equity, justice, balance and inclusiveness. China will work with other members of the international community to plan energy cooperation together, address global climate change, promote harmony between humanity and nature, and create a clean and beautiful world for us all.

Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects

Poverty Alleviation: China's Experience and Contribution

Source: State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
April 2021

Preface

Poverty is a chronic affliction of human society and a common challenge faced by the whole world. Poverty and its associated problems, including hunger, diseases, and social conflicts, are serious impediments to people's pursuit of a better life, so the eradication of poverty has always been a wish to be fulfilled. The history of humankind is the history of relentless struggle against poverty.

China is the world's largest developing country, with a population of 1.4 billion. In addition to its weak foundations and uneven development, the nation had long been plagued by poverty at a scale and a level of severity that has rarely been seen anywhere else in the world. As a result, the challenge of poverty alleviation in China almost defies imagination.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Over the past century, the Party has united and led the Chinese people in the battle against poverty with unwavering faith and will. Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the Party Central Committee, with General Secretary Xi Jinping at the core, has fought a decisive battle against poverty that is unprecedented in scale and intensity, and has benefited the largest number of people in human history. At a grand gathering held on February 25, 2021, to mark China's achievements in poverty alleviation and to honor its model fighters against poverty, General Secretary Xi solemnly declared: Victory in the battle against poverty is complete, and China completed the arduous task of eliminating extreme poverty.

China is home to nearly one fifth of the world's population. Its complete eradication of extreme poverty—the first target of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—10 years ahead of schedule, is a milestone in the history of the Chinese nation and the history of humankind, making an important contribution to the cause of global poverty alleviation.

Poverty is not predestined, nor is it unconquerable. China's experience in poverty alleviation indicates that courage, vision, sense of responsibility, and the eagerness to take on challenges are the most essential. With strong will and determination, as well as practical action, one can make steady progress towards overcoming poverty and realizing common prosperity.

This white paper is being issued to record the course of the Chinese people's great fight in eliminating extreme poverty, introduce China's approach, and share its experience and actions in poverty alleviation.

The Solemn Commitment of the CPC

The Chinese nation has a long history, diligent and intelligent people and splendid civilization. Over the history of thousands of years, eliminating poverty has been the persistent goal of the Chinese people, who suffered hardships and difficulties frequently. From the middle of the 19th century, foreign aggression and the decadence of the imperial dynasty reduced China to a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society, and hundreds of millions of its people were plunged into poverty or even extreme poverty. But the Chinese people have fought with fortitude to realize their dream—achieving economic prosperity, national rejuvenation, and a happy and better life.

The CPC Led the People to Win Victory in the Revolution, Build the People's Republic of China (PRC), Opening a New Journey Towards Prosperity

The founding of the CPC in July 1921 was an epochal event in China's history. The CPC has taken the happiness of the people and rejuvenation of the nation as its aspiration since its founding, and united and led the people to fight for a better life over the decades. The Party's first generation of central collective leadership under Mao Zedong regarded the liberation of peasants as the fundamental issue of the revolution, led the people to launch the Agrarian Revolution to realize the goal of "the land to the tiller," overthrew the rule of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism, and won victory in the New Democratic Revolution and established the PRC, bringing an end to sustained oppression, exploitation of the people, frequent wars, and partitioning of the country, and realizing the goals of national independence and people's liberation. This helped to remove the obstacles to China's progress, and created the political conditions it needed to eradicate poverty, regain national strength, and realize prosperity for everyone.

The founding of the PRC on October 1, 1949, allowed the Chinese people to stand upright and become the true masters of the country. To change the backward situation starting from scratch, the CPC united and led the people to rely on themselves and strived to build their homeland with strong determination and concerted effort. Land reform was rolled out across the country, abolishing the feudal land system that had endured for over 2,000 years. This removed the major institutional obstacle to eliminating poverty. Socialist transformation was carried out in agriculture, individual craft industries, and capitalist industry and commerce. The establishment of the socialist system provided a basic institutional guarantee for addressing the root causes of poverty. Socialist development was carried out on all fronts, creating an independent and rather complete industrial system and economic system. Efforts were made to develop the collective economy, improve farmland irrigation and water conservation, and develop rural education and cooperative medical services. A preliminary social security system took shape, with the collective economy at the base, and the “five guarantees” (The National Agricultural Development Program [1956–1967] specified that agricultural cooperatives should give proper care to commune members who could not work and had no family to support them, by providing them with proper food, clothing, fuel, and education [for children and teenagers], and by paying their burial expenses.) and relief for people in extreme poverty as the core. The Chinese people—including the farmers—who made up nearly one quarter of the world’s population, saw their basic living needs met. Their living standards and educational level improved. Socialist building during this period pressed ahead amidst successes and setbacks.

Reform and Opening Up Accelerated Development and Poverty Alleviation in China

Held in December 1978, the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee ushered in a new chapter of reform and opening up and socialist modernization in China. Reform and opening up has been another great revolution in the history of the Chinese people and Chinese nation, injecting momentum and innovation. The rapid socioeconomic development that ensued gave a vigorous boost to poverty alleviation, and resulted in a sharp decline in the impoverished population.

In the initial period of reform and opening up, confronted by the grim challenge of a large rural impoverished population base and a high incidence of poverty, the second generation of the central collective leadership headed by Deng Xiaoping issued a declaration that “Poverty is not socialism; socialism means eliminating poverty.” It set the goal of ensuring the people a moderately prosperous life by the end of the 20th century, formulated a three-step strategic plan (The 13th CPC National Congress proposed that a three-step strategic plan for China’s economic development would be laid out after the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee: doubling the 1980 GNP by the end of the 1980s and ensuring that the people would have adequate food and clothing as the first step; doubling the 1990 GNP by the end of the 20th century and ensuring the people a moderately prosperous life as the second step; and increasing the per capita GNP level to that of moderately developed countries, ensuring the people a relatively affluent life, and realizing basic modernization by the middle of the 21st century as the third step.), and articulated the vision of “Two Development Strategies” (In 1988, Deng Xiaoping proposed that “The coastal areas, which comprise a vast region with a population of 200 million, should accelerate their opening to the outside world, and we should help them develop rapidly first; afterwards they can promote the development of the inland regions. The development of the coastal areas is of overriding importance, and the interior provinces should subordinate themselves to it. When the coastal areas have developed to a certain extent, they will be required to give more help to the interior. Then, the development of the interior provinces will be of overriding importance, and the coastal areas will in turn have to subordinate themselves to it.” [Source: “The Central Leadership Must Have Authority,” *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Vol III*]). A swathe of major reforms involving agriculture and rural areas were launched, providing for a massive, planned, well-organized poverty alleviation effort at the national level. The two-tier management system adopted in the rural areas, integrating cooperative management with household contract management, clarified the most basic production relations and inspired the farmers’ enthusiasm, bringing an end to a period of protracted stagnation in agricultural output. Reform of the distribution system for agricultural products was enacted. A major effort was made to develop township enterprises in order to increase overall incomes in rural areas. Special poverty alleviation agencies were set up, poverty standards were set, key impoverished areas and counties were identified, and a special plan for agricultural development in the three western regions (The three western regions were Hexi Region and Dingxi Region in Gansu Province and the mountainous region in southern Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, the most impoverished contiguous areas in the country at the beginning of reform and opening up. In December 1982, China launched poverty alleviation initiatives in these regions to boost their agricultural development. This involved 47 counties, cities and districts [which expanded to 57 in 1992]. It was a groundbreaking project in China’s poverty alleviation efforts. It set a precedent in regional poverty alleviation, accumulating rich experience in moving from relief-based poverty alleviation to development-driven poverty alleviation, pooling resources for the development of impoverished areas, for poverty alleviation through relocation, and for combining development-driven poverty alleviation with developing the eco-economy. These successful measures have had a profound influence on massive, planned, well-organized poverty alleviation efforts across the country starting from 1986.) was launched. These measures liberated the rural productive forces, released vitality, boosted economic development, increased farmers’ incomes, and updated their mindsets. Development-driven poverty alleviation opened

a new chapter in China.

By the early 1990s, there had been visible progress in poverty alleviation in rural areas. In the meantime, poverty had evolved from a widespread problem into one afflicting particular regions, groups and populations, highlighting the problem of uneven regional development. The Party's third generation of central collective leadership with Comrade Jiang Zemin at the core formulated a three-step development strategic plan (The 15th CPC National Congress held in 1997 drew up a new three-step strategic plan. The first step involved doubling the 2000 GNP, giving the people greater prosperity, and putting in place a relatively complete socialist market economy system, all by the end of 2010. The second step involved working hard for another decade to further develop the economy by the centenary of the CPC, and to improve all relevant systems. The third step involved realizing basic modernization and developing China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, and culturally advanced by the time we celebrate the centenary of the PRC in the middle of the 21st century.), put forward the goal of achieving moderate prosperity in all respects, and continued to press ahead with massive national campaigns on poverty alleviation. In 1994, the State Council launched the Priority Poverty Alleviation Program (1994–2000), China's first ever national poverty alleviation program with definite goals, targets, measures and deadlines. It committed to ensuring that the basic needs of 80 million impoverished rural residents would be met in the seven years from 1994 to 2000. In 1996, the central authorities held the National Conference on Development-driven Poverty Alleviation, further clarifying the steadfast commitment to the goal of being able to provide adequate food and clothing for the impoverished people by the end of the 20th century and confirming the shift from relief-based poverty alleviation to development-driven poverty alleviation. In 1999, the central authorities held the National Conference on Development-driven Poverty Alleviation, making plans to ensure success of the Priority Poverty Alleviation Program. Another conference on poverty alleviation was convened in 2001, and the State Council issued the Outline of Development-driven Poverty Alleviation in Rural Areas (2001–2010). On the basis of initial progress of China's poverty alleviation, the campaign continued with further measures. By the end of 2000, the impoverished population in rural areas had been reduced to 32.09 million and the incidence of poverty down to 3.5 percent, based on the poverty alleviation standard at the time.

In the 21st century, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Hu Jintao as General Secretary embraced the Scientific Outlook on Development. Its goals were to advance the development of a harmonious society, build a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and facilitate the development of a new socialist countryside.

It enacted a new series of poverty alleviation policies and measures. This resulted in major adjustments to the focus and targets of poverty alleviation work, listing the central and western regions as the priority region, and choosing as individual targets 150,000 impoverished villages besides the 592 key counties, where the full participation of villagers in poverty alleviation efforts was encouraged.

A whole range of efforts were directed to business development, the training and transfer of rural labor, poverty alleviation through relocation, and relocation for the development of the eco-economy. State strategy of regional development was implemented, such as developing west China, revitalizing old industrial bases in the northeast, and stimulating the rise of the central region. These achieved coordinated development between regions and between rural and urban areas. The Agricultural Tax was abolished and a series of rural social security systems such as the new cooperative medical care system were established, greatly easing the burden on farmers. The National Conference on Development-driven Poverty Alleviation in 2011 made plans for a new phase in the battle against poverty to ensure that moderate prosperity in all respects would be achieved by 2020. After the meeting, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the Outline of Development-driven Poverty Alleviation in Rural Areas (2011–2020). China's poverty alleviation effort had evolved from its primary mission—meeting the basic needs of the poor—to a new stage of consolidating this achievement, accelerating poverty alleviation, improving the eco-environment, increasing development capacity, and bridging the development gap. By the end of 2010, according to the poverty standard, the impoverished rural population had been reduced to 26.88 million, and the incidence of poverty had fallen to 2.8 percent. In 2011, the standard was raised to 2,300 yuan, and accordingly the poor population was 122 million.

China in a New Era and a New Battle Against Poverty

China marched into a new era after the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012. The country reached a critical stage in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and achieving the First Centenary Goal. Rapid economic and social development, a marked increase in comprehensive national strength, a better social security system, and progress in modernizing China's system and capacity for governance provided solid manpower, material, and financial foundations and strong institutional support for its poverty alleviation efforts. But the country still faced a daunting challenge since it had to solve the most difficult problems in raising the poorest population out of poverty in the coming period. China's battle against extreme poverty had entered the toughest stage. It was hard to complete the task with conventional approaches and ideas. To achieve the goal of poverty alleviation, the nation had to pull together with greater determination, sharper thinking, more targeted measures, and extraordinary efforts.

The CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core takes the desire of the people for a better life as its goal. It has committed to realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation and

securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Poverty alleviation, a key task and index of the realization of the First Centenary Goal, has been included in the Five-sphere Integrated Plan and the Four-pronged Comprehensive Strategy. The CPC set the goals that by 2020 it would help all the rural population out of poverty as defined by the existing standard, lift all impoverished counties out of poverty, and eliminate poverty over entire regions—mobilizing the whole Party, the whole country, and all sectors of society to engage in this battle. President Xi Jinping, always concerned about impoverished regions and families in straitened circumstances, has always put poverty alleviation at the top of his work agenda and devoted much of his energy to it. He has presented a series of important ideas and proposals, and made some major policy decisions. The 18th CPC National Congress in 2012 set the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Soon after that, Xi enunciated, “To achieve initial prosperity in the countryside, it is essential to raise rural living standards and particularly those of impoverished villagers.” Launching the campaign against poverty in the new era, he also emphasized, “No single poor area or single poor person should be left behind in achieving this goal.” In 2013, on his inspection tour to Shibadong Village, Huayuan County, Hunan Province, Xi proposed for the first time the concept of “giving differentiated guidance for targeted poverty alleviation in line with local conditions by seeking truth from facts.” In 2014, while attending the deliberation session of the Guizhou delegation at the Second Plenary Session of the 12th National People’s Congress, Xi stated, “Inspection tours must be conducted to identify the truly poor. Poverty alleviation must reach those who truly need it, and poverty must be fully eliminated.” In 2015, at the National Conference on Development-driven Poverty Alleviation, he sounded the bugle call to battle, “We should be determined, dedicate ourselves, and work hard towards the goal.” In 2017, in the report to the 19th CPC National Congress, Xi emphasized the need to mobilize the energies of the whole Party, the whole country, and the whole of society to win the battle against extreme poverty and eradicate it, “Ensuring that poor people and poor areas will enter the moderately prosperous society together with the rest of the country is a solemn promise made by our Party... We must win the battle against poverty.” In 2020, faced with the sudden attack of COVID-19, Xi mapped out new plans for mobilization at a seminar on poverty alleviation, emphasizing that lifting poor people in the rural areas out of poverty “must be achieved as scheduled.” “It is non-negotiable. This is a tough battle with no route of retreat. We must double our efforts till the last minute. We must not pause, slacken off or be negligent.” He asked the whole Party to perform well in this “difficult test” to apply more determination and more vigor, and to be confident of bringing the battle to a successful end.

President Xi Jinping Has Assumed Leadership, Made Plans, and Directed the Battle in Person

He has attended the National Conference on Development-driven Poverty Alleviation, and presided over seven seminars on poverty elimination. He has made over 50 fact-finding trips. In every one of the last five years, he has reviewed the evaluation reports of the poverty alleviation work. In every one of the last seven years, he has attended important events or issued directives on the National Poverty Alleviation Day. In every one of the last seven years, he has expounded on the fight against extreme poverty in his New Year address. In every one of the last eight years, he has discussed plans for the battle against poverty with delegates during the Two Sessions and written letters to encourage grassroots officials and communities to engage in the great fight. He has visited every one of the 14 contiguous poor areas across the country and over 20 poor villages, and sat in the homes of impoverished households to hear of their difficulties, suggestions, and needs, building up their confidence and determination, and their belief that they can work their way out of poverty. On February 25, 2021, at the National Poverty Alleviation Summary and Commendation Conference, he declared that China had secured a comprehensive victory in the fight against poverty, and completed the arduous task of eradicating extreme poverty—an outstanding and historic achievement.

The strenuous process whereby the CPC has led the Chinese people in the battle against poverty has been extraordinary and difficult. Over the past 100 years, the Party has committed itself to the original aspiration of seeking happiness for the people, taken on its responsibility for the people, honored its promise to the people, and made huge sacrifices in fighting to win national independence and people’s liberation, to make China prosperous and strong, and to bring common prosperity to all. In the process it has won the support and trust of the people.

Over the past 100 years the Chinese people, under the leadership of the CPC, have never faltered in pursuit of progress, have put in unimaginable efforts, and have relied on themselves to eradicate extreme poverty, and march towards shared all-round prosperity.

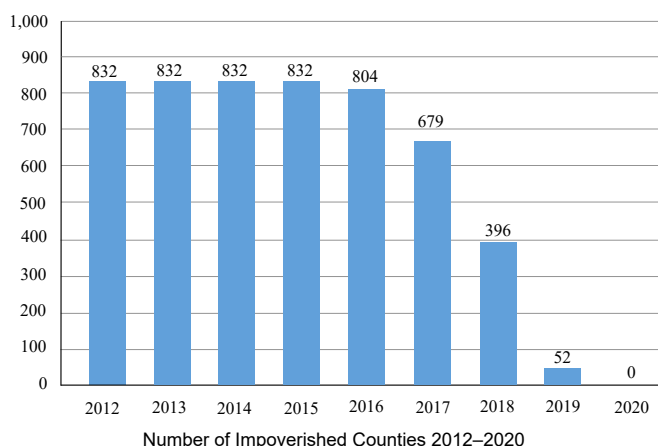
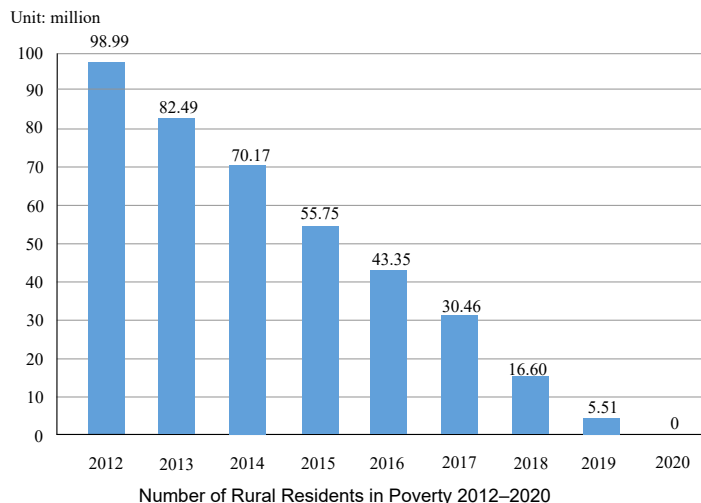
Over the past 100 years, under the leadership of the CPC, China has stood tall, become prosperous, and grown in overall national strength. The protection of the rights to subsistence and development, and the promotion of equality and justice have laid solid foundations for well-rounded human development.

Final Victory in the Fight Against Extreme Poverty

China’s fight against poverty entered a critical stage after the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012. At the end of 2020, through eight years of hard work, China achieved the goal of eliminating extreme

poverty—a key goal for the new era of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. The 98.99 million people in rural areas who were living below the current poverty threshold all shook off poverty; all the 128,000 impoverished villages and 832 designated poor counties got rid of poverty. China has eliminated poverty over entire regions and eradicated extreme poverty.

The battle against poverty has been another great revolution in rural China, leading to historic and comprehensive changes. The campaign saw an end to the backwardness of poverty-stricken areas, boosted overall rural development, resolved the greatest threat to success in achieving moderate prosperity in all respects, and laid a solid foundation for building a modern socialist China and realizing the Second Centenary Goal. China has secured a complete victory in the battle against extreme poverty, eliminating overall and extreme poverty for the first time in its history of thousands of years, and realizing a century-long aspiration of the Chinese people.

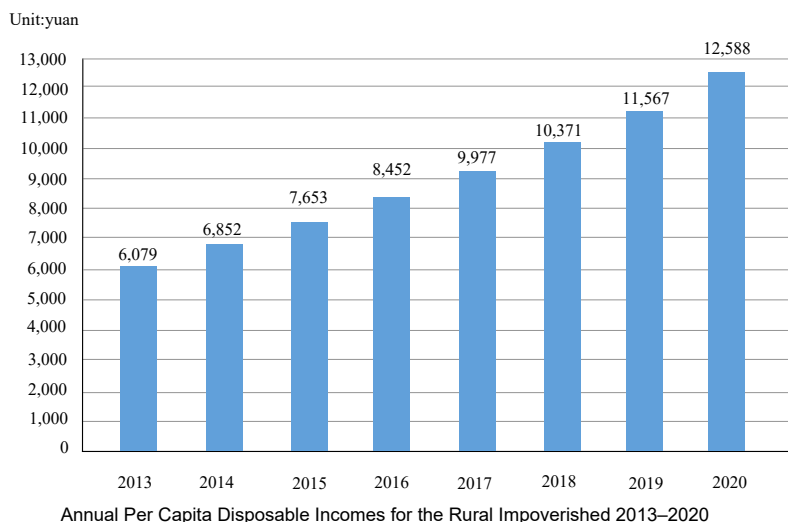


Significant Improvement in the Living Standards of the Poor

Through poverty alleviation, there has been a substantial improvement in the incomes and welfare of the poor. The Two Assurances and Three Guarantees (This refers to assurances of adequate food and clothing, and guarantees of access to compulsory education, basic medical services and safe housing for impoverished rural residents.) have been realized; education, healthcare, housing and drinking water supplies are much improved. These provisions have covered all basic needs and laid the foundations for future development. The fight against poverty has led to dramatic changes in the lives of the impoverished.

The incomes of the impoverished are increasing. The per capita disposable income of the rural poor increased from 6,079 yuan in 2013 to 12,588 yuan in 2020, up by 11.6 percent per annum on average. The growth rate was 2.3 percentage points higher than the national rural average. Their salary income and operative income kept increasing over the years in proportion to their transfer income, showing a stronger ability to shake off poverty through their own efforts.

Ethnic minority areas have made notable progress in fighting poverty. From 2016 to 2020, in the five autonomous regions (Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Xizang, Ningxia and Xinjiang) and three provinces with a large multi-ethnic population (Guizhou, Yunnan and Qinghai), the number of the poor dropped by 15.6 million. Extreme poverty was eliminated in all 28 of the minority ethnic groups with a small population. Some ethnic groups, still at the later stage of primitive society when the PRC was founded in 1949, leapfrogged to socialism and then again made great strides towards moderate prosperity in all respects.



The Two Assurances and Three Guarantees have been realized. According to the national survey of poverty alleviation (The national survey of poverty alleviation is a full review of China's progress in fighting poverty and has fundamental importance for targeted poverty alleviation. From 2020 to 2021, the survey was conducted in 22 provinces and equivalent administrative units in central and western China, focusing on the veracity of poverty alleviation results, particularly the overall progress in designated poor counties. The survey includes registration of poverty-stricken populations, progress in the Two Assurances and Three Guarantees, participation of the impoverished in poverty alleviation programs, and basic public services in poor counties and villages.), poor households now have adequate food and clothing all year round and a proper supply of nutritious food. They have clothing for all four seasons and comforters that protect them from cold weather.

Access to good quality education for the impoverished has improved remarkably; there are no dropouts in the countryside due to financial difficulties; nine-year compulsory education is now available to all children from rural poor households, and the completion rate in 2020 was 94.8 percent.

The three-tier healthcare system at village, township and county levels has been improved. All poverty-stricken populations now have access to basic medical insurance, critical illness insurance, and medical assistance, to ensure medical treatment for the impoverished with major illnesses, contracted healthcare for the impoverished with chronic diseases, and guaranteed medical services for the impoverished with critical illnesses. Basic medical insurance coverage of the poor is now over 99.9 percent. All the impoverished have been guaranteed medical services and medical insurance. Through these measures, China has resolved the problem of difficult and expensive access to medical treatment for poverty-stricken residents.

The program of renovation of dilapidated rural homes has ensured safe housing for all the impoverished. The program of safe drinking water for rural residents has secured supplies to 28.89 million poor in terms of both quantity and quality, and benefited 382 million rural population; tap water coverage increased from 70 percent in 2015 to 83 percent in 2020.

Renovation of Dilapidated Rural Homes

Renovation of dilapidated rural homes is an important policy measure in realizing the Two Assurances and Three Guarantees. Since 2013, a total of 25.68 million poor from 7.9 million households have had their dilapidated mud-and-straw cottages renovated. Housing improvement assistance was offered to 10.75 million rural households with economic difficulties, including households entitled to subsistence allowances, severely impoverished residents cared for at their homes with government support, and impoverished families of individuals with disabilities. Housing renovation for the rural poor is a part of the program of improving rural infrastructure, along with road construction, afforestation, supply of safe drinking water, garbage disposal, and sewage treatment. Through all these efforts, the rural living environment in China has notably improved. During housing renovation programs in poor rural areas, ethnic and local features have been retained to the maximum extent; cultural villages, as a means of

poverty alleviation, have been developed to increase local tourism income.

Subsidies were offered to the rural impoverished for the renovation of their dilapidated homes. In 2017, the average per household subsidy from the state budget was raised from 8,500 yuan to 14,000 yuan. Domestic authorities integrated all government subsidy funds before they were classified and graded in accordance with the extent of poverty, the level of risk for each dwelling, and the approach to renovation. This measure has ensured that poor households can afford safe housing. The widowed, orphaned and childless in extreme poverty are provided with rural public rental housing or rural nursing homes, vacant public housing that has been renovated, or vacant farmhouses for long-term rental, to guarantee their access to safe housing.

Poverty-Stricken Areas Getting Rid of Backwardness

Poor areas have long suffered from weak infrastructure, inadequate public services, and social and economic underdevelopment. In the final stages of fighting poverty, China succeeded in raising all the rural poor out of extreme poverty and the impoverished areas achieved a big stride in economic and social development, taking on a brand new look.

Infrastructure has been improved. Lack of access to transport, electricity, drinking water and communications hinders the development of poverty-stricken areas. Infrastructure construction is a basic element in the battle against poverty; through an intensified effort and further investment, new infrastructure in poor areas boosted their social and economic development.

The construction, management, maintenance and operation of roads in rural areas have all seen significant improvement. Transport networks now connect all villages with other local villages and with the outside world, and provide them with safe and easy access to bus services. By the end of 2020, impoverished areas had gained 1.1 million km of reconstructed highways and 35,000 km of new railways; all the villages, townships and towns in poverty-stricken areas with the right conditions were accessible by paved roads and provided with bus and mail routes, which facilitated economic development.

Water infrastructure in impoverished areas has been improved in many ways. Since 2016, the effective irrigated area has increased by more than 5.35 million ha and water supply capacity has increased by 18.1 billion cubic meters. Better water infrastructure is also a provider of strong support for the development of poverty-stricken areas.

Electricity access in poor areas has been improved through power grid construction projects such as power supply to areas without electricity, upgrading of rural power grids, and construction of trunk power grids and power transmission channels. Now, more remote areas are connected to power grids, and almost all rural areas enjoy a steady power supply.

Communications infrastructure has been extended in poverty-stricken areas. Now, over 98 percent of poor villages have access to optical fiber communications (OFC) and 4G technology; distance education is available at more schools in impoverished areas; telemedicine and e-commerce cover all designated poor counties. All of this represents an unprecedented pace of development of IT application in poverty-stricken areas.

This comprehensive range of infrastructure improvements has resolved many historical problems trapping poor areas in poverty, facilitated the flows of personnel, logistics, knowledge and information between poor areas and the outside world, and provided solid support for social and economic development in impoverished areas.

Construction, Management, Maintenance and Operation of Roads in Rural Areas

This policy is an important hallmark of the social changes in rural China in the new era. By the end of 2019, rural highways made up 83.8 percent of the total length of highways in China, and graded highways accounted for 93.2 percent of rural highways. The rate of rural highways subject to government maintenance plans reached 98.8 percent. Some 59,000 km of roads had been renovated to support resource, tourism and industrial development in poverty-stricken areas, resolving long-standing travel obstacles there. Rural road networks have narrowed the distance between cities and villages, improved rural living and working conditions, transformed rural society, and provided remote and isolated villages with access to modernity.

Better Power Supply in Poor Areas

Rural power grids are an important part of the infrastructure for social and economic development in the countryside.

In 2013, China implemented the National Action Plan on 100 percent Power Supply Coverage (2013–2015); by 2015, all residents had access to electricity. In 2016, China launched the Project of Upgrading Rural Power Grids during the 13th Five-year Plan Period (2016–2020), which notably improved rural access to electricity: the reliability of power supply from rural power grids reached 99.8%, and voltage eligibility rate reached 99.7%. At the end of 2020, all county-level administrative units in China were connected to major power grids.

China launched the Project of Dynamic Electricity Access for All Impoverished Villages in 2015. The

project involved about 170,000 villages in 839 counties and 23 provinces and equivalent administrative units. It ensured that all poor villages connected to major power grids have access to dynamic electricity.

Basic public services have been improved. In addition to providing adequate food, clothing and safe housing for the impoverished, China has intensified efforts to improve basic public services covering education, healthcare, culture and social security. The goal is to guarantee impoverished people access to education, medical services, elderly care and social assistance, so as to support development in poverty-stricken areas.

Since 2013, China has renovated 108,000 schools to strengthen the provision of compulsory education in poor areas, and ensured that all school-age rural children receive kindergarten and elementary education within their own villages.

Public cultural services in poor areas have also been improved. By the end of 2020, 99.48 percent of villages in 22 provinces and equivalent administrative units in central and western China had seen their own cultural centers completed. The campaign of bringing culture to the countryside has enriched the cultural life of the rural poor.

There has been a notable improvement in healthcare provision in poor areas. This program has remedied the shortfall in medical workers and institutions at village and township levels. 98 percent of the designated poor counties now have at least one grade-two hospital. The county-level hospitals in impoverished areas can treat 90 percent of the diseases that general county-level hospitals can. The impoverished can now have common ailments and chronic diseases treated at nearby medical institutions in a timely manner, and more major illnesses can be effectively treated at county-level hospitals.

Comprehensive social security systems are now in place in poor areas. The standards of eligibility for rural subsistence allowances in designated poor counties are all higher than the national poverty threshold.

Some 19.36 million impoverished people have been covered by rural subsistence allowances or extreme poverty relief funds, and 60.98 million by basic pension schemes for rural and non-working urban residents, achieving nearly 100 percent coverage.

The economy has achieved sustained and rapid growth. The battle against poverty has released the potential of poor areas, and injected vigor into their economic development.

Poverty-stricken areas have seen notable improvements in their economic structure. Businesses that leverage local strengths have been growing and thriving, including such new forms as e-commerce, photovoltaic technology, and tourism. The economy in poor areas has diversified, and effective market supply has increased. These developments provide solid foundations for economic growth.

The GDP of impoverished areas has maintained rapid growth. Since 2015, the average annual increment in per capita revenue from the national general public budget has been seven percentage points higher than the national average. A steady increase in incomes has created higher demand for life quality and cultural activities. This has stimulated a surge in consumption in rural areas, and provided support for the domestic economy.

Cultural heritage has been protected. China has strengthened the protection and promotion of traditional culture, folk culture and ethnic culture in poor areas to maintain a wealth of cultural diversity. It has implemented the Plan on the Revitalization of Traditional Chinese Craftsmanship to protect and develop fine craftsmanship in old revolutionary base areas, areas with large ethnic minority populations, border areas, and poverty-stricken areas. It has supported poor areas to develop cultural resources with local characteristics, including ethnic culture, revolutionary sites, folk culture, and intangible cultural heritage. Local governments in poor areas have developed tourism there by conserving and promoting these cultural resources and training support staff. China has paid attention to keeping a record of the experiences of ordinary people in poverty alleviation, such as archives of poor villages, films, TV programs and literary works themed on poverty alleviation. Through the protection and promotion of cultural heritage in poor areas, the impoverished have gained additional income while retaining their cultural roots.

The eco-environment has improved. China has integrated development-driven poverty alleviation with soil and water conservation and eco-environmental conservation. By developing the eco-economy, improving the rural living environment, and relocating the impoverished from inhospitable areas to places with better economic prospects, there have been remarkable improvements in the eco-environment of poverty-stricken areas. Lucid waters and lush mountains have become their invaluable assets. Through the fight against poverty, China has increased the incomes of the impoverished, improved the eco-environment of poor areas, and made the vast rural areas more livable spaces for their inhabitants.

Severely impoverished areas are the top priority in China's battle against poverty. The "three areas and three prefectures" (The "three areas" refer to the Xizang Autonomous Region, the Hotan, Aksu, Kashgar prefectures and the Kizilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture in southern Xinjiang, and prefectures and counties with large Tibetan populations in the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai. The "three prefectures" refer to the Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province, the Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province, and the Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province.) in extreme poverty have seen notable improvements in infrastructure, public services, and civil communal behavior, as well as rapid development in industries and businesses that leverage local strengths. All of these efforts have brought an end to regional and overall poverty.

Poverty Eradication in Severely Impoverished Areas

The toughest battle against poverty lies in severely impoverished areas. These areas lag furthest behind in the drive towards a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

On June 23, 2017, President Xi Jinping presided over the Seminar on Eliminating Poverty in Severely Impoverished Areas, urging the need to accelerate the pace of this campaign. After the seminar, the central authorities issued Guidelines on Supporting Severely Impoverished Areas in Ending Poverty. According to the document, additional funds, programs and policy measures for poverty alleviation would be mainly applied to severely impoverished areas, particularly the "three areas and three prefectures." The provinces concerned created master plans for implementation, and counties made specific plans. Government departments formulated 49 specialized policy documents, covering finance, banking, land, housing, education, healthcare, the eco-environment, businesses and water resources.

From 2018 to 2020, the state budget allocated 72.2 billion yuan to assist severely impoverished areas, accounting for 60.2% of the total funding over these three years. The funds were applied on a preferential basis to public infrastructure projects, key construction projects for social undertakings, and energy and transport investment projects.

Since 2017, China has approved 40 ha of land used for poverty alleviation purposes annually by every county in severely impoverished areas. Since 2018, these areas have brought in 190 billion yuan through inter-provincial transfer of 41,200 ha surplus rural land quotas for urban construction.

China has adopted differentiated credit policies, increased interest subsidies for startup business loans in severely impoverished areas. It has extended greater tolerance for non-performing personal loans used in targeted poverty alleviation, and abolished counter-guarantee requirement. China has applied the policy of immediate approval for applications for initial public offerings (IPOs) to qualified enterprises in the "three areas and three prefectures" in extreme poverty.

Those Who Have Been Lifted Out of Poverty Adopt a New Mindset

The battle against poverty is a profound revolution and complete victory on both material and theoretical levels. Through this battle, the mindset of the poor has been enriched and sublimed—they have greater confidence, more active minds, and higher aspirations; they have experienced a thorough transformation from the inside to the outside.

The impoverished have a deep desire to rid themselves of the shackles of poverty and achieve prosperity. The poverty relief efforts have not only widened channels for the impoverished to improve their material welfare but rekindled their desire to seek a better life as well. Impoverished people have been inspired to seek prosperity through hard work, self-reliance, frugality and entrepreneurship, and strive for excellence. They are highly motivated and have more confidence about getting rid of poverty. As the Chinese people always say, "Good days come after hard work." They are ready to compete in the race to prosperity.

The impoverished have a stronger sense of self-reliance. The poverty alleviation work has set up a new platform for the impoverished to participate in collective affairs. When making major decisions on the implementation of poverty relief projects and the use of funds at the village level, villagers have carried out a "4+2" system ("4+2" system refers to the democratic policy-making process on village affairs under the leadership of village Party organizations. "4" means four steps: Proposals should be put forward by the Party branch, jointly discussed by the village committee and the Party branch, and deliberated by Party members, and resolutions should be adopted by villagers' representatives; "2" means transparency on two levels—resolutions and implementation results should be made known to the public.). The oversight mechanisms for village affairs and villagers' councils and poverty relief councils have been improved to ensure that public affairs are discussed and handled by everyone. Under these arrangements, the impoverished have participated more in the decision making and implementation process in the battle against poverty. They have been more motivated to participate actively in collective affairs, more enthusiastic to build up their hometown, and more cohesive to develop the countryside.

The impoverished have been constantly upgrading their mindsets. The battle against poverty has opened the door to the outside world for poverty-stricken areas. Improvements in transport infrastructure have established links between poor areas and the outside world; development of public cultural undertakings has enriched the cultural life of impoverished people; with better access to the internet, the poor have greater knowledge, broader horizons, and a deeper understanding of openness, innovation, technology, rules and markets. They are capable of generating more ideas and opening wider channels for poverty alleviation.

Cultural and ethical work has been advancing in impoverished regions. Civility villages and towns are being built in poverty-stricken areas, and civil families cultivated under the "Five Family Virtues" program (encouraging respect for the law, diligent study, family planning, domestic harmony, and industrious and thrifty management of the household). Social etiquette, village rules, agreements among villagers, and councils on moral issues, weddings and funerals have been promoted, to update outmoded and undesirable habits and customs. Activities, such as competition for best households and families, have been organized to carry forward cherished family traditions, spread core socialist values, and enhance

social etiquette and civility. Scientific, healthy and civilized new ways of life which are simple, green, eco-friendly, and hygienic have been embraced by the villagers. Good social practices, including modest weddings and funerals, filial piety, harmonious neighborhoods, and helping the needy, the weak and the disabled, have been promoted. In the new era, new cultural practices with a local and modern essence are developing in rural areas.

Protecting the Rights of Special Groups to Basic Needs and Development

China prioritizes the basic rights of subsistence and development of the disadvantaged groups among women, children, the elderly, and the disabled. The nation has enacted favorable policies and provided more assistance to raise the welfare level of these groups.

Living conditions of impoverished women have been improving. China adheres to the fundamental national policy of gender equality, and sees women as a key target in poverty alleviation. Among nearly 100 million who have shaken off poverty, women account for half. By implementing the Outline of Women's Development in China (2011–2020), China has given priority to helping women alleviate poverty and reducing the number of women in poverty, given preferential treatment to women when making poverty alleviation policies, allocated funds and taken measures, and helped them solve the most difficult, most worrying and most pressing problems. A total of 10.21 million impoverished women have received skills training, over 5 million of whom have increased their incomes through activities such as handicrafts, crop and animal husbandry, housekeeping and e-business. Small-sum guaranteed loans and micro credit amounting to more than 450 billion yuan have been provided to impoverished women, which have helped 8.7 million women to start businesses and increase their incomes. China has assisted 192,000 women who suffer from poverty and diseases and launched a program of free cervical and breast cancer checkups to cover all women in poverty-stricken areas. 4.17 billion yuan has been invested in titled campaigns to provide 50 million impoverished mothers in impoverished areas with infrastructure and health benefits, as well as daily necessities.

Extending greater care to deprived children. China has implemented the Outline on the Development of Chinese Children (2011–2020) and the National Development Plan for Children in Poor Areas (2014–2020) to provide security for children's education and health and deliver interventions when required. Efforts have been made to popularize knowledge on children's nutrition and health. Following the implementation of nutritional improvement projects for children in impoverished areas, children in these regions now enjoy better health. The government gives a free daily pack of nutritional dietary supplements to every baby and toddler aged 6–24 months in contiguous destitute areas. By the end of 2020, a total of 11.2 million children in those areas had benefited from this project. Birth defect prevention & relief programs have been launched to help cover medical expenses for children who suffer from poverty and serious diseases such as congenital malformations, some inherited metabolic disorders, and thalassemia. A total of 470 million yuan has been allocated for the care of 41,000 sick children. China has organized volunteers to pair up with orphans, deprived children, and children of migrant workers left at home in the countryside, providing care and help to 25.19 million children and parents. More than 280,000 children's homes and over 1,200 children's happy homes have been built to give entertainment, psychological counseling, life care and tutoring to deprived children and children of migrant workers left at home in the countryside. China continues to improve the protection of orphans' rights and interests, with monthly allowance for orphans in welfare institutions and families that provide temporary care totaling 1,611 yuan and 1,184 yuan per person respectively. China has invested 1.7 billion yuan in the Tomorrow Plan for Rehabilitation of Handicapped Orphans to offer operations and rehabilitation to 223,000 orphans with disabilities. 540 million yuan from the public welfare has been used to carry out a program to support school education for 54,000 orphans. A support system for de facto orphans has been established in China to cover 253,000 such children.

Continuing to provide services and improve the lives of impoverished senior citizens. China has raised the amount of basic pension in rural areas and subsidies for basic medical insurance for poor seniors to further reduce poverty among the elderly in rural areas. The subsidy system for the poor population of advanced age and incapacitated seniors has been put in place, benefiting 36.89 million people. The government has initiated a program for the elderly in the western regions to promote health awareness among seniors in poverty-stricken areas, and organized medical workers and volunteers to provide free medical services and offer advice on health matters. China has developed a system to support and care for elderly people left behind by their families in the countryside after their grown-up children have moved to the cities in search of employment. It has shifted the focus of medical security for the impoverished elderly from medical treatment to health services. More care has been provided for incapacitated seniors living below the poverty line. On the basis of an overall inspection, China has verified 627,000 impoverished seniors who lost the ability to take care of themselves and extended contracted family doctor services to 590,000 of them, significantly improving their health.

Strengthening the protection of impoverished people with disabilities in an all-round way. More than 7 million poor people with disabilities have been lifted out of poverty as scheduled. This is a historic achievement in poverty alleviation among groups with special difficulties. The systems for providing living allowances for poor people with disabilities and nursing subsidies for severely disabled persons cover more than 24 million. China includes 10.67 million people with disabilities in the system of

subsistence allowances. Poor people with disabilities are now all covered by basic medical insurance and serious illness insurance. Among them, 547,000 people have received medical assistance. China has made efforts to ensure 1.79 million poor households with one or more disabled members live in secure housing. The special needs of impoverished people with disabilities are being met. More than 80,000 disadvantaged children with disabilities have received generally beneficial pre-school education. The houses of 653,000 impoverished households with severely disabled members have been upgraded for better accessibility. New progress has been made in nursing care for poor and severely disabled people.

Significantly Improving Grassroots Social Governance in Poverty-Stricken Areas

The fight against poverty is a successful exercise in the modernization of China's system and capacity for governance. Our success in this battle has improved our poverty governance, and significantly improved China's systems and capacity for grassroots social governance in impoverished areas.

Stronger grassroots Party organizations in rural areas. Grassroots Party organizations are the cornerstone of the CPC's rural work, playing a key role in ensuring that decisions and plans on poverty alleviation are implemented. China has strengthened the leading group to win this battle against poverty. Weak and slack grassroots Party organizations have been rectified and consolidated, and first Party secretaries and resident working teams are carefully selected and dispatched to poverty-stricken villages. We select a range of people as village leaders to hold the post of secretary of village Party organizations—hard-working, dedicated, and innovative Party members from those who have lifted themselves out of poverty in rural areas, veterans, returning migrant workers and business people, heads of farmer cooperatives, and college graduates. Village Party branches perform a decisive role in this battle, and continue to enhance their cohesion and skills. With closer relations between the villagers and village officials, and between the Party and the people, people in poverty-stricken areas have greater trust and confidence in the Party and the government, laying solid foundations for the Party's governance in rural areas.

Grassroots governance is becoming more effective. Grassroots democracy has advanced in poverty-stricken areas as a result of the battle against poverty, inspiring vitality in local communities. Villagers and residents committees are more actively involved, while the poor are able to do more in improving their own management, education, services and supervision. Village affairs have become more transparent, so that villagers can discuss and direct their own affairs and engage in democratic decision-making on issues of importance. The public are becoming increasingly active and are breaking new ground in grassroots governance. At the beginning of poverty alleviation, many poor villages had little collective income. By the end of 2020, the average collective income in impoverished villages across the country had exceeded 120,000 yuan. With a steady collective income, many village organizations have become more capable of keeping operations running and serving the people.

Increasing the number of rural service personnel who have a good knowledge of agriculture, love our rural areas, and care about rural people. Since 2013, more than 3 million first Party secretaries and resident working team members have been selected and dispatched to carry out targeted poverty alleviation. Officials working at the grassroots and poverty relief officials always concern themselves first and foremost with the interests of the poor. They dedicate themselves to practical actions and solving tough problems for the poor, and thereby win public approval. Going through hardships in the battle against poverty, persistent, optimistic, hard-working grassroots officials and poverty relief officials have become more confident in motivating people to shake off poverty and more capable of doing it. A large number of professionals and entrepreneurs in fields such as education, science and technology, healthcare and culture have gone to poverty-stricken regions to aid construction and make investments. Many college graduates have resisted the temptation of much better pay and benefits in cities to go back and help their hometowns in rural areas. Becoming more prosperous and attractive, rural areas are better able to attract and retain talented professionals who love the countryside, encouraging them to take root and assist with agricultural and rural modernization.

Notable progress made in strengthening China's capacity for social governance. China's poverty relief efforts have brought advanced concepts of development, modern technology, and scientific management models to impoverished areas, significantly improving social governance. In the process, China has explored new ways in grassroots social governance, and put in place an open and information-based grassroots system to provide a gridded management model and better services for everyone. All these have strengthened public participation and rule of law in social governance, and made it smarter and more specialized, improving the ability of the grassroots to prevent and resolve conflicts, and helping maintain harmony, stability and order in impoverished areas.

Our complete victory over extreme poverty is an outstanding achievement in the history of both China and humanity. It has reinforced the Chinese nation's self-belief and its sense of pride, cohesiveness and affinity. It has strengthened the people's confidence in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and given them trust in their ability to build a better life. This great victory shows that the CPC has held fast to its original aspiration and mission, and demonstrates its ability to lead politically, to guide through theory, to organize the people, and to inspire society. It shows the strength of socialism with Chinese characteristics in pooling resources to solve major problems. It highlights China's spirit, China's values, China's strength, and the willpower of the Chinese people to strive to

realize dreams with bold resolve which dares to make sun and moon shine in new skies. It exemplifies the fearless and indomitable character of the Chinese nation, determined to struggle and resolutely overcome all difficulties and challenges along the way. A will to unite as one, do our best, set targets, adopt a pragmatic approach, be pioneers, innovate, tackle tough issues head-on, and live up to our people's trust, has formed in the great endeavors of poverty alleviation. It has fostered a Chinese ethos and a readiness to respond to the call of our times, and will continue to inspire our people to create a better future.

The Strategy of Targeted Poverty Alleviation

Identifying those truly in need is a universal problem in countries with a large population in poverty. Accurate identification of the poor and targeted measures are central to any effort to eradicate poverty. In its poverty elimination effort, China has actively learned from international experience, fully considered its actual conditions, and launched a series of guidelines and measures to increase efficiency, summarized as accomplishing “Targeted Efforts in Six Areas” (This refers to efforts to identify the poor accurately, arrange targeted programs, utilize capital efficiently, take household-based measures, dispatch first Party secretaries based on village conditions, and achieve the set goals.), taking “Five Measures for Poverty Eradication” (The measures include: boosting the economy to provide more job opportunities, relocating poor people from inhospitable areas, compensating for economic losses associated with reducing ecological damage, improving education in impoverished areas, and providing subsistence allowances for those unable to shake off poverty through their own efforts alone.), and addressing “Five Questions in Poverty Alleviation” (This refers to these questions: who should help, who should be helped, how to help, how to evaluate whether someone has emerged from poverty, and how to ensure those people stay free from poverty.).

Identifying People in Need to Know Whom to Help

To help the poor, we must know who they are. China had a large poor population, which was complex in composition. China has developed a set of standards and procedures to accurately identify the poor, and grassroots officials have spent time in villages analyzing the distribution of the poor population, the causes of their poverty, and their needs. Poor households are identified primarily based on their incomes, with consideration given to other factors such as housing, education and health. Household applications for poverty registration are discussed and reviewed, disclosed for public supervision, and then evaluated by each level of administration. For administrative villages applying to be registered, consideration is given to the incidence of poverty, the per capita net income of the villagers, and income from businesses run by village collectives. Applications are filed by the village committee, reviewed and disclosed by the township government, and examined by the county government before the results are made public. The individuals and villages confirmed as poor are then registered and a file is created in the national poverty alleviation information system. Dynamic management of the poor population has been strengthened to remove those who have been wrongly identified and to add those newly identified, with an emphasis on accuracy. Through this registration system, for the first time in the history of poverty alleviation, China has identified every poor individual in every village, every poor household has the causes of their poverty and their needs registered with the government. The national information platform on poverty alleviation provides powerful IT support for targeted measures to realize the set goals.

Strengthening Leadership and Team-Building to Know How to Offer Help

Poverty eradication work covers a wide range of areas and is extremely complex, thus requiring rigorous organization, leadership, and implementation. Relying on the CPC's political and organizational strength, China has established a poverty eradication management network with the central government acting as coordinator, provincial governments taking overall responsibility, and city and county governments overseeing implementation. The network covers all poor areas and officials are sent to villages to help every needy household. Party committees at all levels have assumed an overall coordinating role and assigned top officials to take charge of poverty eradication affairs. The leading officials of 22 provinces and equivalent administrative units in central and western China signed written pledges to the Party Central Committee, and Party secretaries at the five administrative levels of province, city, county, township and village have worked towards the same goal. During the poverty eradication campaign, Party committee secretaries and county governors have been required to remain unchanged in their posts. Areas tasked with poverty elimination worked out timetables with a clear division of responsibilities and pressed forward with implementation. In places where the work was particularly difficult, the fight against poverty became the top priority of social and economic development. Through the strictest possible evaluation and supervision, as well as specialized inspection tours, China has addressed any corruption and misconduct in poverty alleviation with rigor, and strengthened the evaluation and supervision of results to ensure solid and authentic outcomes that can survive the test of time and practice. China has improved the incentives for encouraging officials to fulfill responsibilities and undertake initiatives, and the relevant mechanisms to protect their position. By giving more attention to and caring for officials and establishing the right approach to their selection and appointment, the government has given them the incentive to fulfill their duties and do their best in the final fight against poverty. China has strengthened its team of grassroots officials working in poverty

alleviation, and formed resident working teams to assign officials to villages where they could be most useful. Officials on the resident working teams must be politically reliable and professional, and have a can-do approach to their work. Officials on these teams have dedicated themselves to their mission and fulfilled their duties, committing themselves to helping those in need on the front line of fighting poverty, and giving their all to help the poor find ways to emerge from poverty and seek development. The first group of first secretaries and resident working teams were dispatched to poor villages in 2013. By 2015, all poor villages had resident working teams, and every poor household a contact official in charge of poverty elimination. As of the end of 2020, 255,000 resident teams and more than 3 million officials had been dispatched as first secretaries and resident officials to poor villages, fighting on the front line of poverty alleviation alongside nearly 2 million township officials and millions of village officials.

Investigating and Punishing Violations of Regulations and Party Discipline in Poverty Elimination

The CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the National Supervisory Commission have conducted supervision and disciplinary inspection over all work related to poverty alleviation, and campaigns to address corruption and misconduct. Violations of regulations and Party discipline have been duly investigated and punished, to ensure a clean environment for the final battle against poverty. Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, they have followed and looked into 498 reports about violations commonly found in poverty alleviation, and verified and confirmed 87% of them. Those responsible have been held accountable and punished. Sixty-nine cases of corruption and misconduct have been reported and made public. From January 2016 to November 2020, 337,700 cases of corruption and misconduct in poverty alleviation were handled, and 464,500 people were admonished or assigned to receive education, including 241,300 people who received punishment in accordance with Party discipline or government regulations.

The Supervisory System for Poverty Elimination Work

To strengthen supervision over poverty elimination work, China has established a comprehensive system of scrutiny that incorporates supervision from inside the Party, from other political parties, from the government, and from the public, effectively preventing falsification, embezzlement, and corruption.

Intra-Party supervision: Poverty alleviation has been made a target area of inspection tours. Poverty elimination work in 14 provinces and autonomous regions was covered on the first round of inspection by the 19th CPC Central Committee. On its second round of inspection, the Central Committee specially inspected work related to poverty elimination in 13 provinces and equivalent administrative units, and the Party committees of 11 central Party and government departments and two centrally managed financial enterprises playing key roles in poverty elimination.

Supervision by other political parties: Since 2016, the central committees of the eight non-CPC political parties have been entrusted by the CPC Central Committee to supervise poverty eradication work in the eight provinces and autonomous regions whose tasks were rather difficult. By going on field trips to these areas, these political parties have fulfilled their mission by supervising how poverty alleviation policies and measures were implemented there. This is the first time that the non-CPC political parties have supervised the implementation of a major national strategy; it is also their largest and longest-spanning supervision activity to date.

Inspection tours: Since 2016, the former State Council Leading Group Office on Poverty Alleviation and Development has organized supervision and inspection over poverty elimination work on a yearly basis, mainly over the work of the Party committees and governments of 22 central and western provinces and autonomous regions, and relevant central Party and government departments.

Audit supervision: The National Audit Office has carried out an annual follow-up audit of the implementation of policy measures and the application of funds in key programs, covering all 832 poor counties. The proportion of misused funds identified by audit dropped from 36.3% in 2013 to 1.5% in 2020.

Industry supervision: Government bodies in charge of development and reform, finance, education, housing and urban-rural development, health, healthcare security, and water resources have strengthened supervision over poverty elimination policies and measures, and the enforcement of tasks.

Public supervision: In December 2014, the government opened the hotline "12317" for reporting poverty alleviation problems and enabling public supervision. The hotline receives reports and complaints regarding problems in the management, allocation and use of poverty alleviation funds, problems in the implementation and management of poverty alleviation projects, and violations such as misappropriation, corruption and embezzlement. News media have also strengthened supervision, exposing problems in poverty elimination work and raising constructive suggestions.

Applying Targeted Measures for Different Groups to Know How to Help

There are many different types of poverty and the causes vary from case to case. We cannot address the root cause without the right remedies. In practice, China has adopted categorized and targeted measures to reduce poverty, based on the situation of individual households, local conditions, and the

causes for and types of poverty. These targeted measures include: boosting the economy to provide more job opportunities, relocating poor people from inhospitable areas, compensating for economic losses associated with reducing ecological damage, improving education in impoverished areas, and providing subsistence allowances for those unable to shake off poverty through their own efforts alone.

First, boosting the economy to provide more job opportunities. Poverty alleviation through economic development is the most direct and effective method, the fundamental way to give poor areas the capacity for independent development and help the poor find employment locally. With this in mind, China has supported and guided poor areas in developing economic activities geared to their available resources, and encouraged poverty alleviation through new forms of business and new industries such as e-commerce, photovoltaic (PV) power generation and tourism, and through the consumption of products and services from poor areas. Relying on collaboration on poverty alleviation between the eastern and western regions, China has facilitated the transfer of food processing, clothes manufacturing, and other labor-intensive industries from the east to the west. With the growth of such specialty industries, poor areas have gained economic momentum. More than 300,000 industrial bases have been built, leading to the creation of new industries with distinctive features and greater capacity to facilitate poverty alleviation efforts. China has created 12,000 local agroproduct brands, 14,400 leading enterprises above the city level, and 719,000 rural cooperatives operated by farmers. A total of 72.6 percent of poor households have formed close ties with new types of agribusiness entities, and almost every poor household has been covered by policy support for boosting the economy. Almost all poor people with the ability and intention to work have joined the collective endeavor. Solid progress has been made in poverty alleviation through the development of science and technology. A total of 1,290 innovative platforms and business startups have been set up, and 77,000 people have been paired up with professionals to receive guidance on new technology in impoverished regions. With a team of 289,800 technicians and a fund of over 20 billion yuan, China has launched 37,600 high-tech programs of all kinds and at all levels and introduced more than 50,000 advanced applied technologies and new, improved breeds. Poor households have received financial support such as small loans. In poor villages, entrepreneurial individuals have been encouraged to start businesses and given support to help and lead others out of poverty.

Small Loans for Poverty Alleviation

To help the poor apply for low-interest loans, in 2014 the government began to try small loans for poverty alleviation—loans under 50,000 yuan to be issued to poor people without requirements for guarantee or collateral and paid back in three years. The loans are issued at benchmark interest rates with interest subsidies and risk compensation funds set up at county level. Targeted at the weaker links hindering the poor from doing business, these loans have brought valuable financial tools to poor areas, making it easier for the poor to start businesses. People who have used them have also built up their awareness of the market, of risk prevention, and of the credit system. The loans have given motivation to the poor, and increased effective financial supply to rural areas. As of the end of 2020, more than 710 billion yuan had been issued in small loans to 15 million poor households.

Poverty Alleviation Through PV Power Generation and E-commerce

In areas with the appropriate resources and suitable conditions, the government has funded the construction of photovoltaic (PV) power stations, which are owned collectively by local villages. The income generated from the power stations is employed entirely for poverty alleviation purposes. As of the end of 2020, 100,000 villages had PV power stations, generating a total of 18.65 million kW of electricity and bringing an average annual income of 200,000 yuan for each village. The earnings have been used to create public welfare jobs, fund small public welfare programs, and offer small bonuses and subsidies.

Remarkable results have been achieved in poverty alleviation through e-commerce by tapping into the potential of the new business form for helping the poor increase incomes. China launched demonstration projects to introduce e-commerce to rural areas in 2014. All 832 poor counties have been included in the initiative, with an investment of 24.92 billion yuan by the end of 2020. The number of e-businesses in these counties grew from 1.32 million in 2016 to 3.11 million in 2020. Longnan City in Gansu Province has been a national leader in this field. As of 2020, the city had 14,000 online shops, with total sales of more than 22 billion yuan. E-commerce has helped 500,000 poor people increase their incomes, and their per capita income derived from e-commerce rose from 430 yuan in 2015 to 930 yuan in 2020.

Second, relocating poor people from inhospitable areas. Some people lived in uninhabitable areas suffering from harsh natural conditions and subject to frequent natural disasters. It would be very hard for them to shake off poverty if they remained where they were, so the government relocated them to other areas. The government respected these people's wishes, and only relocated those who were eligible and agreed to move. The reasons for relocation were explained to them but no coercion was used. The conditions and needs of target relocation groups were given full consideration, the scale of relocation was determined through research, and feasible plans were worked out and implemented in steps. As a result, more than 9.6 million people from inhospitable areas have shaken off poverty through relocation. Their former homes have been turned into farmland or planted with trees, to improve the eco-environment in

these areas. In the resettlement sites, support facilities, industrial parks, and workshops have been built to create jobs for the relocated population, to ensure that they have stable incomes and equitable access to basic public services. Measures have been taken to ensure smooth relocation and resettlement, and make sure that those involved have the means to better themselves.

Poverty Alleviation Through Relocation

Poverty alleviation through relocation was a milestone project in winning the battle against extreme poverty. As of the end of 2020, China had completed all planned relocation projects, building 35,000 settlement communities and 2.66 million housing units for the resettled families. All the 9.6 million poor people who have been relocated have moved into new homes and shaken off poverty. Some 6,100 kindergartens, elementary and middle schools, 12,000 hospitals and community health centers, 3,400 old-age care facilities, and 40,000 cultural centers and venues have been built or expanded. A series of follow-up measures have been adopted to help them adapt. These include support in employment, financial support, and community management. Of all the relocated people with the ability to work, 73.7% have found jobs; 94.1% of relocated families with members who have the ability to work are in employment.

Third, shaking off poverty through compensations for economic losses associated with reducing ecological damage and getting eco-jobs. Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets. Laying equal emphasis on poverty alleviation and eco-conservation, China has strengthened ecological restoration and environmental protection in poor areas, increased government transfer payments to key eco-areas, and expanded the scope of those eligible for preferential policies. Poor people with the ability to work have thus been employed in eco-work, for example as forest rangers. Since 2013, a total of 4.97 million ha of farmland in poor areas has been returned to forest and grassland. A total of 1.1 million poor people have become forest rangers, and 23,000 poverty alleviation afforestation cooperatives/teams have been formed. By participating in projects for afforestation, turning reclaimed farmlands into forests or grasslands, restoring and protecting forests, grasslands and wetlands, and growing woody oil plants and working in forest tourism, the poor population have increased their incomes and made a major contribution to improving the eco-environment in poor areas, with mutually beneficial results.

Fourth, improving education in impoverished areas. Through education, poverty can be prevented from passing down from generation to generation. The government has continued to increase support for schools in poor areas to improve their conditions, standard of teaching, faculties and financial resources. The state ensures compulsory education for all school-age children. All the 200,000 dropouts from compulsory education coming from poor families have returned to school. Favorable policies have been leveraged to enroll more poor students from designated areas, expand employment for graduates, and help students shake off poverty through vocational education. More than 8 million middle and high school graduates from poor families have received vocational training, 5.14 million poor students have received higher education, and key institutions of higher learning have admitted some 700,000 students from designated rural and poor areas. All this has opened up more channels for poor students to emerge from poverty and move upwards in society. The government has offered training on standard spoken and written Chinese language to 3.5 million rural teachers and young farmers and herdsmen in ethnic minority areas, in an effort to make poor people from these areas more competitive in the job market. A pilot campaign has been launched to teach standard Chinese to preschool children in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, and Mabian Yi Autonomous County, Ebian Yi Autonomous County and Jinkouhe District in Leshan City, Sichuan Province, involving 430,000 children.

Poverty Alleviation Through Education

Since the launch of the poverty alleviation campaign, poor areas have seen notable improvements in local education services. A total of 99.8% of China's schools (including teaching centers) delivering compulsory education have met the basic requirements. The number of schools in poor areas that have been connected to the internet has increased greatly. All of China's elementary and secondary schools (including teaching centers) have access to the internet, and 95.3% have been equipped with multimedia classrooms. There has been an overall improvement in the rural teaching force. Altogether 950,000 teachers have been recruited through the Special Post Program (for college graduates to be teachers in impoverished areas) and an equivalent of 17 million rural teachers in the central and western regions have received training through the National Training Program (for elementary and secondary school teachers, especially those in impoverished areas). A total of 1.27 million teachers from more than 80,000 schools have benefited from a program that gives special allowances to rural teachers in contiguous areas in extreme poverty. Altogether 190,000 rural teachers have been dispatched to support schools in remote poor areas and ethnic minority areas on the borders. A funding system covering preschool to postgraduate education has been established, offering assistance to an equivalent of 640 million people. A plan for improving nutrition for students in compulsory education has been introduced to cover 136,300 schools in 1,634 counties, benefitting 40 million students every year.

Fifth, providing subsistence allowances for those unable to shake off poverty through their own efforts

alone. China focuses on the needs of the most vulnerable groups and provides them with subsistence allowances. Services and facilities to support people living in extreme poverty have been upgraded, with a greater capacity to provide care in service centers. The rural subsistence allowances framework has been effectively dovetailed with poverty alleviation policies, and the per capita yearly subsistence allowances in rural areas had grown from 2,068 yuan in 2012 to 5,962 yuan in 2020, an increase of 188.3 percent. The departments in charge of poverty alleviation and civil affairs compare data and verify information on a regular basis, to ensure full coverage of support for eligible groups.

China has also implemented many other forms of support for poverty alleviation that are consistent with local conditions. The government has redoubled its efforts to boost employment for the poor, through means such as offering free training on vocational skills, strengthening collaboration in the labor market between the eastern and western regions, supporting leading enterprises and workshops in poverty alleviation to create more jobs, encouraging entrepreneurial individuals to start businesses in their hometowns or villages, and creating public welfare jobs for the rest of the unemployed. Poor people who have the ability to work are encouraged to find employment locally or elsewhere, or start their own businesses. In 2015, 12.27 million poor laborers found employment; the figure had risen to 32.43 million in 2020. China has made efforts to improve healthcare service to the poor, considering it an important part of poverty alleviation in order to prevent the poor from sinking back into poverty due to illness. China has launched a project to connect poor areas to the internet, introducing the “internet+” model for poverty alleviation in poor areas, especially in the extremely impoverished “three areas and three prefectures.” The earnings from poverty alleviation funds and assets have been used to support the poor. The assets generated from facility agriculture—agriculture making extensive use of polytunnels and other similar equipment—PV power stations, and rural tourism using central government funds for poverty alleviation and other agriculture-related funds have been converted into shares and allocated proportionately to poor villages in order to give a boost to businesses, increase villagers’ incomes and more importantly help solve the problem of generating revenue for the villages’ collective economy. Since COVID-19 struck in 2020, China has adopted a series of support measures, such as measures to stabilize employment and encourage consumption of products from poor areas, effectively minimizing the impact of the virus.

Poverty Alleviation Through Health Promotion

China has strengthened efforts to improve health institutions and build their workforce at the village, township and county levels. 1,007 leading hospitals have been paired up with 1,172 county-level hospitals in poor areas to provide the support they need, sending the equivalent of 118,000 health workers to help poor areas establish 3,700 key clinical departments and introduce 53,000 projects, including some involving new technology. The incoming doctors have treated 55 million outpatients, performed 1.9 million surgeries, and cured 6 million inpatients. More than 60,000 medical students have been admitted to a program that offers free training for medical students who have working contracts with rural medical institutions. Some 30,000 have graduated and become doctors at their contract hospitals and health centers in townships. A special-post program has been introduced to hire general practitioners. Some 5,000 general practitioners have been hired through the program, adding up to 50,000 general practitioners in poor areas. More than 100,000 health workers have been hired and managed by county governments to work in townships, or by township governments to work in villages, to support local health services. Alternative means of support such as visiting doctors and resident doctors have also been introduced. Telemedicine covers all poor counties and is being introduced to township health centers. As always, China has emphasized the importance of prevention; it has strengthened the comprehensive network to prevent and control major diseases, and to improve the health of key groups. Patriotic health campaigns and health promotion actions are carried out. Concerted efforts have been made in the prevention and control of infectious and endemic diseases in the “three areas and three prefectures.” As a result, the diseases that caused great suffering to local people have either been eradicated or brought under effective control.

Adopting Strict Criteria to Know When and How to Deregister Those Who Have Emerged from Poverty

A poverty exit mechanism has been established, with clear provisions on the standards and procedures for deregistering from the list of poor counties, villages, and individuals. This prevents misconduct such as manipulation and falsification of data, and also prevents those who have emerged from poverty from keeping the label in order to continue accessing preferential treatment. The government has worked out a poverty deregistration plan and an annual poverty alleviation plan to ensure procedure-based, rational and orderly exit from the registers. The criteria and procedures have been strictly enforced, for example, by conducting public review in the case of individuals and government examination in the case of villages and counties. The results of poverty exit have been disclosed for public evaluation and review, based on transparent procedures, accurate data and complete files, to ensure fairness. Supervision and inspection have been strengthened, including annual evaluations by third parties of the deregistered population and counties, with a focus on remote areas with weaker economic foundations. Three parameters—the accuracy of decisions, the poverty incidence of recurrence among deregistered counties, and public rating

of assistance measures—are emphasized in evaluation, to ensure accurate results. From 2020 to early 2021, China conducted a general survey of poverty elimination, collecting accurate data on progress in helping the poor out of poverty. A “grace period” is allowed for previously impoverished population, villages and counties, during which time poverty alleviation policies and government supervision are continued until their status is secure.

Conducting Follow-Up Monitoring to Help People Stay Out of Poverty

People and locations will only be considered to have shaken off poverty when they have stayed out of it and have not fallen back in after a certain period. Counties have been given a five-year period of grace from the day they emerged from poverty. During this period they will continue to enjoy the main support policies, which will be adjusted and optimized by category. Over time the resources leveraged for intensive poverty elimination will be redirected towards an extensive drive for rural revitalization. China will improve its dynamic monitoring of any trends indicating a return to poverty, and improve associated support measures. It will regularly check on key groups, such as those who have just emerged from poverty but whose position is far from secure, those on the verge of poverty who can fall back in again easily, and those experiencing difficulties in meeting their basic needs due to expenditure induced by illness, disaster or accident, or due to a sharp drop in income, and exercise dynamic management to spot these trends early and intervene through support measures, so that these people do not fall back into poverty. China will continue to support formerly impoverished areas in developing their specialty industries and help those who have emerged from poverty have stable employment. Follow-up support will be given to the resettled population whose employment will be promoted through multiple means. The government will improve social management to help them integrate into society, so that they will stay out of poverty, remain employed and have a promising future. Systems and practices that have proven effective, such as resident first secretaries and working teams, eastern-western collaboration, paired-up assistance, and social assistance, will be continued and improved. Efforts will be intensified to help those who have emerged from poverty build up self-belief and have access to education, so that they can create a better life through their own hard work. More evaluation will be carried out over the status of formerly impoverished people and areas, and Party committees and governments at all levels will continue to take responsibility to ensure that people do not sink back into poverty in large numbers.

The strategy of targeted poverty alleviation is China’s strongest weapon in its final battle to secure victory against poverty, and a major innovation in the theory and practice of poverty alleviation. It highlights the CPC’s sound approach whereby all actions are based on actual conditions and conform to the needs of development; it is a manifestation of its courage to face up to new challenges and find solutions through trial and error; of its tireless exploration of the characteristics of governance by the CPC, the development of socialism, and the evolution of human society; and of its pursuit of all-round development of the people and common prosperity for all. In addition to securing a sweeping victory in the final battle against poverty, the strategy has also given a powerful boost to modernizing China’s national governance system and capacity, and to enriching and developing the CPC’s guiding philosophies and governance strategies in the new era.

Exploring a New Path of Poverty Alleviation

Eliminating poverty is a challenge for all countries. Each subject to different national conditions and at different stages of development, they adopt different poverty reduction criteria, methods and approaches. Bearing in mind its prevailing reality and understanding the nature of poverty and the status of poverty alleviation, China has embarked on a path of poverty alleviation and designed an approach with Chinese characteristics. In this battle, the nation has upheld the CPC leadership and the people-centered philosophy. It has taken advantage of one of the strengths of its socialist system—the ability to pool resources on major endeavors. It has adopted targeted measures and stimulated the enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity of the people in poverty. It has carried forward the great tradition of working together and offering mutual support, and it has adopted a down-to-earth and pragmatic style of work. In this approach, China has accumulated valuable experience, which belongs both to China itself and to the rest of the world, and offers enlightenment to the international community in its battle to reduce poverty.

People-Centered Philosophy

The CPC is an ambitious party with a grand but simple goal: to ensure a happy life for the Chinese people. In the face of all the changes in the international landscape and the domestic situation over the past century, the Party has always followed a people-centered philosophy. It has borne in mind its founding mission to seek happiness for the Chinese people and national rejuvenation, and united and led the people in fighting poverty armed with firm convictions and a strong will. In the new era, the CPC has adopted a series of bold policies and measures to advance the cause, trying to ensure higher incomes and better education, healthcare, and living conditions for the poor. Taking public satisfaction as an important yardstick to judge the effectiveness of poverty elimination, the Party has concentrated its efforts on guaranteeing the basic needs of the poor. It would rather cut down on the number of major projects in favor of investment in poverty elimination; it would rather penalize short-term, partial or local interests to ensure the cause is well served and guaranteed; and it would rather slow the pace of economic growth to

ensure the task of poverty alleviation is accomplished on schedule.

In the fight against poverty, officials including first Party secretaries and resident working teams, grassroots officials and Party members, and volunteers have worked with diligence and a spirit of dedication in support of the poor, fulfilling their mission and their pledge to the people. Some of them have been fighting on the front line for a long time, without time or energy to take care of their own families; some have been traveling around or braving harsh natural conditions; some have fallen sick from overwork all the year round; some have continued work even after getting injured at work. More than 1,800 Party members and officials have lost their lives in the cause of poverty alleviation.

China's poverty elimination effort in the new era is a full and vivid expression of its people-centered philosophy and the CPC's mission of serving the people wholeheartedly. Success in poverty alleviation has proven that the problem of poverty, in essence, is how the people should be treated: the people-centered philosophy is the fundamental driving force behind this cause. Only with this philosophy, can a country identify those who are poor, adopt concrete measures, and deliver genuine outcomes; only with this philosophy, can it draw on inexhaustible motivation, set a clear direction, and find the right approach.

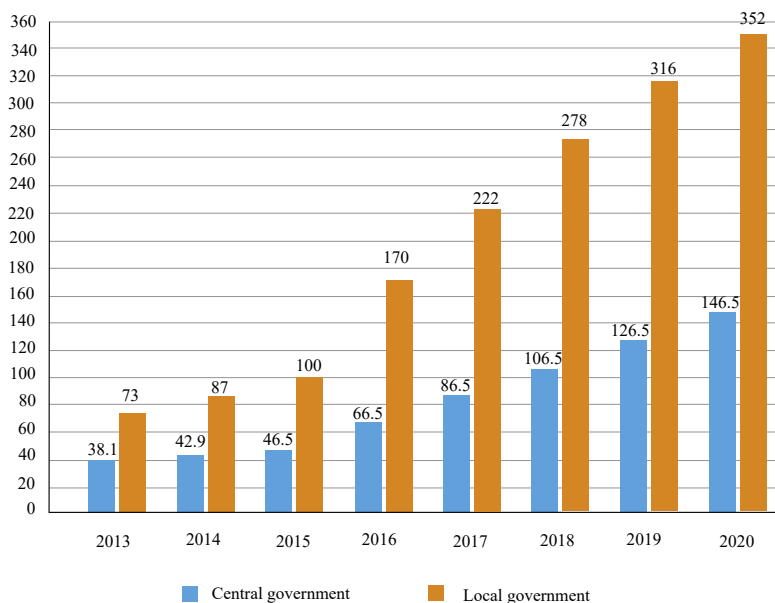
Highlighting Poverty Alleviation in the Governance of China

Poor conditions for development in impoverished areas and a lack of capacity for self-improvement among the poor population determine that poverty cannot be eliminated by relying solely on the efforts of individuals, local governments, or nongovernmental forces. Poverty elimination must be taken on as a responsibility of the ruling party and the country; it requires will and action at national level, and it must be elevated to a national strategy.

The CPC has always regarded poverty alleviation as an important task for ensuring national peace and stability. It has highlighted poverty alleviation at national level when setting its guidelines, principles and policies, and when formulating national plans for medium-term and long-term development. The Party has pooled national resources to advance this cause and motivated generations of its members to devote themselves to this cause.

Since the 18th National Congress in 2012, the CPC has prioritized poverty elimination in its governance, and planned and advanced this cause under its centralized and unified leadership. All Party members, from top leaders to the grassroots officials, are concerned about the poor and the cause of poverty alleviation, and work together towards the same goal.

Unit: billion yuan



Government Funding for Poverty Alleviation 2013–2020

China has strengthened top-level design and strategic planning. It has issued policy documents such as Decision on Winning the Battle Against Extreme Poverty and Guidelines on the Three-year Action Plan to Win the Battle Against Extreme Poverty, setting specific aims, defining approaches and detailed measures, and carrying them out with consistent efforts. Investment has been increased by governments at all levels and a multiple investment system has been established, guaranteeing financial support for poverty alleviation. Leveraging the strength of its socialist system—the ability to pool resources on major endeavors—China has mobilized forces from all quarters to participate in poverty alleviation. Systems

have been established, covering responsibilities, policies, organization, inputs, mobilization, supervision, assessment and evaluation, and many other aspects of poverty elimination, providing an institutional guarantee for the nation to advance the battle against poverty.

The success in poverty alleviation has proven that governance of a country starts with the needs of the people, and that their prosperity is the responsibility of the government. Poverty alleviation is a pioneering and arduous trek. To achieve success, it is of utmost importance that the leadership has devotion, strong will and determination, and the ruling party and government assume their responsibilities to the people, play a leading role, mobilize forces from all quarters, and ensure policies are consistent and stable.

Investment in Poverty Elimination

Over the course of poverty alleviation the Chinese government has steadily increased funding to meet the challenge. Investment from the central, provincial, city and county governments has totaled nearly 1.6 trillion yuan, including 660.1 billion yuan from the central budget.

Other investments for poverty alleviation in China include:

- More than 440 billion yuan for regulating the use of surplus urban construction land quotas between provincial-level administrative units, and transferring them within each unit;
- Small loans of more than 710 billion yuan;
- Re-lending loans of 668.8 billion yuan;
- Financial credit of 9.2 trillion yuan for targeted poverty alleviation;
- Government and social assistance funds of more than 100.5 billion yuan from nine provincial-level administrative units in eastern China to their paired targets; and
- Investment of more than 1 trillion yuan from enterprises in eastern China.

China has used agriculture-related funds in a coordinated way and strengthened the supervision of poverty alleviation funds to ensure that money is spent effectively where it is needed.

Eradicating Poverty Through Development

The root cause of poverty is inadequate development. As the world's largest developing country with a population of 1.4 billion, China is aware that development is essential to solving many of its problems, including poverty. The CPC has always regarded this as the top priority in governing and rejuvenating the country. It has concentrated its efforts in particular on the economy, to address the problem of unbalanced and inadequate development. Through development, the economy has been growing rapidly and the country has enjoyed a long period of social stability. China has regarded reform as an important driving force for poverty eradication and worked constantly to remove institutional and structural causes of poverty:

- By launching land reform and establishing the socialist system after the founding of the PRC in 1949;
- By implementing the household contract responsibility system with remuneration linked to output after the launch of reform and opening up in 1978;
- By establishing the socialist market economy and rescinding all agricultural taxes;
- By separating the ownership rights, contracting rights, and management rights for contracted rural land and further reforming the rural collective property rights system since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012.

These measures have contributed to rural development and increased farmers' incomes. In addition, China has opened wider to the world amidst economic globalization and seen sustained and rapid growth in its foreign trade, creating many employment opportunities and more sources of higher incomes for rural labor.

Since the founding of the PRC in 1949, and especially since the launch of reform and opening up in 1978, the country has witnessed rapid economic and social development, with the economy and national strength growing steadily. This has provided solid support for large-scale development-driven poverty alleviation effort.

China's experience with poverty alleviation has proven that development is the most effective way to eradicate poverty and the most reliable path towards a more prosperous life. Only development can lead to economic growth, social progress and higher living standards. Only development can better guarantee people's basic rights and meet their desire for a better life.

Pressing Ahead with Poverty Alleviation Based on Reality

Poverty problems, as well as their causes, are diverse and complex. China's poverty alleviation efforts are based on a realistic appraisal of the situation. China has set its poverty line and its poverty alleviation goals and strategies, and worked to create better ideas and methods based on its national conditions and stage of development, and on the changes in the demographics, distribution, and structure of the poor population. It has advanced this undertaking step by step and with a steady effort.

Immediately after its founding in 1949, the PRC addressed the problem of poverty mainly through reform of the social system and large-scale economic development. After the launch of reform and opening up in 1978, China drove poverty alleviation mainly through rural economic reform and economic growth. It adopted development-oriented measures, guiding people in impoverished areas to increase

their capacity for accumulation of wealth and endogenous development by adjusting the local economic structure, tapping into local resources, and developing production in response to market demand. In the new era, China has continued previous measures, and at the same time carried out a strategy of targeted poverty alleviation. The approach has changed from generalized broad-brush policies to targeted measures based on specific conditions. Before, resources for poverty alleviation came from multiple sources and were used by scattering them among the impoverished areas; now they are concentrated and better coordinated. The model of poverty alleviation has changed from mainly relying on external support like a blood transfusion to a more sustained effort from self-motivation. The assessment system has shifted focus from regional GDP as the main indicator to the genuine result of poverty alleviation. China has gradually lifted its poverty line based on its economic and social advances and progress in the cause of poverty alleviation to share the fruits of development with more people.

The occurrence and evolution of poverty has its own features and trends. To achieve success in reducing poverty, a country must follow a path in line with its national conditions, identify and remove obstacles to poverty alleviation, find driving forces for this cause, and constantly adjust and reform its strategies and policies as circumstances and local conditions change.

Letting the Poor Play the Principal Role

Poor people are the main players in eliminating poverty. Poverty alleviation requires both external and internal forces to form a synergy. China fully respects the principal role of the poor and encourages them to play their part, inspires them with the motivation to fight poverty, and enhances their ability to participate in development, share the fruits of development, and achieve endogenous development. They benefit from success in the undertaking of poverty alleviation and at the same time contribute to development in China.

China has inspired its people in poverty to strive for prosperity and provided them with necessary education, so that they have the ambition to emerge from poverty and the tools to succeed. People in poverty have had better access to education opportunities, such as farmers' night schools and training workshops, to improve their skills and abilities in work and business.

A significant improvement in the battle against poverty is an effective mechanism of positive incentives encouraging the poor to learn from and keep pace with each other. Through this mechanism, productive activities are rewarded and subsidized and jobs instead of grants are provided, to encourage poor people to rely on their own efforts rather than wait for external assistance.

China has promoted stories of role models who escaped poverty through their hard work. It has also carried out various activities to establish the idea that "It is better to work hard than to endure poverty." The people in poverty have followed suit and eventually shaken off poverty and backwardness.

The fight against poverty shows that the people are the creators and drivers of history, and the true heroes. As long as a country serves the people, relies on them, respects their principal status and pioneering spirit, and motivates the poor to rely on their own hard work, it is sure to defeat poverty.

Pooling All Resources to Create Synergy

Poverty alleviation is an arduous, complex, and systematic endeavor, requiring the active participation of all parties. In the fight against poverty, the CPC has mobilized and pooled all possible forces on the basis of its rigorous organizational system and efficient work mechanism. A large-scale poverty alleviation network has been established, with the government, society and the market working in coordination, and government-sponsored projects, sector-specific programs, and corporate and societal assistance supplementing each other. It is a framework with the full participation of multiple players from different regions, sectors, departments and businesses.

China has strengthened collaboration and paired assistance between the eastern and western regions at provincial, city and county levels to encourage the flow of talent, capital, and technology to poor areas so that they can complement each other and narrow the gaps between them.

Poverty alleviation assistance has been directed to designated targets. Party and government institutions, people's organizations, state-owned enterprises and public institutions, and the military have assisted poor counties or villages.

Other political parties, federations of industry and commerce and prominent individuals without party affiliation have leveraged their strengths to contribute intellectual and material support.

Various industries have been encouraged to offer assistance with their professional advantages by launching sector-specific programs, providing technological support, improving education, cultural undertakings and healthcare, and boosting consumption.

Private enterprises have been urged to participate in development-driven poverty alleviation. Businesses skilled in resource extraction have been encouraged to enter regions with great resource potential, which benefits both the businesses and those regions.

Social organizations and individual citizens have been mobilized to participate in poverty alleviation and related public benefit activities. China has designated a National Poverty Alleviation Day and established a national system to commend models in fighting poverty. All these measures have created an atmosphere where everyone who is interested can join in poverty alleviation.

China's experience has proven that only when a country mobilizes all sectors of society to unite with common purpose and act in unison, can poverty be finally defeated.

Collaboration and Paired Assistance Between Eastern and Western Regions

Collaboration and paired assistance between eastern and western regions is a major move to achieve the goal of common prosperity, with the more developed areas helping the less developed areas. In an action to "achieve moderate prosperity hand in hand," 343 counties (county-level cities or districts) in 9 provincial-level administrative units in eastern China have offered paired assistance to 573 poor counties in 14 provincial-level administrative units in central and western China. From 2015 to 2020, nine eastern provincial-level administrative units invested more than 100.5 billion yuan in government and social assistance funds in their paired poverty alleviation areas, and mobilized more than 22,000 local enterprises to invest 1.1 trillion yuan there. They and their western counterparts exchanged 131,000 officials and technical personnel.

Eastern provincial-level administrative units and some central departments have provided targeted assistance to the Xizang Autonomous Region, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and Qinghai Province. Outstanding teachers and medical workers have been selected and sent in groups to assist Xizang and Xinjiang. Officials from central departments have been sent to western China, old industrial bases, and old revolutionary base areas to help with the work there.

Private Enterprises Offering Targeted Assistance to Poor Villages

In this poverty alleviation action, private enterprises have offered targeted assistance to registered poor villages and households by developing industries and businesses, creating jobs, and carrying out public benefit programs, and by helping them to access education. From 2015 to the end of 2020, 127,000 private enterprises participated in this action and offered targeted help to 139,100 poor villages (including 73,200 registered ones), benefiting 18.04 million poor people.

Central Departments Assisting Designated Targets and the Military Supporting the Poor

Central departments have assisted designated targets by issuing preferential policies and funding, introducing projects, and providing intellectual and technological support. A total of 307 departments have contributed to 592 national key counties for poverty alleviation. From 2013 to 2020, they invested a total of 42.76 billion yuan in aid funds and materials, helped bring in additional capital totaling 106.64 billion yuan, and trained an equivalent of 3.69 million grassroots officials and technicians. The military has helped 924,000 poor people in 4,100 poor villages out of poverty.

Under the CPC leadership, the Chinese people have created an approach to poverty alleviation with their own hard work. China's successful practice and valuable experience in eliminating extreme poverty have deepened human understanding of poverty alleviation trends, enriched and extended the theory of international poverty alleviation, and boosted the confidence of other countries, especially developing ones, in eradicating extreme poverty. They serve as reference for other countries to choose a suitable path of poverty alleviation, and offer China's approach to solving the problem of modern national governance and creating brighter prospects for social progress.

A Global Community with a Shared Future Free from Poverty

China will prosper only when the world prospers, and vice versa. The country has always closely linked its future with that of the rest of the world. While committed to eradicating its own poverty, China has actively participated in international cooperation on poverty alleviation, acted as an advocate, facilitator of and contributor to the international cause of poverty alleviation, and worked with other countries to build a global community with a shared future that is free from poverty and pursues common prosperity.

China as a Facilitator of the Global Cause of Poverty Alleviation

Over the past 100 years, China has contributed to global poverty alleviation under the leadership of the CPC through its own development—from winning the people's liberation to meeting their basic needs, from ensuring them a moderately prosperous life to building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Since reform and opening up, more than 770 million of China's rural population living below the current poverty line have been raised from poverty, accounting for more than 70 percent of the global total over the same period according to the World Bank's international poverty standard. Against the backdrop of severe global poverty and a widening gap between the rich and the poor in some countries, China has won the battle against extreme poverty and achieved the poverty alleviation goal set on the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 10 years ahead of schedule. This has significantly reduced the world's poor population and made a significant contribution towards realizing a better and more prosperous world, as envisioned by the Agenda (UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres extended congratulations to Chinese President Xi Jinping in February 2021 on the occasion of the announcement of China's success in the fight against extreme poverty. Noting this moment is a notable achievement and a significant contribution towards realizing a better and more prosperous world, as envisioned by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the secretary-general said, "This extraordinary result is a reason for hope and inspiration to the entire community of nations.") . As the largest developing country, China has achieved rapid development in step with large-scale poverty alleviation, and economic transformation in step with the elimination of

extreme poverty. It has completed all poverty eradication targets and tasks on schedule, which, as a new chapter in the history of the fight against poverty, has greatly accelerated global poverty alleviation.

International Support and Assistance

In the early years after the founding of the PRC, China made great efforts to break an external blockade and carry out international exchanges and cooperation in order to win the support of the international community. Since reform and opening up, China has conducted extensive cooperation with the UN development system and the World Bank in the field of poverty alleviation, while accepting assistance from some developed countries and carrying out cooperation projects. It has received support in financial input, knowledge transfer, and technical assistance, and learned from the advanced concepts and methods of the international community in poverty alleviation. All this has provided support to its poverty alleviation effort. In cooperation with the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank and other international organizations, China has implemented foreign-funded poverty alleviation projects in some poverty-stricken counties, bringing in various forms of concessional loan and grant aid. These international poverty-alleviation exchange and cooperation projects have alleviated poverty, improved China's institutional innovation and management, and laid a foundation for sustainable development in the project areas. The Chinese people will always remember the valuable support and assistance received from the international community. The Chinese nation never forgets the help and generosity it receives, and always reciprocates with the same goodwill; China has always supported other countries in poverty alleviation and development to the full extent of its ability.

International Exchanges and Cooperation

To improve the well-being of all peoples, China has taken an active part in global poverty management, furthered exchanges and cooperation with other countries, and promoted a new model of international exchanges and cooperation on poverty alleviation, with mutual respect and mutually-beneficial cooperation at its core.

China has supported other developing countries in poverty alleviation. Immediately after the founding of the PRC, China began to provide assistance to other developing countries in support of their struggle for national independence and liberation and for economic and social development, despite the fact that China had to address its own difficulties with limited financial resources. Since reform and opening up, China's foreign aid approach has diversified, which has promoted the common development of China and other developing countries. Entering the new era, China has fulfilled its responsibilities as a major country and upgraded its foreign aid into international development cooperation, contributing its vision and approaches to the resolution of global development challenges and the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. President Xi Jinping has announced on many major international occasions that China's practical measures for international development cooperation have been implemented on schedule or are progressing in an orderly manner.

China has launched the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to expand deep and high-level regional cooperation on economic and social development, and to help eligible countries better achieve poverty alleviation. According to a World Bank study, the initiative will help 7.6 million people out of extreme poverty and 32 million out of moderate poverty in these countries. Over the past 70 years and more, China has provided assistance in various forms to over 160 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania, and Europe, and international organizations, reduced or exempted the debts of eligible countries, and helped developing countries in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

President Xi Jinping Has Announced a Series of Major Projects for International Development Cooperation

China has made solemn commitments and taken concrete steps to carry out international development cooperation. On several international occasions President Xi has announced a series of major projects for international development cooperation.

In 2015, at a series of summits marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of the UN, President Xi announced a number of important measures: In the next five years, China would support 600 projects in other developing countries—100 poverty alleviation projects, 100 agricultural cooperation projects, 100 trade promotion assistance projects, 100 environmental protection and climate change projects, 100 hospitals and clinics, and 100 schools and vocational training centers and help them to implement 100 "maternal and child health projects" and 100 "happy campus projects." China would set up an Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation, a China-UN Peace and Development Fund, an Institute of South-South Cooperation, and a Center for International Knowledge on Development. It would offer training and scholarships to other developing countries. It would also cancel the interest-free loan debts of eligible countries.

At the Johannesburg Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2015, President Xi announced that in the following three years China and Africa would focus on implementing 10 cooperation plans on industrialization, agricultural modernization, infrastructure, finance, green development, trade and investment facilitation, poverty alleviation, public health, people-to-people exchanges, and peace and security. China also pledged 60 billion US dollars in funding support.

At the First Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in 2017, President Xi announced further measures: In the coming three years, China would provide assistance worth 60 billion yuan to developing countries and international organizations participating in the BRI for more projects to improve people's lives. It would provide emergency food aid worth 2 billion yuan to developing countries along the routes, make an additional contribution of 1 billion US dollars to the Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation, and launch 100 happy home projects, 100 poverty alleviation projects, and 100 healthcare and rehabilitation projects in countries along the routes. It would also provide 1 billion US dollars to relevant international organizations.

At the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2018, President Xi announced that China would implement eight major initiatives with African countries in the next three years and beyond, covering industrial promotion, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, green development, capacity building, healthcare, people-to-people exchanges, and peace and security. To facilitate smooth implementation, China would extend a total of 60 billion US dollars of support to Africa in the form of government assistance and investment and financing by financial institutions and enterprises.

At the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in 2019, President Xi announced a series of new measures: China would implement the Belt and Road South-South Cooperation Initiative on Climate Change, expand cooperation in agriculture, health, disaster relief and water resources. It would invite 10,000 representatives to visit China, encourage and support social organizations of BRI participating countries in jointly undertaking projects for improving people's lives, and continue to run the Chinese government scholarship Silk Road Program.

At the opening ceremony of the video conference of the 73rd World Health Assembly in 2020, President Xi announced a series of major measures to support the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic: China would provide 2 billion US dollars in international assistance within two years, work with the UN to set up a global humanitarian emergency warehouse and hub in China, and establish a cooperation mechanism for its hospitals to pair up with 30 African hospitals. China's new vaccine would serve as a global public product once developed and introduced; China would also work with other G20 members to implement the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for Poorest Countries.

China has launched international poverty alleviation cooperation projects for the benefit of all. In Asia, China and ASEAN countries have jointly launched a rural poverty alleviation plan, and carried out the East Asia Poverty Reduction Demonstration Cooperation Technical Assistance Projects program in rural communities of Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar. In Africa, China has helped African countries build water conservancy infrastructure, vocational and technical schools, government-subsidized housing, and other facilities, set up demonstration zones for agricultural cooperation, and carried out China-Africa cooperation projects involving a Chinese-invented technology using grass to grow mushrooms, China-Africa friendship hospitals, and the headquarters of the African Center for Disease Control and Prevention. In the South Pacific region, China has promoted measures such as grant aid and concessional loans to Pacific island countries, and carried out technical cooperation assistance projects in infrastructure construction, agriculture, and medical care. In Latin America, China has built agricultural technology demonstration centers to help local people in recipient countries shake off poverty. China has also set up the International Research and Training Center for Rural Education and other institutions in cooperation with UNESCO, and carried out projects on rural education transformation and teacher training for countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and other regions.

East Asia Poverty Reduction Technical Assistance Projects

In November 2014, China put forward the Cooperation Initiative on Poverty Reduction in East Asia, directed to poverty reduction in rural communities of East Asian countries and cooperative pilot projects. Since July 2017, China has carried out the program known as East Asia Poverty Reduction Demonstration Cooperation Technical Assistance Projects in six rural communities of Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar. It has built infrastructure for these communities including drinking water facilities, bridges, roads, and power facilities, and public service facilities such as village activity centers, health clinics and schools. It has built or upgraded houses, toilets and environmental protection facilities for poor households, thus improving the working and living conditions of the local communities and the local environment. China has organized villagers to raise beef cattle and poultry, plant maize and vegetables, use superior varieties of rice and peanuts and modern planting methods, and develop handicraft industries including weaving and bamboo weaving, rural tourism, courtyard economy, migrant work, and technical training. These efforts have increased villagers' incomes via multiple channels and increased the self-development capacity of villagers and communities. The model and its success have been highly praised by ministers of ASEAN countries and representatives of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and other international agencies, who have described it as a benchmark for cooperation in poverty reduction.

A Village-Level Demonstration Project of China's Technical Assistance to Africa

Since 2011, the International Poverty Reduction Center in China has been introducing Chinese maize

planting techniques to the village of Peapea in Tanzania's eastern region of Morogoro. This is China's first village-level assistance project in Africa. The aim of the project is to apply China's experience to poverty reduction in Tanzania to improve food security and alleviate poverty by increasing the productivity and efficiency of small rural households. Chinese agricultural experts have been teaching local villagers hands-on techniques that have increased yields by a factor of two to three in comparison with the former practice of extensive sowing. As a result, the farmers' food shortages have been largely solved, and surplus grain sales have increased their incomes. The locals affectionately refer to the techniques brought by Chinese experts as "Chinese techniques." In 2018, Morogoro extended the techniques and launched a China-Tanzania joint program to increase the yield of 667 ha of maize field for 1,000 households in the region.

China has shared its experience on poverty reduction. It has carried out exchanges and cooperation in various forms, including building platforms, organizing training, and conducting think tank exchanges. Together with UN agencies in China, the Chinese government has convened sessions of the Global Poverty Reduction and Development Forum on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. China has initiated the China-ASEAN Forum on Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and the International Forum on Sharing Poverty Reduction Experience, and has hosted a series of discussions and exchange activities including the China-Africa Poverty Reduction and Development Conference, the International Seminar on Poverty Eradication and Responsibility of Political Parties, and the International Forum on Reform and Opening Up and Poverty Reduction in China. In cooperation with the ASEAN Secretariat and relevant ASEAN countries, China has launched the ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan and the ROK) village official exchange program for grassroots village officials and community officials. China conducts international training on poverty reduction with relevant countries and regional organizations. Since 2012, it has held over 130 international training sessions, attended by officials from 116 countries and organizations.

The world today is experiencing a scale of change unseen in a century. The COVID-19 pandemic is still spreading around the world, and poverty, hunger and disease are undermining people's pursuit for a better life. The kind of world we should build and the future direction of human civilization are issues that have a bearing on every country and every person. Everyone has the right to a decent life. All countries need to shoulder their responsibilities and work on poverty reduction, so that the sunshine of equity and justice can break through the haze of poverty and backwardness and illuminate a future of prosperity and development. China is ready to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with other countries on poverty reduction, support international poverty reduction, and make a greater contribution to building a global community with a shared future that is free from poverty and blessed with common prosperity.

Conclusion

China has won the final battle against extreme poverty. By achieving the goals of the poverty elimination campaign as scheduled, the Chinese people have made solid strides towards a better life and common prosperity. Yet China remains the world's largest developing country, still confronted by the gap between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's growing desire for a better life, and by the gaps between urban and rural areas and between regions. China still has much to do in order to realize people's all-round development and common prosperity for all.

Removing the label of extreme poverty is not the end, but the beginning of a new life and a new journey. The CPC will always remain committed to its founding mission, striving for the people's well-being and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It will always put the people before everything else, and continue to work for people's all-round development, and common prosperity and a better life for all.

There will be no national rejuvenation without a thriving countryside. Following the victory in the final battle against extreme poverty, China will continue to consolidate the results of poverty elimination, dovetail new measures with rural revitalization, and shift its focus in work related to agriculture, rural areas and rural people. In the new era, China will act on its new development philosophy and build on its new development paradigm. It will prioritize affairs related to agriculture, rural areas and rural people, and follow a socialist path with Chinese characteristics in revitalizing the countryside by introducing more vigorous measures and pooling more resources.

By 2035, China will have achieved basic socialist modernization. With decisive progress in rural revitalization by that time, agriculture and rural areas will be modernized and fundamentally restructured. Farmers will benefit from the quality employment which comes with better jobs, relative poverty will be further alleviated, and concrete progress will be made in achieving common prosperity for all. Rural areas will enjoy the same basic public services as urban areas, brought about by improved systems and mechanisms for urban-rural integration. Farmers will enjoy a better cultural environment in civil and neighborly communities, and benefit from improved rural governance. There will be a fundamental improvement in the eco-environment; the goal of building a beautiful, livable countryside will be basically realized.

By 2050, China will have become a great modern socialist country in every dimension, realizing the

Second Centenary Goal and fully revitalizing the countryside. At that time, China will have a strong agriculture, a beautiful and revitalized countryside, and prosperous farmers, enjoying across-the-board progress in society and the economy, and thriving endeavors in every sector. At that time, the Chinese people will embrace a happier life in common prosperity, and the nation will continue to march towards higher goals of all-round development of the people and common prosperity for all.

China cannot develop in isolation from the rest of the world; and the world needs China for further development. With this in mind, China has always been a builder of global peace, a contributor to global growth, and a guardian of the international order. In the future, a more prosperous China will also be more open and inclusive; it will interact more constructively with the international community, and make a greater contribution to building a better world.

Appendix Adjustments of China's Poverty Standards

China has implemented large-scale planned and organized poverty alleviation programs. Standards for poverty alleviation were formulated according to its social and economic development and the basic living needs of its poor populations.

In 1986, China set its first poverty standard at 206 yuan, designed to provide adequate food and clothing for 125 million poor. In 2001, when formulating the Outline of Development-driven Poverty Alleviation in Rural Areas (2001–2010), the nation raised the standard to 865 yuan for 94.23 million poor. In 2011, when formulating the Outline of Development-driven Poverty Alleviation in Rural Areas (2011–2020), China readjusted the standard to 2,300 yuan (based on the 2010 price index) to help 122 million poor.

In the final stage of fighting extreme poverty, impoverished people in China were registered and deregistered by household. The criteria are personal incomes, and the household's situation with reference to the Two Assurances and Three Guarantees. The former requires that the annual average per capita income for a household remains steady above China's current poverty line. The latter refers to guarantees of adequate food and clothing, and access to compulsory education, basic medical services, and safe housing for impoverished rural residents.

China's standards for deregistering those who have emerged from poverty are comprehensive, including income, and the extent to which they are assured the rights to subsistence and development. These standards reflect the realities of China's social and economic development as well as the basic requirements for achieving moderate prosperity in all respects.