

# China's Diplomacy in the New Era: Opening Up New Horizons with a New Outlook

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*Wang Yi*

**T**he year 2017 is of special, high significance to both China and the world. The world is at a crucial stage of evolving international landscape and shifting balance of power, facing growing destabilizing and uncertain factors and new problems and challenges on multiple fronts. The human society has once again come to a crossroads of history. Should one opt for openness or isolation, cooperation or confrontation, win-win or zero-sum game? These are questions we are all thinking hard about. The choice made by major countries will significantly impact the future of our world and the entire mankind.

As for China, since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, China has made historic achievements and registered historic changes in wide-ranging areas. The 19th CPC National Congress successfully held established the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, opened up new horizons for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and set out the direction and objectives of China's diplomacy in the new era. This has given Chinese answers to the serious questions confronting the world. That is to say, China believes it is essential to advance peace, development and win-win cooperation, foster a new form of international

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**Wang Yi** is Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. This article is based on his speech at the opening of the Symposium on International Developments and China's Diplomacy, co-hosted by China Institute of International Studies (CIIS) and China Foundation for International Studies (CFIS) in December 2017.

relations and build a community with a shared future for mankind. It is fair to say that we have taken stock of our achievements and broken new ground in China's diplomacy in the year of 2017.

Under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee in the past year, we have earnestly implemented the new thinking, new ideas and new measures put forward by General Secretary Xi Jinping in the past five years by taking active, innovative and pioneering steps, and made many breakthroughs and important headway in our diplomatic work. These achievements can be summed up in the following five aspects:

**First, we have drawn up the blueprint for jointly undertaking the Belt and Road Initiative.**

In the past four years since President Xi Jinping put it forward, this major initiative has been translated from an envisioned concept into real action and progress on the ground. The initiative has delivered real benefits through win-win cooperation and attracted extensive attention and participation. More and more countries are looking to China with high expectation for cooperation opportunities under the Belt and Road framework.

In May 2017, President Xi Jinping successfully chaired the first Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) in Beijing. The forum generated huge enthusiasm around the world and the keenness to participate was overwhelming. The heads of state/government from 29 foreign countries, senior representatives from over 140 countries and heads of over 70 international organizations attended the event. It became the most extensively attended and most highly represented multilateral diplomatic event that China had initiated and hosted. And it produced a broad consensus among the nations from across the world on jointly advancing the Belt and Road Initiative.

At the BRF, President Xi Jinping set out the objective of building the Belt and Road into a road for peace, prosperity, opening-up, innovation and exchanges among civilizations. Plans were laid out for

future cooperation under the Belt and Road framework, presenting the prospects for common development and prosperity. Underpinned by real actions and concrete projects, the BRF produced over 270 specific results under 76 broad categories across five key areas. A series of major projects were launched on the ground during the forum. A win-win cooperation network is coming into being, centering around the Eurasian continent and reaching out to continents and oceans across the world. And an international cooperation platform has been put into place for countries to synergize their development strategies and complement each other with comparative strengths for enhanced connectivity and inclusive and open development.

The Belt and Road has become the most popular international public goods in today's world. Its success lies in the fact that by focusing on the dual deficits in development and governance and the dual challenges of anemic global growth and lack of drive in global cooperation, the Belt and Road Initiative has responded to the shared desire for accelerated development, and sought to pool the economic factors and developmental resources from wider areas following an approach of pursuing shared benefits through consultation and collaboration. This opens a new pathway for resolving development conundrums, improving economic governance, achieving sustainable development and rebalancing globalization.

Up till now, we have signed Belt and Road cooperation agreements with 80 countries and organizations, conducted institutionalized cooperation on industrial capacity with over 30 countries, and built 75 overseas economic and trade cooperation zones in 24 countries under the Belt and Road framework. Chinese businesses have invested over US\$50 billion and created near-200,000 local jobs in the countries along the Belt and Road. Building on the first BRF, the Belt and Road Initiative is developing across the board and has shown strong vigor and vitality. It carries far-reaching positive implications for global development, and will also lend strong and sustained impetus to the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

**Second, we have been a strong advocate of economic globalization.**

In a time of sluggish economic growth and recovery as well as global turbulence and unending conflicts, the judgment and leadership of global statesmen and the ability to take swift action are more sought after than gold. President Xi's visit to Davos early in the year was such a trip that boosted global confidence and charted the way forward for economic globalization.

In his keynote speech at the World Economic Forum, President Xi pointed out that the road of human progress has never been a smooth one, but no difficulty, however daunting, can stop mankind from advancing. In the face of difficulty, instead of making complaints or blaming others, we should come together and rise to the challenge. He emphasized that many of the world's problems are not caused by economic globalization, and trying to reverse the trend of globalization will be futile, just as it is impossible to channel the water in the global economic ocean back into isolated lakes and creeks. He stressed the importance of steadfastly building an open global economy, reminding us that those who pursue protectionism will lock themselves in a dark room deprived of light and air. President Xi also put forward China's proposal for boosting global growth and making globalization more balanced. He called for joint efforts to develop a model of innovation-driven growth, open and win-win cooperation, fair and equitable governance, and balanced and inclusive development.

President Xi's visit to the United Nations Office at Geneva is the first such visit by China's top leader in the 21st century, and a major diplomatic initiative after his participation in the summits commemorating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. It sent a clear message that China fully supports the United Nations and multilateralism. At the Palace of Nations, President Xi gave a full account of his major international initiative to jointly build a community with a shared future

for mankind, provided China's perspectives on addressing the many global challenges facing human society, and built international consensus on China's proposal.

From Davos to Geneva, from Hamburg to Da Nang, President Xi delivered a series of important speeches, laying out China's clear position on a range of issues, suggesting the way forward for the world economy and making contribution to global governance. Thus, China is emerging as the most positive factor in the evolution of the international system and the most dynamic force for improving global governance. The Chinese dream is increasingly linked with the dream of the world.

**Third, we have been an anchor for stable relations among the world's major countries.**

The China-US relationship affects not just the wellbeing of the two countries but also that of the world. Since China and the United States reopened doors to exchanges 45 years ago, this relationship has come a long way. We have had both rosy and thorny episodes; we have seen not only storms but also rainbows. The two countries have evolved from mutual estrangement to key partners for each other, because the two sides act in the fundamental interests of the two peoples, bear in mind the big picture of bilateral relations and share the desire to move in the right direction.

The Presidents of the two countries have always played a key role in developing the relationship. The three meetings and many letters and phone calls between President Xi and President Trump in the past year have provided a strategic anchor to what is the most complicated and consequential relationship in the world. Soon after President Trump had taken office, he and President Xi met in Mar-a-Lago, agreeing on the establishment of four high-level dialogue mechanisms covering various fields in China-US relations, outlining cooperation plans in key areas, and thus enabling the smooth transition and good start of China-US relations under a new administration. Shortly after the 19th CPC National Congress, President Trump paid a state visit to China, during which both

sides agreed to expand cooperation across the board on the basis of mutual benefit and manage differences on the basis of mutual respect. The visit delivered tangible outcomes and important understandings for deepening cooperation in various fields, and the US side expressed their desire for a stronger relationship with China.

The sound interactions between the world's two largest economies and their commitment to win-win cooperation is sending a strong signal to the world that more positive things are to be expected for all parties. A good China-US relationship will benefit both countries and peoples and be welcomed by the international community. Of course, the China-US relationship has never been smooth sailing and progress can only be made by overcoming various difficulties and interferences. The social system, history and culture of the two countries are different. China has no intention to change or displace the United States; the US cannot expect to dictate to China or impede its development. The ever more extensive cooperation and close exchanges at different levels have tied the two countries' interests closely together. There is far more that they share than they disagree. Cooperation leads to win-win outcomes while confrontation can only result in a lose-lose situation. This is a plain truth that anyone with a strategic vision and sober mind will recognize. It is a trend that will not bend to the will of any individuals. Recognizing this, China and the US need to find ways to better get along with each other. China is willing, on the basis of mutual respect, to live peacefully with the American superpower. The US needs to understand and accept a China that is following its own path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, one suited to its own conditions. When engaging with each other, both countries must observe the rules, by which I mean the commonly recognized international law and basic norms governing international relations, the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the three communiqués between China and the United States. For both countries, the old-fashioned mentality of zero-sum game and confrontation works no longer. Putting aside differences, seeking common ground and pursuing win-win

cooperation are the only right choice for a bright future.

China and Russia are each other's largest neighbors. Having stood the test of a changing international landscape, this relationship has proven to be both historic and forward-looking, and has grown increasingly resilient and stable. The China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination, thanks to efforts of both sides, has continued to move forward at a high standard. Frequent interactions between President Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin, who exchanged visits and met five times within the year, have enabled consistent, close coordination on major issues concerning global strategic stability, forged greater synergy of development strategies that are crucial to the revitalization of Eurasia, and steered China-Russia strategic coordination toward higher levels and into more areas and greater depths. China-Russia relationship has become a major cornerstone for world peace and stability, fairness and justice, and win-win cooperation.

China and Europe have continued to make fresh headway in the development of the partnership for peace, growth, reform and progress of civilization. President Xi Jinping paid successful visits to Germany, Switzerland and Finland and met with the new French President Emmanuel Macron and the UK Prime Minister Theresa May in Hamburg to maintain and strengthen strategic communication. Premier Li Keqiang attended the annual China-EU Summit and worked with leaders of the 16 Central and Eastern European countries to advance the building of the cross-regional cooperation platform. Notwithstanding the various uncertainties in Europe, China's Europe policy remains consistent and rock-firm. We will continue to approach and advance relations with Europe from a global perspective and in the context of the world's major trends. We firmly support the European integration process and welcome EU's unity and development. We are committed to managing and handling differences on the basis of mutual respect, and will work to expand converging interests and explore new growth areas in regional cooperation to enrich and expand the strategic substance of China-Europe relations.

**Fourth, we have worked to maintain stability in our neighborhood and the sound momentum of regional cooperation.**

As we Chinese people often say, a close neighbor is better than a distant relative. China has therefore every reason to maintain friendship and amity with its neighbors. For his first overseas visit after the 19th CPC National Congress, General Secretary and President Xi Jinping chose Viet Nam and Laos, two socialist neighbors sharing mountains and rivers with China, as his destinations. The visit renewed our traditional friendship, deepened practical cooperation, and sent a clear message to the international community, demonstrating China's commitment to building a community with a shared future in its neighborhood. President Xi Jinping met with President Rodrigo Duterte twice this year and Premier Li Keqiang paid a successful visit to the Philippines. China-Philippines relations hold out a prospect of steady development. While making new friends, we have not forgotten the old ones. We have deepened mutual trust and enhanced mutual support with traditional friends such as Cambodia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

For some time, China-ROK relations met with headwinds due to the THAAD issue. Since President Moon Jae-in took office, he has opted for friendship and cooperation with China and the ROK side has made important public statement that the ROK will not consider additional THAAD deployment, not participate in the US missile defense network and not develop a trilateral military alliance with the US and Japan. Our two sides have reached agreement on handling the THAAD issue for the current stage, and President Moon Jae-in paid his first state visit to China at the invitation of President Xi Jinping. China is ready to work with the ROK to take the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations as an opportunity, cherish the cooperation outcomes already achieved, increase mutual understanding and mutual trust, effectively manage differences, and deepen mutually beneficial cooperation between the two sides. China and the ROK will work for the sound development of the bilateral relations

and stay committed to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

The year 2017 marks the 45th anniversary of the normalization of China-Japan relations. There are more than enough experience and lessons over the past 45 years to help people come to realize the crux of the problem in China-Japan relationship and the great importance of its sound development. We value the recent steps Japan has taken to improve ties with China and welcome Japan's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative. We hope Japan will not hesitate, backpedal or relapse, and we hope Japan will do more to increase understanding, dispel mistrust and facilitate sound interactions. We will see light at the end of the tunnel as long as we keep moving forward. We are ready to work with Japan to bring the bilateral relations back to normal at an early date and make friendship prevail again in our engagement.

Both being big developing countries, China and India have far greater shared strategic interests than specific differences, and far greater needs for cooperation than partial frictions. China always values the good-neighborliness and friendship between the two countries as we are each other's big neighbors and ancient civilizations. In the meantime, China is also firm in upholding its sovereign rights and interests and territorial integrity. We handled the Indian border troops' trespass into China's Dong Lang area in our national interest, on just grounds and with restraint. Through diplomatic means, we engaged with the Indian side and it withdrew its equipment and personnel. This demonstrates not only the value and emphasis we put on relations with India but also our sincerity and sense of responsibility in maintaining regional peace and stability. We believe that as long as we continue to engage in in-depth strategic communication and promptly dispel strategic misgivings, the strategic value of China-India cooperation will speak for itself, and there will be a prospect of "the Dragon and the Elephant Dancing Together" and "1+1=11" effect as expected by our leaders.

China-Mongolia relations suffered some setbacks previously. After the new government led by the People's Party was formed, it attached greater

importance to relations with China. Last week, during the new Mongolian Foreign Minister's first visit to China, he stressed that Mongolia sees China as a strategic priority in its foreign policy and reiterated Mongolia's firm commitment to the one China policy and respect for China's core interests on Tibet- and Xinjiang-related issues and on the Taiwan question. China highly appreciates that. The Mongolian side has realized the importance of maintaining policy consistency and hopes to make Mongolia-China relationship an exemplary one between neighbors. We welcome that and would like to make joint efforts with Mongolia toward that end.

China always champions regional cooperation in its neighborhood and safeguards peace and development in the region. At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Da Nang, President Xi Jinping, responding to the new developments and challenges in Asia-Pacific economic cooperation, reaffirmed the commitment to fostering an open economy, and called for more steps toward the building of a Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP) and new progress in the economic integration of the Asia Pacific. In Astana, at the first summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) after its expansion, President Xi stressed that the SCO members should stay true to their original aspiration, carry forward the Shanghai Spirit, keep abreast with the times, and open new ground in promoting regional cooperation in order to ensure that the SCO continues to move forward in the right direction. At the East Asia leaders' meetings in Manila, Premier Li Keqiang underscored the need to take China-ASEAN relations to a higher level with better quality and greater maturity, and called for the building of the East Asia Economic Community at a faster pace. We have actively advanced the mechanism of Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC), a sub-regional cooperation initiative first put forward by China. We have promoted the theme of "shared river, shared future", fostered the culture of "equality, sincerity, mutual assistance and kinship", and advanced cooperation to the benefit of the people with a can-do spirit. Our cooperation, with its focus on efficiency and practical results, has contributed to the wellbeing of people in this region. Since the launch of

this mechanism over a year ago, notable early harvest has been achieved, and the LMC Special Fund has gone into full operation. With progress made every day and results delivered every month, LMC cooperation has proven to be a mechanism with great efficiency.

China's position on the South China Sea has been upheld by successive Chinese governments, which reflects both the continuity of China's policy and our firm resolve to uphold sovereignty. All the littoral states of the South China Sea are China's neighbors. It has always been our hope to make the South China Sea a sea of peace, friendship, and cooperation. In the past year, we have worked actively to ease the situation in the South China Sea. We have restored and reinforced the consensus between China and ASEAN countries to peacefully resolve disputes through dialogue and consultation by the countries concerned, and facilitated the joint efforts of regional countries to develop the rules of the South China Sea. With agreement reached on the framework of a code of conduct (COC) in the South China Sea ahead of schedule, we have officially declared the commencement of consultations on the COC text.

The mutual trust is all too precious between China and ASEAN countries; and stability has not come easily in the South China Sea. Some countries outside this region seem to feel uncomfortable with the calm waters in the South China Sea and are still looking for opportunities to stir up trouble. However, just as the high mountains cannot stop the river from flowing to the ocean, the positive trend in the South China Sea cannot be reversed. China and ASEAN countries have both the ability and wisdom to safeguard peace and stability in the South China Sea.

As a key member of the international community, China has actively worked for the settlement of hotspot issues in its neighborhood. On the nuclear issue of the Korean Peninsula, we have kept firmly in mind the goal of upholding the international non-proliferation regime, safeguarding peace and stability of the Peninsula, and achieving the denuclearization of the Peninsula, and stayed committed to resolving the issue through dialogue and negotiation. To this end, we have fully and

strictly implemented the DPRK-related resolutions of the UN Security Council. While taking concrete actions to curb the DPRK's nuclear and missile development, we have put forward the "suspension for suspension" proposal with the aim of creating conditions for resuming dialogue and negotiation. Taking an objective and impartial stand and a responsible attitude, China has fulfilled its due international obligations and played its unique role in implementing the resolutions, promoting peace and talks, upholding stability and preventing chaos on the Peninsula. Through shuttle diplomacy, we have encouraged Afghanistan and Pakistan to agree on a bilateral crisis management mechanism, and made our contribution to Afghanistan's domestic political reconciliation and reconstruction and the improvement of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. We have conducted mediation between Myanmar and Bangladesh and put forward a three-step proposal to resolve the issue in Rakhine State of Myanmar. The proposal has been well-received by both countries, contributing to a preliminary consensus and the signing of the relevant agreement between the two sides.

**Fifth, we have ushered in the second "Golden Decade" of cooperation among BRICS countries.**

Thanks to the concerted efforts of the five BRICS countries, the BRICS mechanism has continued to grow despite various pessimistic rhetoric, and the BRICS Xiamen Summit chaired by President Xi has been a full success. At the summit, BRICS countries decided to develop a closer, broader and more comprehensive strategic partnership, and upgrade BRICS cooperation with three pillars of economic, trade and financial cooperation, political and security cooperation, and people-to-people exchange. The summit is a milestone in BRICS cooperation, as it has opened a brighter prospect for the cooperation, and boosted international confidence in the future of emerging markets.

With the first ever Dialogue of Emerging Market and Developing Countries, the Xiamen Summit introduced a new approach to cooperation, namely BRICS+. The dialogue, which invited the leaders of five major

emerging market and developing countries in the world such as Egypt, focused on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, deepened practical cooperation between BRICS and African, Latin American, Middle East and Eurasian countries, and built a new platform for South-South cooperation with a global impact.

In addition to the major outcomes in these five areas, we have firmly safeguarded national sovereignty and security, actively served China's opening-up and domestic development, accelerated the capacity building to protect overseas interests, explored new ways of conducting public diplomacy, and launched the reform of the mechanisms and systems for our external work. These efforts have enriched the contents and expanded the outreach of China's diplomacy.

China has made all-round progress and ground-breaking achievements on the diplomatic front since the 18th CPC National Congress. A most important reason behind this is the leadership and personal commitment of General Secretary Xi Jinping. Over the past five years, recognizing and riding the trend of the world and the times, General Secretary Xi has put forth a series of new ideas, measures and strategies that have provided guidance for the advance of China's diplomacy. With tireless efforts and outstanding leadership, General Secretary Xi has engaged in intensive interactions with other world leaders to safeguard China's national interests, enhance China's international standing, and establish the profile of China as a major country in the world.

The 19th CPC National Congress which concluded with great success has charted the course for China's external relations. General Secretary Xi Jinping made it clear in his report to the Congress that China will endeavor to foster a new form of international relations and build a community with a shared future for mankind, which identified the overarching goals of China's foreign policy in the years ahead.

These twin objectives are inspired by the fine traditions of the 5000-year Chinese culture emphasizing the pursuit of the common good, by the core values championed by China's peaceful foreign policy for over six

decades, and by the CPC's global vision of delivering benefits to the people of China as well as those of all other countries.

To foster a new form of international relations, we need to find a new approach to developing state-to-state relations with the following core principles. First, mutual respect. Countries of different size, strength or wealth, and with diverse systems, religions and civilizations, are all equals. Second, fairness and justice. The law of the jungle which puts the weak at the mercy of the strong must be rejected, and the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, in particular the developing countries, should be upheld. And third, win-win cooperation. The outdated mindset of zero-sum game or winner taking all should be replaced with a new approach of working for common development and shared benefits.

To build a community with a shared future for mankind, we need to come up with solutions to various global challenges. All countries and peoples live on the same planet, and thus have their future closely intertwined like passengers on the same boat. We need to make this world a big, harmonious family where all peoples' needs for a better life can be met. To be more specific, we will build a five-in-one world, namely a world of lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity, and a world that is open, inclusive and enjoys a well-preserved ecology. This vision of our world is both inspired by the five-sphere integrated plan for our domestic development, and it echoes well with the trend of human progress and the shared aspirations of all countries.

The year 2018 will go down as the year for the beginning of the implementation of the decisions taken at the 19th CPC National Congress. As socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, we also need to gain a new outlook, make new accomplishments and take new responsibilities in the conduct of China's foreign policy.

We will continue to break new ground in pursuing major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in line with the strategic plans of the 19th CPC National Congress. The Congress' report stressed at the very beginning of the foreign affairs section that "The Communist Party

of China strives for both the wellbeing of the Chinese people and human progress. To make new and greater contributions for mankind is our Party's abiding mission." China, as the world's largest developing country, will continue to take its development the top priority in governance. Modernization for all the 1.3 billion-plus Chinese people will be an extraordinary endeavor in history, and will be the biggest contribution of the Chinese nation to human progress. Above all, China needs to create a more favorable external environment and stronger external impetus for completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects and for achieving the two centenary goals. At the same time, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, a developing China also needs to consider and contribute to global wellbeing, shoulder its due international responsibilities for world peace, and play its role as a major country in promoting common development. For China's diplomacy in the new era, we will take a longer and broader perspective, and be even more open-minded and resourceful in our diplomacy. We will give more consideration to the overall interests of the world and humanity, and work in a proactive manner.

Living in a world of major changes, transformations and adjustments, we will continue to hold high the banner of peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, and strengthen friendship and cooperation with other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. We will firmly uphold the existing international system with the UN at its core, and protect and expand the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries. We will follow the principle of achieving shared benefits through consultation and collaboration in engaging in global governance, and strive for a more equitable and fairer international political and economic order. We will continue to treat all countries as equals, address international disputes through peaceful means, and work for greater democracy and rule of law in international relations. We will continue to act as a responsible major country to contribute to world peace, promote global development, and uphold the international order.

**First, we will expand China's network of global partnerships and promote a new form of international relations.** In keeping with the historical trend, China has called for embracing a new approach to state-to-state relations that features dialogue rather than confrontation and partnership instead of alliance. As General Secretary Xi Jinping has explicitly pointed out, those who share the same ideal and follow the same path can be partners; those who seek common ground while shelving differences can also be partners. Guided by this inclusive and open-minded vision, China has established partnerships with over 100 countries. These countries are different from each other and our partnerships vary in formulation and format. Yet, the essence of partnerships is the same: treating each other as equals and pursuing win-win cooperation, while transcending differences in social system and development stage. This important practice by China, offering a new option for countries exploring approaches to state-to-state relations, is widely recognized and welcomed. Going forward, we will continue to work with other countries to expand converging interests and enhance the quality of partnerships, to create enabling conditions for and lending new impetus to our endeavor in building a new form of international relations.

In this endeavor, major countries have a key role to play. We will continue to enhance coordination and cooperation with Russia, the United States, Europe and other major countries and country groups. Hence, we will be able to build a framework for major-country relations of overall stability and balanced development that contributes to global peace, tranquility and harmonious development.

**Second, we will start from our neighborhood and other developing countries in building a community with a shared future for mankind.** China and its neighbors, connected by mountains and rivers, share the same aspiration for peace and development. This has created natural conditions for our joint endeavors. President Xi's initiative to build a community with a shared future is meant to be oriented to China's neighbors and other developing countries as a priority. We will make steady

progress toward this goal by starting from our neighborhood and working with other developing countries.

China will deepen relations with its neighbors in line with the principle of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness and the policy of forging friendship and partnership in its neighborhood. We will deepen win-win cooperation with our neighbors and help friendly countries boost their capacity for self-development through major events next year, such as the 15th anniversary of China-ASEAN strategic partnership and the formulation of a China-ASEAN Strategic Partnership Vision 2030. We will ensure the success of the two international conferences to be hosted by China and participated mainly by our neighbors next year, namely the Boao Forum for Asia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Qingdao summit, with a view to enhancing the regional consensus on mutual support and lending new impetus to regional cooperation. We remain committed to upholding stability in the South China Sea and promoting maritime cooperation with regional countries through the two wheels of implementing the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and holding consultations on a code of conduct (COC). We will also work with regional countries to push for an early conclusion of the negotiations on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in an effort to open a new chapter in Asia-Pacific cooperation.

China will, in keeping with the principle of upholding justice while pursuing shared interests and the principle of sincerity, real results, affinity, and good faith, strengthen solidarity and cooperation with other developing countries. We will continue to make full use of the existing institutional platforms for cooperation with African countries, Latin American and Caribbean states, and Arab states respectively. Another significant event on China's diplomatic agenda for 2018 will be hosting the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. At the forum, we will discuss plans for future development with our African brothers and sisters, and roll out new cooperation measures and explore new growth areas, to lift

our cooperation to a new level. In particular, in meeting the aspiration of African countries, we will work to further synergize the Belt and Road Initiative with the Agenda 2063, making the Belt and Road cooperation a new, strong driver for China-Africa all-dimensional cooperation. We will also hold the ministerial meetings under the China-CELAC Forum and the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, which will further enrich China-CELAC and China-Arab cooperation.

**Third, we will comprehensively advance the Belt and Road Initiative to benefit all other participating countries through win-win cooperation.** President Xi Jinping outlined the blueprint for the Belt and Road Initiative while addressing the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. We are ready to make solid efforts with all the other parties to follow through on the 270 outcomes of the first BRF, develop the follow-up mechanisms, and ensure the success of ministerial meetings in key areas in preparation for the second forum to be held in 2019. We will work for real results in facilitating policy, infrastructure, trade, financial, and people-to-people connectivity and reach consensus with more countries for Belt and Road cooperation. We will focus on flagship projects along the key routes and at key junctions to reap early harvest to the benefit of our people. Through our work at the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, China-Laos Economic Corridor, and China-Myanmar Economic Corridor, at the Piraeus port and Kyaukpyu port, at the China-Laos railway and China-Thailand railway in Asia and other railway projects in Africa, Europe and Latin America, we will strengthen new driving forces for and further upgrade Belt and Road cooperation. By earnestly implementing the principle of shared benefits through consultation and collaboration, we will ensure that this international public good plays its role of boosting development of countries and regions along the routes.

In addition, President Xi Jinping has announced at the BRF that the first China International Import Expo will be held in Shanghai in 2018. As the first expo devoted to expanding imports anywhere in the world, it testifies to China's readiness to open its market and share its development

opportunities with the rest of the world.

**Fourth, we will actively explore a way of resolving hotspot issues with Chinese characteristics and play a bigger and more constructive role in upholding world stability.** China is ready to take part in the peaceful settlement of hotspot issues, and actively explore a Chinese approach of constructive engagement. We will continue to advocate and practice the following three principles in the handling of hotspot issues, i.e. non-interference in other countries' internal affairs or imposition of one's own will on others; taking an objective and impartial approach and refraining from seeking one's selfish interests; and striving for political solutions while rejecting the use of force. These principles have stood the test of time, yielded positive outcomes and received endorsement from more and more countries.

The situation on the Korean Peninsula, which has been caught up in a vicious cycle of provocation and confrontation, has remained grave. However, it is important to highlight that the hope of peace remains alive, and the possibility of negotiation still exists. War is by no means acceptable. China believes that parties need to give serious consideration to China's "suspension for suspension" proposal, take the first step toward de-escalation to at least take the situation out of the "black hole" of confrontation, and endeavor to create the right conditions and atmosphere for the resumption of dialogue and negotiation.

China has put in more efforts and borne greater cost than any other party in addressing the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue. China believes that all the parties' efforts must be guided by the letter and spirit of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which represent the common position of the international community and constitute an international responsibility that all UN members must fulfill. China, for one, has been implementing the resolutions in all earnest. China will not support or accept the demands of any party that are inconsistent with the resolutions or measures that go beyond the resolutions, still less unilateral actions, for they will only undermine the unity of the Security Council and the legitimate interests of

other countries.

The Middle East is again embroiled in turbulence. China has always firmly supported the Palestinian people's efforts to restore their lawful rights. We support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state that enjoys full sovereignty, with East Jerusalem as its capital and based on the 1967 border. The status of Jerusalem must be determined through dialogue and negotiation on the basis of UN resolutions, and the two-state solution remains a viable, fundamental solution to the Palestinian issue. We appeal to all parties to be level-headed and exercise restraint, and avoid creating new turbulence in a region already fraught with challenges. To continue its constructive role, China will implement President Xi's four-point proposal for resolving the Palestinian issue, and work to convene a meeting in Beijing this year that brings together Palestinian and Israeli advocates of peace. The Syrian issue is likely to enter a new phase of political settlement. China supports dialogue and negotiations aimed at reaching a future political arrangement. We support joint counter-terrorism actions for the sake of regional stability and efforts to build lasting peace and security through reconstruction.

China will direct more attention and resources to the issue of Afghanistan. I have been joined by my Afghan and Pakistani counterparts in Beijing to discuss peace, reconciliation and reconstruction in Afghanistan, improvement of relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and cooperation among our three countries. The three-way foreign ministers' meeting, the first of its kind, has built important consensus and produced tangible outcomes. In the meantime, China will continue its mediation for a proper, phased settlement of the situation in Rakhine state, Myanmar.

**Fifth and finally, we will step up efforts to serve China's domestic development and overseas interests in line with our national conditions and the needs of our people.** In 2017, the Foreign Ministry hosted successful events to promote five Chinese provinces, which helped Yunnan, Anhui, Jilin, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Jiangxi to increase

their international profile. We also organized lecture tours to universities and Party schools, which enhanced the public's understanding of the international landscape and China's foreign policy.

In 2018, we will explore new ideas and approaches to better serve China's development. To provide a better stage for Chinese provinces and municipalities to engage the world, the Foreign Ministry will present more of them under the theme of "China in a New Era", and facilitate various initiatives of strategic importance for national development, most notably the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the planning and construction of the Xiongan New Area and the organization of the 2022 Winter Olympic Games. We will also tap the resources at the disposal of the Foreign Ministry and our overseas missions to provide tailor-made information services for the reform and development at home.

The protection of Chinese nationals overseas is always a priority for us. Guided by a people-centered philosophy, we will continue to build capacity and institutions, deepen the reform of consular services, and improve the WeChat version of the consular hotline 12308 and other information platforms for our nationals to make consular services more accessible and popular. Recognizing China's growing overseas interests and the new patterns of Chinese nationals and businesses going abroad, we will do more to facilitate their travel and mobility. We will also improve the mechanism and institution of consular protection, explore a system for safeguarding the safety and security of overseas Chinese nationals and businesses, and provide a reliable safety net for them.

"With the rising tide and favorable wind, it is time to sail the ship and ride the waves." The world is changing like never before, and China is on the final leg of its march toward national rejuvenation. In a great era that is unfolding before our eyes, let us follow the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, keep our mission firmly in mind, live up to the trust placed on us, and scale new heights in our major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. 🇨🇳