

NPC

National People's Congress of China



ISSUE 3
2010

Farewell, Shanghai Expo

ISSN 1674-3008



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NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo participates and delivers a speech at the ceremony for the China National Pavilion Day at the Shanghai Expo on October 1.

Ren Chenming

During the Shanghai Expo 2010, visitors have the opportunity to appreciate the well-known Chinese painting *The Riverside Scenes at Qingming Festival*. The dynamic version of the picture is 130 meters long and 6.3 meters high, 30 times of its original. Designed by modern multimedia technics, the dynamic picture varies with change of lights and movements of figures. *Xu Jiajun*



On October 1, a national flag-raising ceremony is held at the Shanghai Expo to mark the China National Pavilion Day.

Fei Maohua



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ISBN 1674-3008

CN 11-5683/D

Price:RMB35

Edited by The People's Congresses Journal
 Published by The People's Congresses Journal
 Printed by C&C Joint Printing Co.,(Beijing) Ltd. in China



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Pride, joy and a little sadness as Shanghai bids farewell to Expo





At midnight, hundreds of flags of participant countries and international organizations were lowered at the Shanghai World Expo site on October 31, bringing the record-breaking event to a close. The flags had been raised in front of the China Pavilion on May 1, and flew over the 5.28-square-kilometer Expo site for the past 184 days.

More than 73 million visitors were treated to a feast of cultures and technologies focused on the theme “Better City, Better Life” in the biggest Expo since the world event began with the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London.

A crowd of around 8,000, joined by singers and dancers on stage at the Culture Center, erupted into applause when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao declared the Expo formally closed last night.

Wen said the Shanghai Expo had been a splendid event and added a glorious chapter to Expo history.

Calling the event “eye-opening” and “unforgettable,” the premier expressed gratitude on behalf of the Chinese government and paid tribute to all the people who had participated in, supported and contributed to the first Expo held by a developing country.

Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan said the Expo has made China and the world come closer together, and that a more open, inclusive and culturally advanced China that steadily moves forward will join other countries to usher in an ever brighter future for all.

He said the Expo spirit will be carried forward from generation to generation.

“I am convinced that the vision of ‘Better City, Better Life’ will become reality,” Wang said.

Jean-Pierre Lafon, president of World Expo supervising body

the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE), said the Shanghai World Expo was an “astounding success.”

Speaking in Chinese, Lafon said: “Expo 2010 is the success of China. It is the success of Shanghai ... It is also the great success of the World Expo.”

The BIE flag was lowered and handed over by Shanghai Mayor Han Zheng and Hong Hao, director general of the Bureau of Shanghai World Expo Coordination to Letizia Moratti, mayor of Milan, and Giuseppe Sala, CEO of the Milan Expo 2015.

China’s top entertainers and athletes, including Shanghai’s 110m-hurdler Liu Xiang, film star Jackie Chan and pop singer Andy Lau, also helped mark the end of Expo.

The Shanghai World Expo attracted 246 nations and international organizations, the largest-ever number at a World Expo. More than 73 million people visited the site – a record in Expo history.

The Expo also set a record for the largest daily attendance, when more than 1.03 million visitors flocked to the site on October 16.

These figures broke records set at the Osaka World Expo in 1970, which recorded 64.22 million visitors, including 844,000 on a single day.

For the past six months, the Expo site was a global village where people could see rare cultural treasures from around the world – such as the Bronze Chariot and Horse sculpture from China’s Qin Dynasty, the statue of Athena from Greece and the masterpieces of French Impressionist artists – and also get a taste of the world’s diverse cultures through more than 20,000 events.

But today work will begin dismantling more than 200 foreign and corporate pavilions, in accordance with BIE stipulations. Five structures will remain; the China Pavilion, the Culture Center, the Expo Center, the Theme Pavilions and Expo Boulevard.

The Expo site will be transformed into a cultural, business and commercial center.

The United Kingdom Pavilion, the Saudi Arabia Pavilion and the Germany Pavilion were given the top three golden awards by the Expo Shanghai organizer and BIE.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said at the Summit Forum of the Expo yesterday morning that the Chinese government, the city of Shanghai and the BIE deserve the highest praise as the Shanghai World Expo brought nations together and celebrated global diversity.

The Summit Forum on Urban Innovation and Sustainable Development invites State leaders, officials, scientists, experts and entrepreneurs to seek innovative ways for sustainable urban development.

The Shanghai Declaration, which set out targets for building cities that establish harmony between diverse cultures, between development and environment and between cultural legacies and



Numerous visitors wait in line to enter pavilions at Shanghai Expo.

Yu Xiangjun



A firework performance follows the opening ceremony of the Shanghai Expo 2010 on the evening of April 30. CFP

future innovations, was delivered during the closing plenary.

Six months ago, the Expo opened with a bang as fireworks lit up the sky and Shanghai welcomed the world to the city.

While the closing ceremony was more low-key, the Expo site was filled with joy, tinged with a little sadness at the prospect of the event ending and teams who had worked together for months breaking-up.

Marco Fabio Lauretti, manager of the Italy Pavilion restaurant, said he felt a little sad as he didn't think he would ever be involved in such a large-scale fair again.

There were tears and smiles as volunteers embraced. Pavilion officials sang and danced while visitors gathered in front of LED screens across the Expo site broadcasting the closing ceremony.

Officials from more than 200 countries and organizations sang the Chinese song "The Jasmine Flower" together in Chinese on the stage. This was said to be the first time that foreigners from so many different countries had sung a Chinese song together.

Some 304,200 people visited the site on the last day, bringing

the final attendance to 73.08 million.

Pavilions held various special events after welcoming their final visitors.

Kevin Rudd, Australia's minister for foreign affairs, closed the door of the Australia Pavilion around 11pm after saying goodbye to the final visitors. "I congratulate Shanghai and the people of China on the successful staging of this historic Expo, which welcomed more than 70 million visitors," said Rudd.

He said the popularity of the Australia Pavilion confirmed strong interest and opportunities for Australia in China.

The Taiwan Pavilion held a lights out ceremony to mark its closure. Wang Chih Kang, chairman of the Taipei World Trade Center, led staff around the pavilion for the final time before holding a countdown and turning off the lights.

The Singapore Pavilion erected a golden wishing tree in front of the building for visitors to hang their wishes.

On the last parade on Bocheng Road at noon, performers waved at visitors along the roads. Many visitors waved back, as they all bid goodbye to the Shanghai World Expo. ■

China National Pavilion Day marked at Shanghai World Expo

By Liu Dongkai, Zou Shengwen, Li Zhenghong and Wu Yu



On October 1, the ceremony for China National Pavilion Day is held at the Shanghai Expo 2010. NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo, who is also a member of the Political Bureau Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee, attended the opening ceremony and delivered a speech. *Li Tao*

The China National Pavilion Day celebrations started in the morning on October 1, which also marked the 61st anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, at the Shanghai World Expo, a grand gathering of the world's cultures. Politburo Standing Committee Member of CPC Central Committee and NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo attended the ceremony and delivered a speech.

The Shanghai World Expo, the first one hosted by a developing country in the history of the World Expo, has seen participants from 246 countries and international organizations in the past five months. It has also hosted more than 100 foreign leaders and nearly 60 million Chinese and foreign visitors. More than 2 million volunteers from home and abroad participated in the grand event themed "Better City, Better Life."

The China National Pavilion Day celebrations held in the golden autumn, when flowers blossom in sunshine and breeze, not only adding cheers to China's National Day, but also making it more splendid of the Shanghai World Expo.

The top legislator, accompanied by his wife Zhang Ruizhen, greeted foreign leaders and other distinguished guests at the World Expo Center at about 10:30 am when they arrived at the expo site for the China National Day Pavilion celebrations.

The top legislator and the distinguished guests were received with warm applause when they walked into the central hall.

A flag-raising ceremony was held to mark the launch of the celebrations, which started at 10:40 am.

The top legislator gave a speech brimming with warm feeling.

Vicente Loscertales, secretary-general of the International Expositions Bureau, attended the event on behalf of his agency. He applauded that the Shanghai Expo 2010 has made history and set new standards for World Expo. It has also made great contributions to promoting exchanges and cooperation among countries throughout the world, which is of great value.

After the ceremony of China National Pavilion Day celebrations ended, Wu and the distinguished guests visited the China Pavilion and a number of domestic pavilions of Yunnan, Tibet, Gansu and Shanghai.

Wu thought high of the Yunnan Pavilion, which was his first stop of his tour at the Shanghai Expo site after he and his wife left the China Pavilion. Young women in traditional ethnic costumes from Yunnan greeted the couple and the other guests and presented them with traditional sachets, which stand for good luck, peace and health. The top legislator, along with other guests, then admired items and relics on display showcasing local ethnic cultures, including Bai ethnic residential building models, Dai ethnic gateway models and dinosaur fossils. "You've done a good job," Wu said when he and his wife greeted ethnic artists and the pavilion staff. He shook hands with them to show his appreciation for their hard work and took a group photograph



To celebrate the China National Pavilion Day as well as the National Day, the Shanghai Expo holds a float parade on October 1, 2010. CFP

with them.

Wu went to the top of the China Pavilion, the Oriental Crown, which stands high at the Shanghai Expo site and stands out among the rest for its magnificence and grandeur. The official admired a number of eye-catching items displayed at the China Pavilion, as well as the regional pavilions, including the multimedia exhibit The Riverside Scenes at Qingming Festival, the ethnic building models, the 3-D model of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway, as well as the exhibition featuring disaster relief efforts in Zhouqu, Gansu Province, which was hit by a massive mudslide. The top legislator said that the pavilions and the items exemplified Chinese people's maneuvers to strive for a better life and the pursuit of harmony. In addition, the pavilions embodied China's promising prospect featuring scientific development.

Wu also visited the United Arab Emirates' Pavilion and the Italy Pavilion and talked to the pavilion staff, saying that their pavilions were highly characteristic and very impressive.

The Shanghai World Expo organizers hosted a banquet for the distinguished guests attending the China National Pavilion Day celebrations. The top legislator attended the banquet. Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, Vice Premier and Chairman of Shanghai World Expo Organization Committee Wang Qishan made a toast at the banquet. He said that the expo, which fully embodies the idea of the World Expo, "understanding, communication, unity and collaboration," has maintained successful operation in the past 154 days. He added that the Shanghai World Expo would surely be a successful, splendid and unforgettable event if we kept persevering in our efforts to work on it.

Foreign leaders who attended the celebrations and the banquet included Albanian President Bamir Topi, Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni, Central African Republic President Francois Bozize, Fiji President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Lao National Assembly President Thongsing Thammavong, Speaker of the Liberian National Assembly Alex Tyler, Speaker of National Assembly of Mali Traore, Chairman of the Chamber of Representatives of Morocco Abdelouahed Radi, and Saif Al-Islam M. Al Gaddafi, President of the Gaddafi International Charity and

Development Foundation.

Other Chinese officials attended the celebrations and the banquet included Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Vice-chairman of NPC Standing Committee Wang Zhaoguo, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, Secretary of the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee and Deputy Chairman of Shanghai World Expo Organizing Committee Yu Zhengsheng, Vice-chairman and Secretary-general of NPC Standing Committee Li Jianguo

Top legislator's speech on China National Pavilion Day at Shanghai World Expo

SHANGHAI – Wu Bangguo, chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, delivered a speech at the ceremony for the China National Pavilion Day at the Shanghai World Expo on October 1. The following is the full text of his speech:

Your Excellencies heads of State and Speakers of Parliament, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends,

On this joyous day of grand celebration for the 61st anniversary of the People's Republic of China (PRC), we gather here to mark the China National Pavilion Day of Expo 2010 Shanghai. It adds to happiness of the anniversary of the People's Republic, and it brings the Expo 2010 Shanghai event to a new height. At the outset, I wish to extend, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, warm welcome and sincere thanks to all distinguished guests attending the China National Pavilion Day events.

Expo 2010 Shanghai is the first such global event hosted by a developing country in the history of the world expo. In the past five months, participants from 246 countries and international organizations have gathered by the Huangpu River to attend the Expo. The Expo site has hosted over 100 foreign leaders and nearly 60 million Chinese and foreign visitors. Together with the over 2 million dedicated volunteers from home and abroad, they have made "Better City, Better Life" a living reality. In the less than six-square-kilometer Expo Park, pavilions of diverse styles bearing distinct features of different countries stand alongside each

other, hosting creative exhibitions and various cultural performances, not to mention the unique Urban Best Practices Area and the inspiring forum dialogues. Together, they form a vivid picture of the diverse world and the harmonious co-existence of different cultures and civilizations. We have every reason to believe that, with concerted efforts of all sides, Expo 2010 Shanghai will surely be a successful, splendid and unforgettable event. Let me take this opportunity to express sincere gratitude to the governments and peoples of other countries, to the International Exhibitions Bureau and relevant international organizations, to all participants for their great support for the Expo and to all friends who have contributed their share to the Expo.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends:

Standing proudly in the Expo Park, the splendid and magnificent China Pavilion, the "Oriental Crown", is a showcase of "Chinese Wisdom in Urban Development". It is living proof of the effort by the Chinese people in pursuit of a better life. It gives expression to the long-lasting belief in harmony as rooted in the Chinese culture and to the vision of a brighter future of China through scientific development.

The Chinese nation has a long history and a splendid culture. For over 5,000 years, generation after generation the Chi-

and State Councilor Dai Bingguo.

Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade and Deputy Director of the Shanghai Expo Organizing Committee Wan Jifei presided over the China National Pavilion Day ceremony. Shanghai Mayor and Deputy Director of the Shanghai Expo Organizing Committee Han Zheng presided over the banquet. Government officials from the Shanghai World Expo Organization Committee and the World Expo 2010 Shanghai Executive Committee, Chinese government represen-

nese people of different ethnic groups have lived on this vast land. They have formed a fine character of diligence, courage and self-reliance. They are open-minded and inclusive. They dare to innovate and explore new ways of development. The contribution they have made to the progress of human civilization is significant and indelible.

Over the past 60 years or more since the founding of the PRC, the Communist Party of China has led the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in an earth-shaking and pioneering endeavor and succeeded in bringing about three historic shifts: the shift from a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society to a new society of national independence, where people are the masters of their own country; the shift from a new democratic revolution to a socialist revolution and development; and the shift from a highly centralized planned economy to a robust socialist market economy and from a closed or semi-closed State to one of all-round opening up. These are indeed epoch-making changes of the Chinese nation. In the past 30 years since the beginning of reform and opening-up, China's economy has maintained rapid growth rarely seen in the world. Our social programs have made progress. Our comprehensive national strength has increased significantly. Our people, on the whole, are leading a life of moderate prosperity, with the outlook of rural and urban areas steadily improving. We enjoy unity and amity among all our ethnic groups, harmony and stability in our society and continued rise in our international standing. China, once an ancient land, is taking on new vigor and vitality.

Looking ahead, we will build a moderately prosperous society at a higher level by 2020 to benefit our over one billion people, and will realize modernization by the middle of this century. This is the grand vision and abiding goal of the Chinese people from generation to generation.

The Chinese people, once plagued by poverty and hunger, long all the more for a life of prosperity and peace. This had made development a common pursuit of the Chinese people.

China has given top priority to development ever since it

tative of the World Expo 2010 Shanghai, representative of the China Pavilion and the pavilion curator, top government officials of the country's provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, representatives of Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions and Taiwan, representatives of overseas Chinese, representative of the International Exhibitions Bureau, representatives of the expo participants and consul generals of many countries in Shanghai attended the celebrations. ■

started reform and opening-up. This has resulted in higher and higher living standards of the people and rendered the belief that development is of overwhelming importance popular and unchangeable.

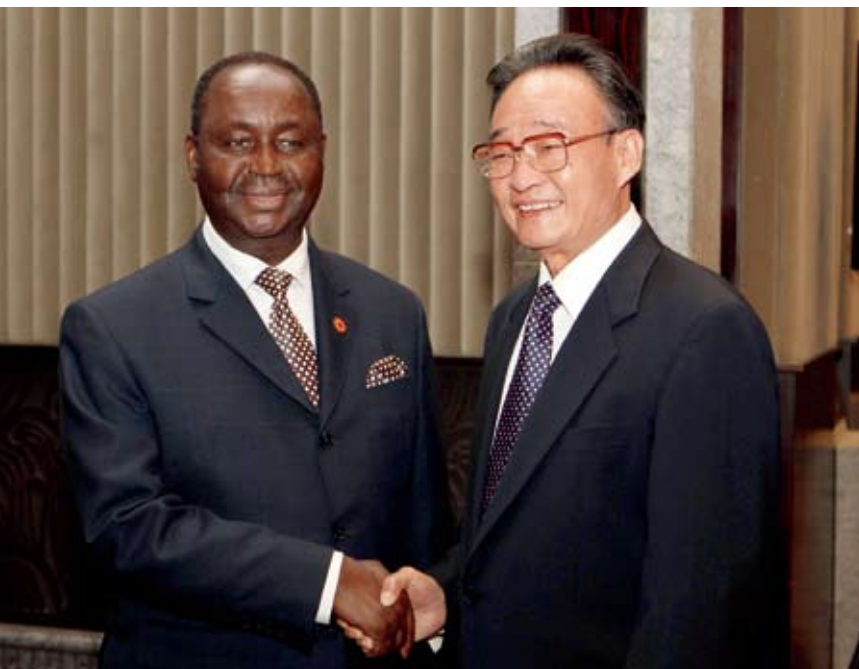
The Chinese nation is a peace-loving nation. Having suffered from numerous atrocities and wars in modern history, we know all too well the value of peace. And we are keener in the understanding that to uphold world peace is our international obligation and serves our development need at home.

China is the largest developing country in the world, and China's development is based on a large population, a weak economic foundation and a late start in development. China remains and will continue to be in the primary stage of socialism for a fairly long period of time. We are consciously aware that there will be problems and challenges on the way ahead. Yet, we are fully confident about our future, because we have embarked on a road of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and have formulated a system of theories on socialism with Chinese characteristics. As long as we follow this road unswervingly, thoroughly implement the Scientific Outlook on Development, continue to free our minds, remain committed to reform and opening-up and promote scientific development and social harmony, we will certainly make China a socialist modern country that is prosperous, democratic, harmonious and culturally advanced.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends:

Though Expo 2010 Shanghai will be concluded in one month's time, the spirit of progress, innovation, harmony and common prosperity advocated by the Expo will long endure. Ours is a time when people around the world are calling for peace, development and cooperation. Let us join hands to enhance exchanges and mutual learning, deepen contacts and coordination, rise up to challenges, and work together to build a harmonious world of enduring peace and common prosperity!

Thank you. ■



Wu Bangguo, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee meets the president of the Central Africa Republic François Bozizé, who is invited to participate in the celebrations of the China National Pavilion Day at Shanghai Xijiao Hotel On October 1. *Lan Hongguang*



On October 1, NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo meets the Albanian President Bamir Topi who participated in the celebrations of the China National Pavilion Day. *Lan Hongguang*

Top legislator meets State and parliament leaders attending Shanghai Expo

Lin Ling, Liu Dongkai and Pan Qing

Top legislator Wu Bangguo met with some State and parliament leaders, who were for the Shanghai Expo and attended celebrations of the China National Pavilion Day on October 1.

On October 1, he met Albanian President Bamir Topi, pledging to promote friendly cooperation between the two countries. Ahead of their meeting, the two leaders attended celebrations marking the China National Pavilion Day at the Shanghai World Expo.

Topi expressed congratulations to Wu on the 61st anniversary of the founding of New China and the success of the Shanghai Expo and the China National Pavilion Day.

Albania was among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with China in 1949. “The two countries should cherish the deeply-rooted friendship,” said Wu. Hailing the smooth bilateral ties and new progress achieved in recent years, Wu said the relationship was entering a period of “comprehensive devel-

opment” and “unprecedented opportunities.”

“China is willing to expand exchanges with Albania between governments, parliaments, political parties and the young people so as to explore new means of partnership,” said Wu.

“The increased cooperation has brought real benefits to the two peoples. There is no obstacle down the road,” said Topi.

The Albanian President said he expected more cooperation with China in hydropower and telecommunication, welcomed more Chinese businesses to invest in his country. “We welcome Chinese enterprises to engage in Albanian economic development and the government will provide a good environment for them,” said Topi.

Wu also met with Central African Republic President François Bozize in Shanghai.

Wu welcomed Bozize’s presence at and support for the World Expo and extended Chinese President Hu Jintao’s greetings to



On October 1, 2010, Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of NPC meets Mr. Seif al-Islam Gaddafi, chairman of the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation, who came to China to attend the celebration of China National Pavilion Day at Shanghai Xijiao Hotel. *Li Tao*

him. Since the two countries resumed diplomatic relations in 1998, bilateral links have been growing rapidly with profound achievements in various areas, said Wu.

“China considers Central African Republic as a good friend and is willing to develop long-term, stable relations based on mutual respect, benefit and equality,” said Wu. He called on both sides to further strengthen political mutual trust, support each other on issues concerning respective core interests, deepen pragmatic cooperation, implement the consensus reached between the two countries’ leaders.

He also called for increased coordination on international issues to protect the interests of developing countries, including China and Central African Republic.

Bozize hailed China as “a role model” for African nations. “China made great achievement in opening-up and reform and modernization, fully demonstrating the Chinese people’s capacity to build better lives,” said Bozize.

Bozize said his country treasured the friendship with China and hoped they would work together for more comprehensive, in-depth cooperation.

When meeting with Abdeloughed Radi, president of Morocco’s Chamber of Representatives, Wu said sound parliamentary exchanges between the two countries have greatly boosted the bilateral relations.

China hopes the tradition can be maintained, bringing closer cooperation between parliamentary leaders, special committees and panels to share governance experiences and promote economic cooperation, said Wu.



On October 1, 2010, Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of NPC meets Mr. Abdelwahed Radi, speaker of the House of Representatives of Morocco, who came to China to attend the celebration of China National Pavilion Day at Shanghai Xijiao Hotel. *Li Tao*

Morocco was an important partner of China in Africa, Wu said, noting that bilateral relations have maintained healthy and stable development.

Radi extended Moroccan King Sidi Mohammed’s greetings to the Chinese people on the 61st anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China.

Radi said relationship with China is high on the agenda of Morocco’s foreign policy. Morocco hopes the two countries will closely coordinate in international and regional parliamentary organizations, said Radi.

On October 2, Wu also met with speaker of the Liberian National Assembly Alex Tyler in Shanghai, saying China would work with Liberia to move forward bilateral ties.

Wu said China regarded Liberia as an important partner for cooperation in West Africa.

China-Liberia relations had seen a new momentum of development in recent years, and they had made progress in implementing the agreement reached on the China-Africa Forum.

Wu said Chinese President Hu Jintao’s and Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf’s exchange of visits had helped progress in bilateral links.

Wu said inter-parliamentary exchanges were an important part of bilateral links and the NPC was ready to carry out friendly exchanges with the Liberian parliament in all areas. He expressed the wish that the parliaments of the two countries should make new contributions to the growth of China-Liberia relations.

Tyler said the Liberian people regarded the Chinese as true friends, and that China was a constructive force to maintain

world peace and promote common development. He expressed the wish that the Liberian National Assembly should strengthen friendly ties with the NPC to advance Liberia-China cooperation. Tyler said Liberia firmly adhered to the one-China policy and supported the peaceful reunification of China.

Both sides exchanged views over bilateral relations and other issues of common concern.

“Your visit to China demonstrates the goodwill of the people of Liberia towards the Chinese,” Wu said on Tyler’s first visit to China as speaker of the Liberian National Assembly.

Tyler is in China for the Shanghai World Expo and attended celebrations of China’s National Pavilion Day, which marked the 61st anniversary of founding of the People’s Republic of China.

Tyler extended President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf’s greetings and congratulated Wu on the success of China National Pavilion Day, saying he was witnessing the biggest World Expo in history. He also thanked China for its help in the economic development of Liberia.

China and Cambodia pledged to further cooperation and bilateral ties as top Chinese legislator Wu met with Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni in Shanghai on October 2.

“China attaches importance to relations with Cambodia and hopes to deepen and advance the mutually beneficial cooperation to lift bilateral ties,” Wu told Sihamoni.

Wu said China cherished the special friendship with the Cambodian Royal Family. The friendship nurtured by Chinese leaders and former Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk had weathered the changing international landscape, said Wu.

Bilateral relations had seen frequent high-level visits, increased political mutual trust, and mutually beneficial trade cooperation and support on international and regional issues, said Wu. He thanked the king for his support to the Shanghai World Expo and presence at the celebrations of China’s National Pavilion Day at the Shanghai World Expo on October 1.

Sihamoni said the progress in bilateral relations was in the line with the two peoples’ aspirations and the Cambodian Royal Family was committed to boosting bilateral cooperation.

Also on October 2, Wu met with Fijian President Epeli Nailatikau in Shanghai, saying the developing country status of China and Fiji meant both sides could do more to boost the relationship.

Despite great differences in national conditions, China and Fiji, as developing countries, shared historical tasks of economic development and improvement of people’s lives, Wu said.

“China and Fiji understand and support each other on major issues and issues relating to their respective core interests. This lays a solid foundation for long-term and stable growth of the relationship,” said Wu. He said the smooth relationship brought real benefits to the two countries and two peoples.

China advocated democracy in international relations and re-

spected diversity, and all countries, big or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, were equal in the international community, he said. “China would like to work with Fiji to advance the relations on principles of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit.”

Applauding China’s great achievements in modernization and contributions to world peace and stability, Nailatikau thanked China for its long-term, unselfish assistance to his country.

Fiji would strengthen ties with China and draw on Chinese experiences in country building, Nailatikau said, welcoming more Chinese enterprises to invest in his country and tourists.

The Fiji president reaffirmed his adherence to the one-China policy and support for the peaceful reunification of China. In late September, he attended the 2010 China Investment and Trade Fair in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China’s Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

When meeting with Laotian National Assembly President Thongsing Thammavong, Wu thanked him for his support for the Shanghai World Expo, saying China and Laos were good neighbors, good friends, good comrades and good partners.

He said Chinese President Hu Jintao and Laotian President Choummaly Saygnasone exchanged visits last year. They jointly lifted bilateral links by deciding to develop an all-round strategic cooperative partnership.

Wu said China had always cherished its friendship with Laos. China was ready to work with Laos to maintain frequent high-level contacts, deepen strategic trust, expand trade and economic cooperation, strengthen exchanges between the ruling parties, expand personnel training and promote common development.

Wu pointed out that both the NPC and the Laotian parliament had the responsibility of enhancing the development of socialist democracy and legal systems. He expressed the hope that both sides should exchange experiences in governing and developing legal systems so as to make even greater contributions to the growth of bilateral links.

Thongsing said China adhered to the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and to the route of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The great achievements that China had made in modernization had reinforced the confidence and determination of Laos to stick to the socialist route.

He said Laos placed great importance on developing relations with China. It was ready to strengthen bilateral exchanges and cooperation and to jointly address challenges.

Thongsing hailed the Shanghai 2010 World Expo as the “most successful” in history. “I was honored to attend the celebrations of China’s National Pavilion Day,” he said.

Recalling Thongsing’s China visit in 2008, Wu said: “I still have fresh memories of your last visit. It was a boost to our relations.”

China and the Laos had made good progress in bilateral relations in recent years, with parliamentary exchanges serving as an important channel to boost understanding and cooperation. ■

State leaders think highly of Shanghai Expo



On September 28, Vice President Xi Jinping and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev attend the celebrations for the Russia National Pavilion Day and visit the Russian National Pavilion at Shanghai World Expo. *Liu Weibing*

Chinese President Hu Jintao and other top leaders toured the World Expo site during the May Day holiday and reminded Shanghai organizers to ensure safety and quality services throughout the six-month event.

“We should ensure safety and offer the best possible services so as to make the Shanghai World Expo a truly successful, spectacular and unforgettable event,” Hu told officials with the organizing committee.

With concern over the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of

Yushu, stricken by a 7.1-magnitude earthquake three weeks ago, Hu visited the Qinghai provincial booth at the Joint Pavilion of Chinese Provinces, Autonomous Regions and Municipalities, and told Qinghai officials to work for the well-being of quake victims and to preserve the vulnerable local ecology in rebuilding work.

Other top leaders, including Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, He Guoqiang and Zhou Yongkang, also visited the Expo site on separate occasions.

2010年上海世博会高峰论坛
2010 SHANGHAI CHINA SUMMIT FORUM

科技进步与创新城市 Science & Technology Progress and Creative Cities

2010年上海世博会组委会
Organizing Committee of Expo 2010 Shanghai China

联合国
United Nations

国际展览局
Bureau International des Expositions



On October 31, participants attend the parallel forum of Shanghai World Expo Summit held in Shanghai. Pei Xin

They visited the China Pavilion and venues of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, as well as the national pavilions of the United States, Russia, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Mexico and the joint African Pavilion.

They also toured the United Nations Pavilion, a number of theme pavilions and the Urban Best Practice Area, a highlight of the Shanghai Expo that carries the theme of “Better city, better life”.

Malta President George Abela missed the spectacular opening ceremony of the World Expo in Shanghai because of a leg injury, but he felt something that he said he would remember forever during the special Chinese tour.

On the morning of April 30, 12 hours before the opening ceremony of the World Expo, Abela’s leg was hurt in an accident. The head of the Mediterranean state was rushed to the city’s best Ruijin Hospital.

“I will not meet with President Hu Jintao on a wheelchair,” said Malta President George Abela lying on a hospital bed in Shanghai, striving to stand up, but failed.

Absent from the opening session held beside the Huangpu River that evening, Abela, who was supposed to be there, watched in his ward the live TV show of those magnificent dancing, singing and splendid fireworks.

“I’m not there, but I can feel as the Chinese do,” Abela was quoted by a Chinese diplomat as saying.

President Hu, upon his knowledge of the accident, immediately instructed senior officials of the Chinese Foreign Ministry

to visit Abela in hospital.

On May 1, Hu met with six foreign leaders who came to the Chinese economic hub for the first World Expo in a developing country. He repeatedly asked about Abela’s situation during the short breaks.

Finishing all the meetings, Hu rushed to Abela’s ward, and the two presidents’ hands held tight.

“I know that today you are very busy and your coming impressed me very much,” Abela said, noting such a meeting indicated the friendship and mutual respect between China and Malta.

“I was sorry to hear you got hurt yesterday,” Hu told Abela, asking his counterpart to be relieved and pledged the best medicare.

“You sent a letter of condolence to us after the earthquake in Yushu of Qinghai Province, and you came here for the Expo after such a long journey.

Now I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you,” Hu said.

As the Malta delegation failed to find a charter plane to take home their president, Hu decided to send a special plane for the task.

“I will remember forever the friendship with Chinese, as well as President Hu and his wife,” Abela told senior officials of the Chinese Foreign Ministry and the Shanghai government at the Hongqiao Airport before leaving.

Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari and his delegation visited pavilions including Pakistan Pavilion and China Pavilion at the Expo site.

He and his delegation first visited the virtual waterfall and water screen projection movie on the first floor of Pakistan Pavilion. The delegation then visited the Sino-Pakistan Cultural Exchange Area to view the photos of meetings between Sino-Pakistani leaders and a model of a mango that was given to Chairman Mao Zedong by the then Pakistani Foreign Minister. They also visited the shopping area of the Pakistan Pavilion.

The Pakistan Pavilion design is inspired by the Lahore Fort, which dates back to the 16th century and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visitors can read e-books about Pakistani culture and urban development as well as watch videos on a water screen to learn more about the country’s ancient civilization and religion.

Visitors can also experience life in a Pakistan city in the dome cinema at the pavilion.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on May 1 celebrated here the opening of US Pavilion in 2010 Shanghai World Expo, which kicked off with a grand opening ceremony earlier in the day.

Clinton said the Pavilion promotes a “people to people connection” between the United States and China, which is “the base of a long-lasting relationship.”

Clinton thanked corporate partners for their participation, saying the pavilion is not only a partnership between China and the United States, but also a partnership between the US government and the country’s corporations.

US law forbids using federal money to participate in World Expo. In order to have a presence in the Expo, Clinton committed her “personal prestige” and helped to raise funds for the Pavilion, according to Jose Villarreal, commissioner general of the US exhibition.

In all, about 50 corporations became sponsors of the US Pavilion. Deloitte’s CEO of Federal Government Services Robin Lineberger said becoming a sponsor can help raise the company’s profile.

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has said that Shanghai World Expo 2010 will be the important event in the world.

“Shanghai World Expo will be the most important event in China as well as in the world in 2010 and it is of key significance for Chile to participate in the expo,” Bachelet told Xinhua recently.

“Chile has decided to participate in the expo and design its own pavilion because we want to convey a clear message to the Chinese government and the Chinese people that Chile is a reliable and capable partner of China,” she said.

Chile will continue to support China in promoting its economic development and boosting its relations with Latin American countries as the two countries share the common aspiration to promote the harmonious and sustainable development of their economies and improve the living standards of their peoples, the president added.

The president regarded Chile’s participation in the Shanghai Expo as a new opportunity for boosting bilateral economic and trade ties.

She also said the event would strengthen Chile’s status as a platform for Chinese investment to enter Latin America. The Chilean government decided to actively participate in the event shortly after it received the invitation, she said.

The Chilean Pavilion at the Expo, designed by a Chilean company and constructed by a Chinese one, will shorten the gap between the two peoples and facilitate the Chinese people’s better understanding of Chile, its product and its people’s view on the world and future, said Bachelet.

The president said the friendship between the two countries can be traced back to long time ago, noting that Chile expected

its best performance at the Shanghai Expo.

Canada was one of the first countries that established diplomatic ties with China, and the relationship between the two countries is significant, Michaelle Jean, Governor-General of Canada, said on July 1 ceremony in the Expo Center.

Canada attaches great importance to the cooperation and exchange between the two countries and the Expo 2010 provides the best platform to explore the issue of how to create a better city with the aim of making better life, she said. The pavilion is themed “The Living City: Inclusive, Sustainable, Creative.”

The C-shaped structure is the hub of events and activities aimed to create a brand-new impression of Canada as a vibrant and trendy place, much more than a magnificent country with vast tracts of snow and forest.

A highlight of the pavilion is a virtual waterfall that changes scenes of Canada when it is touched. It also shows scenes of cities of the future, as imagined by Canadian children.

The copper-rich landlocked Zambia celebrated its National Pavilion Day on October 24 with a traditional dance performance. Zambian Vice President George Kunda said during the ceremony that today was Zambia’s National Day and 46th anniversary of its independence.

Zambia and China have a long tradition of friendship and Expo 2010 has given Zambia a very good opportunity to learn urbanization development experiences from China and other countries, Kunda said. Zambia Pavilion showcased the African country’s challenges from and solutions to urbanization development.

Artists from Zambia in colorful clothing performed dance. The pavilion theme is “Enhancing the Quality of Urban Life.” It features spectacular scenery and wildlife, native cultures, challenges of urbanization and some innovative African solutions.

Exhibitions cover history, culture, economy, tourism, urban development, sustainable living and environmental conservation.

The Philippines celebrated its National Pavilion Day at the Shanghai World Expo on June 9. Outgoing Filipino President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo attended the celebration.

She hailed China for once again capturing the world’s attention with “grandest of all Expos” in Shanghai, adding that the Shanghai Expo is “another milestone in China’s history as a nation.”

With the theme “Performing Cities,” the Philippines Pavilion was designed to illustrate the fact there are many emerging performing cities in the Philippines that create sustainable economic growth like music: they emphasize harmony with balance, coordination and good vibrations, Arroyo said.

The pavilion features daily live performances, including jazz and classical duets, and offers free ten-minute traditional Filipino massages. (NPC-Xinhua) ■



On October 31, the Shanghai World Expo Summit meeting is held in Shanghai. Mr. Loscertales, secretary-general of BIE delivers a speech at the opening ceremony. Pang Xinglei

Vicente Loscertales's speech at Summit Forum

31/10/2010

Your Excellency Premier Wen Jiabao,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the last 184 days we have worked hand in hand for a World Expo that has united us around a major goal: to create a grand international gathering of nations and cultures with the goal of educating citizens and promoting progress for "Better City and Better Life" for today and tomorrow.

Shanghai 2010 has inspired a mindset of cooperation, solidarity and openness which are essential to tackle the major chal-

lenges facing humanity. For visitors and participants alike, this Expo has offered unmatched opportunities to experience cultural differences, to understand ongoing global efforts and to learn about different paths for future progress.

Today's Summit Forum is the tip of the iceberg: it reflects the thematic wisdom of Shanghai 2010; and it is the product of a cooperation effort between participants, governments and inter-

national organizations that is unprecedented in Expo history.

In this sense, Shanghai 2010 has truly materialized the vision for the World Expos of the 21st Century.

In a world where the channels by which we interact and learn about one another are completely transformed and in a world where actions have global impact, Expos are called to fulfill a new role, which is potentially more powerful than the one in the past.

Today, to be effective platforms for education and progress, Expos must inspire and connect the actions of governments and civil society in their common effort to develop and implement sustainable solutions to the universal challenges we all face.

Expos build bridges that connect different spheres of society. As such, they help promote ideas and initiatives with new publics, they foster the development of new forms of cooperation and, last but not least, they introduce a degree accountability for the actions of governmental institutions and civil society alike, as we are all called to contribute solutions to our common problems.

This is why more recent Expos have elected the theme as their central core and organizing principle.

Since the year 2000, there is a strong connexion between the selection of Expo themes and the main agendas established by the United Nations, through different programmes and agreements such as Agenda 21 from the 1992 Rio Conference and the Millennium Development Goals.

These have inspired Hannover 2000, Humankind, Nature and Technology: A New World Arising, Aichi 2005 Nature's Wisdom, Zaragoza 2008 Water and Sustainable Development and Shanghai 2010 Better City, Better Life.

The future Expo of Yeosu 2012 focussed on the environmental protection of oceans and coasts makes reference to the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development. Milan 2015, with its theme Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life, will help promote the Millennium Development Goals.

As you can see, Expos are becoming key assets for governments and international organizations in their effort to communicate to the public the major issues at the top of their global agendas. They are new platforms for multilateral public diplomacy that help fill the existing awareness and knowledge gaps amongst citizens.

As Shanghai 2010 has proven, in the 21st century, Expos are engines of change that strongly support the top-down policy efforts of governments and international organizations.

They translate complex and high-level concept into a visual language that is easily accessible to people from all walks of life. They show change by implementing it directly in both material and intangible ways through architecture, urban planning, services, culture and education.

The efforts of Shanghai 2010 to reach a true "universal" status, however, do not end here.

Recognizing that cities hold the keys to implement the solutions for building quality environments for urban life, it has invited them to be part of the Expo to exchange practices and to enhance the connection and the involvement of citizens.

Shanghai 2010 has created an educational experience that is much greater than the sum of its parts by engaging cities in organizing the physical presentations in the Urban Best Practices area and by involving directly major international organizations in developing the framework for content.

Shanghai 2010 has fostered innovation and cooperation by making the Expo a place where we have been learning from each other in a spirit of cooperation, and, where we have been learning with each other, in a spirit of innovation.

This Expo has given us a common laboratory for urban future where we have been allowed to exchange, discuss and experiment in a non-confrontational, constructive, practical and truly universal way.

The end of an Expo carries with it a certain degree of sadness. Parting from companions after sharing a major endeavour is never easy. However, the cooperation initiatives that have been launched within this Expo show that only the event is over, our relationships will continue.

I wish to express a particular appreciation to the United Nations for how the different organizations, agencies and programs have actively and enthusiastically contributed their expertise and know-how to support, to develop and to promote the theme of Shanghai 2010.

Through this Expo, the BIE and the UN have worked together hand in hand for the first time. It has been a successful experience that has highlighted important synergies that can only strengthen the educational impact of future Expos amongst citizens as well as local and global leaders alike.

Finally, I wish to congratulate China and Shanghai, our generous host and highly capable organizers, for their commitment and their ambition to support the BIE in advancing the role of Expos in this new century.

They have led the way showing that Expos are at the service of the ideals of our global society and function as powerful instruments that engage the world's citizens to contribute to the efforts of our international community.

In this sense, Shanghai 2010 has established even stronger foundations on which to expand Expos in the 21st Century: Shanghai has successfully demonstrated that Expo can be a core venue where citizens and global institutions come together to actively and constructively contribute to the solution of humanity's challenges through peace, creativity and solidarity.

Thank you. ■

Bridging the gap for closer cooperation and better development

Chinese top legislator Wu Bangguo's visit to three European countries and attendance to the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments

Li Zhengyu, Li Shijia and Ma Jian

Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), visited France, Serbia and Switzerland in Europe from July 7 to 20. He also attended the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments in Geneva during his stay in Switzerland.

The top legislator's diplomatic activity is of great significance. It has contributed to promoting China's relations with the three nations and to enhancing the parliamentary exchanges between China and foreign countries to secure a growing role for China in the global arena when the world has been undergoing profound and sophisticated political changes and people around the world confront a growing number of global crises.

Promoting closer bilateral ties

The Sino-French relationship has played a leading role in relations between China and Western countries for its pioneering nature and strategic significance since France established diplomatic relations with the New China in 1964.

Right after arriving in Paris in the late afternoon on July 7, Wu held extensive meetings with French officials and parliamentarians, including President



Nicolas Sarkozy, Speaker of the French National Assembly Bernard Accoyer and Prime Minister Francois Fillon. Both sides reached consensus on a wide range of issues concerning the global situation, bilateral ties and future cooperation. The two sides agreed that there is a growing space for bilateral cooperation as the Sino-French strategic ties have become increasingly significant. The two nations pledged to preserve the pioneering nature and strategic significance of the bilateral relationship and maintain a drive to promote their comprehensive strategic partnership based on respect for each other's core interests and major concerns for enhanced

coordination in international affairs.

Serbia thought highly of Wu's visit, the first tour by a Chinese top official to the country since its founding. The speaker of the Serbian parliament, along with six deputy speakers, greeted Wu at the airport. Serbian government officials and parliamentarians, including the president, speaker of the parliament, the prime minister and all members of Serbian cabinet accompanied to the ceremony of laying the cornerstone of a bridge in Belgrade that will span the Danube River, a project to be built by Chinese firms.

Wu said that China regarded Serbia as a good friend, partner and brother. He said that he hoped the

Wu Bangguo, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, attends the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments in Geneva on July 19. He had a group photo taken with the parliament speakers attending the meeting.

Zhang Duo



The top legislator spent a lot of time elaborating on the potential for international economic cooperation during every stop of his visit.



Wu Bangguo, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee attends the ground breaking ceremony of Zemun Belgrade - Boer Cha bridge across the Danube in Belgrade on July 14. He also delivers a speech at the ceremony. *Ju Peng*

two countries could consolidate their long friendship, strengthen political trust and boost mutually beneficial cooperation to enrich the bilateral ties. Wu's passionate remarks resonated with the Serbian leaders.

Switzerland was among the first Western countries that established diplomatic ties with China. People in the two countries always have a friendly feeling towards each other. Wu stressed during his meeting with Swiss leaders that it is increasingly important to enhance bilateral ties between China and Switzerland, which shared broad common interests though the two countries are different in domestic situation and cultures. Wu said China and Switzerland should take advantage of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Sino-Swiss diplomatic relations to deepen political trust, expand economic cooperation and humanitarian exchanges.

Trade and economic cooperation at a higher level

The top legislator spent a lot of time elaborating on the potential for international economic cooperation during every stop of his visit, putting forward feasible proposals with insight. China is working hard to improve its economic structure and to upgrade its industries while sustains a stable and rapid growth, offering great business opportunities and momentum for the recovery of the world economy, Wu said.

France is China's 4th largest trading partner within the EU while China is France's biggest trading partner in Asia. Chinese and French economies were highly complementary to each other, indicating great potential for more bilateral cooperation. It was a major target of Wu's visit to boost economic cooperation between the two nations. Wu called for closer and more sustainable cooperation during his keynote speech when he was invited to address a forum concerning the Sino-French economic and trade partnership. He also visited a number of projects, enterprises and institutes that highlight either Sino-French cooperation or France's technology capacity.

Wu stressed that the ongoing global economic crisis did not changed the fact that the two economies remain complimentary to each other. In addition, both countries launched economic stimulus plans and initiatives to improve the economic structure, which created new opportunities for further bilateral cooperation. Wu proposed to build a new close, long-term and sustainable Sino-French economic partner-

ship with joint efforts concerning three aspects. The first is to deepen cooperation on big projects that will sever as industry hubs. The second is to explore new cooperation and boost cooperation in such areas as new energy, new materials research, energy-saving and environmental conservation and low-carbon technologies. And the third is to improve the environment for investment and trade by eradicating all forms of trade protectionism.

Wu's elaboration drew a positive response from French authorities and business leaders, who agreed that the two countries should do more to enhance the economic ties for broader cooperation while opposing trade protectionism. They promised to enhance cooperation in fields like environmental protection, agriculture and finance with the aim to adjust economic structure and upgrade industries.

China and Serbia maintain friendly political ties, however the bilateral economic cooperation is not satisfactory. Wu said during his visit to Serbia that an infrastructure construction boom is expected in Serbia's economic recovery, which will demand great maneuver for industry upgrade. Meanwhile China has experiences in this aspect. Wu said that he hoped the two sides could strengthen cooperation in infrastructure construction as well as upgrading and restructuring enterprises to substantially improve the bilateral economic ties.

The Serbian leaders said the door remains open for the investment of Chinese enterprises, and the country is ready to create a better environment for cooperation between the two countries.

Switzerland is China's main trade partner in Europe and a major source of foreign investment and technology. Wu said during his visit to Switzerland that the two sides needed to explore schemes that will help Switzerland to exploit the huge market potential in China with its advanced technology while promoting cooperation in ecological protection, environment management, energy-saving and emission reduction, low-carbon technology and green economy.

Swiss leaders said that Switzerland will work with China to advance the two-way cooperation.

Parliamentary exchange plays significant functions

Parliamentary exchanges make an important part of international relations. Parliamentary exchanges



The 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments kicks off at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on July 19. *Yu Yang*

The top Chinese legislator put forward tailored proposals to strengthen parliamentary exchanges.

are playing an increasingly significant role in enhancing political trust, deepening friendship and promoting pragmatic cooperation among countries as they seek to develop their ties. In recent years, the NPC has set up regular communication mechanisms with parliaments of a number of countries, securing more effective communications and cooperation with them.

During Wu's visit to the three countries, the top Chinese legislator put forward tailored proposals to strengthen parliamentary exchanges. In France, Wu and Speaker of the French National Assembly Bernard Accoyer jointly declared the opening of the first meeting of Sino-French Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, which marks the launching of the regular communications mechanism. Wu said it signaled a new stage in Sino-French parliamentary exchanges. He called on the two sides to seize this opportunity to boost multilevel communications, injecting new vigor in the development of bilateral ties.

In Belgrade, Wu urged the two sides to conduct further exchanges on governance, legislation among other subjects, and maintain closer coordination in international and regional parliamentary organizations.

In Switzerland, Wu said China and Switzerland should further enhance the exchanges between special committees, friendly groups and executive agencies of their respective parliaments to make inter-parliamentary cooperation a constructive drive for better bilateral ties.

Leaders of the three countries' parliaments expressed their support to Wu's proposals, and pledged more efforts to improve the ties between the NPC and their own legislatures, working for better bilateral relations.

China still a developing country

The international community applauds China's rapid growth in recent years, which is highlighted by a string of events, including the nation's remarkable capacity to cope with the magnitude-8.0 quake that shook the country's Sichuan Province and the nota-

China remains and will continue to be in the primary stage of socialism for a long time and it will remain the largest developing country in the world.

ble progress in post-earthquake construction and the great success of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. What's more, China takes the lead in economy recovery in the global financial crisis. Therefore, the question that whether China is still a developing country may perplex some foreigners.

The top legislator gave a convincing answer to the question and noted that China is still a developing country when he addressed the forum concerning Sino-French economic cooperation during his visit to France.

Wu elaborated on China's situation with abundant figures, contributing the nation's remarkable achievements in recent years to its political system that enables the nation to concentrate its resources to get major jobs done, the fortune it has amassed over the past 30 years since the reform and opening-up and Chinese people's spirit to maintain self-reliant.

China remains and will continue to be in the primary stage of socialism for a long time and it will remain the largest developing country in the world. The real situation in China is the reason we drew such a conclusion.

Firstly, though China has registered remarkable economic growth, various structural problems and a growth model heavily reliant on labor and resources still plague the economy. Secondly, striking divides remain between the urban and rural areas, among different regions, and between economic growth and social development. Additionally, while Chinese people in general lead a moderately well-off life, there are still a sizable number of people living under the poverty line or who are paid poorly.

Wu stressed that it is the grand vision and abiding goal of generations of Chinese people to realize modernization. The Chinese people, once plagued by poverty and hunger, long all the more for a life of prosperity and peace, which made development a common pursuit of the Chinese people. China has given top priority to development ever since it started reform and opening-up. This has resulted in higher and higher living standards of the people and rendered the belief that development is of overwhelming importance popular and unchangeable. The Chinese nation is a peace-loving nation. Having suffered from numerous atrocities and wars in modern history, we know all too well the value of peace. And we are keener in the understanding that to uphold world peace is our international obligation and it serves our development need at home.

People from all walks of life in France including French government officials, entrepreneurs and local media all echoed Wu's elaboration. They said that Wu elaborated on not only the bright prospect Chinese people strive for, but the challenges and problems China may face on the way ahead, which helped the international community gain a better understanding of China's real situation, its commitment to the Scientific Outlook on Development as well as the world peace.

Greater maneuver appealed to meet MDGs

The 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments was convened 10 years after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted. The top

Chinese legislator took part in the 2nd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments held at the UN Headquarters in New York City in 2005. He called for common development based on mutual respect and trust, which shaped the trend for multilateral cooperation in the following years after the conference. It was the second time for Wu to participate in the World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments as the chairman of the NPC Standing Committee.

Wu was busy with a tight schedule during his two-day stay in Geneva for the conference, participating in more than 20 activities.

Wu delivered an inaugural speech on the obligation of the international community to meet the MDGs, before conducting the morning session of the meeting as the deputy chairman of the conference.

Wu met UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as well as Theo-Ben Gurirab, president of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia, IPU Secretary-General Anders Johnsson, World Health Organization Director-General Margaret Chan Fung Fu-chun and World Economic Forum Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab. They discussed speeding up efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals and supporting world economic recovery and a larger role for the United Nations.

Wu also met with parliamentary speakers of France, South Africa, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Kazakhstan. He joined parliamentary speakers of Pakistan, South Korea, Japan, India, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malawi for a breakfast meeting to discuss inter-parliamentary exchanges and cooperation, regular exchanges and bilateral ties.

Wu elaborated on China's policy on meeting the MDGs and its efforts concerning the issue, showing China's strong stand on advocating the goals. Wu said that China, the world's largest developing country, has given top priority to the pursuit of peace and development. The nation has stick to a string of State policy including promoting gender equality, resource conservation and environmental protection, indicating that China has taken concrete actions to push forward the implementation of the MDGs.

Wu stressed that the international community has to honor its commitment to the goals, which is vital to safeguard people's dignity, equality and fairness. It is an issue on top of the agenda while the world strives for common development. However, it became a



Wu Bangguo, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee of NPC, visits EuroHelicopter in Marseille on July 13 during his friendship visit to France. Ju Peng

greater challenge to achieve the goals due to the dire impact of the global financial crisis, thus more international efforts were demanded. He put forward three proposals regarding the issue. Firstly, maintain confidence, which is the premise to realize the MDGs. Second, strengthen cooperation, which is an effective way to achieve these goals. Thirdly, safeguard world peace, which is the guarantee to realize the MDGs.

Wu's speech won praise of parliamentary speakers attending the conference, especially those from developing or least developed countries. Listeners agreed that China's stand on the issue embodied the world's common interests and its interests in the long run as well. It also safeguarded the rights to development of developing countries, the least developed countries in particular. They said that China played a positive role in ensuring the conference's success.

The top Chinese legislator Wu Bangguo's European tour was fruitful. The rolling hills of the Alps marked his promotion tour for win-win international cooperation. The meandering Danube River resonated with his call for friendship. And the rippling Geneva Lake set off his blueprint for world peace and development. The top legislator made a significant success of the diplomatic activity with high efficiency and pragmatic manners. ■

Accomplishing millennium development goals an obligatory responsibility of international community

Written speech by NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo at the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments, July 19, 2010

Mr. President, dear colleagues:

This year marks the 10th anniversary that the United Nations set up the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We meet here at the Third World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments to review the follow-up actions, discuss the major roles of the parliaments under the new situation and seek mutual development and cooperation. It is of significance in building a peaceful and harmonious world.

Ten years ago, at the threshold of the new millennium, leaders of all nations gathered at the UN headquarters in New York City and proposed the farsighted MDGs, setting up the road map and timetable for international development and cooperation. Over the past decade, the world has made some achievement in fulfilling the MDGs, but the progress remains slow and imbalanced in different areas. Developing countries, especially the most underdeveloped countries, are in escalated economic difficulties; the gap between the North and the South, the rich and the poor, enlarged. The implementation of the MDGs becomes more crucial due to the impact of the global financial crisis during the past two years. Here I wish to make a few points on this issue for your consideration.

First, strengthen confidence. Confidence is the premise of realizing the MDGs. The MDGs, which include goals in 8 aspects to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, to achieve universal primary education, to promote gender equality and empower women, to reduce child mortality, to improve maternal health, to combat diseases, to ensure environmental sustainability and to develop a global partnership for development, embody the basic demand of people and reflect the fundamental human rights. To fulfill the MDGs is a solemn pledge of the international community, an important measure to uphold dignity, equality and fairness of mankind, and the most urgent and important issue that needs to be addressed. The global financial crisis has an impact that can not be neglected on the MDGs, but the world should be aware that the implementation of MDGs is beneficial to the recovery of world economy and



Wu Bangguo, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, attends the opening ceremony of the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments and delivers a speech in Geneva on July 19. Ju Peng

balanced increase. Getting through the impact of international financial crisis as soon as possible will facilitate the realization of MDGs. Therefore, MDGs and dealing with the crisis are not contradictory. On the contrary, it will be more important for the international community to speed up the MDGs' implementation process while there still exists in-depth impact of the financial crisis and uncertainty of the world economy's systematic and structural risks. We can not slow down or even retreat from the MDGs, but should consolidate the confidence and determination.

Second, intensify cooperation. Cooperation is an effective way to achieve MDGs. The establishment of MDGs was planned to promote the growth of the developing countries. But in a world that economic globalization is gaining momentum and countries are becoming more and more interdependent, the international community would achieve common interest only if all nations shared responsibilities and reciprocity. It should be noticed, without the

development and equal participation of developing countries, there cannot be common prosperity in the world, nor a more just and equitable international economic order. The world should hear the call from the developing and the most underdeveloped nations, increase input into the development problems, and give more say and representation to the developing nations in the international financial system so as to push forward a balanced and prosperous world economy. Developed nations should honor their own commitments on assistance, open market and decrease or exempt debts, and help developing nations improve their development capability. International financial organizations like World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund should give priorities to help developing nations and especially the most underdeveloped nations. On the other hand, the developing nations ought to combine their domestic situations with the world advanced civilization to improve their economy and eradicate poverty, so as to expand trade cooperation, upgrade the South-South cooperation as an effort to realize the MDGs.

Third, safeguard world peace. Peace is the fundamental guarantee to realize the MDGs. The development history of human society has proved time and again that peace and stability deliver happiness while war and turbulence bring disaster. Without a peaceful and stable environment, development can not be achieved; nor can ensure the enduring peace and stability of the country as well as the well-being and happiness of the people. International community shares the common responsibility to cherish and safeguard a peaceful development environment. All nations should observe the principles and purposes of the UN Charter, and adhere to the new security concept of mutual trust and benefit, equality and coordination, properly handle dispute and regional issues by peaceful means. We should oppose terrorism, separatism and extremism in all manifestations. We should respect the diversity of human civilizations, respect the State sovereignty and territorial integrity, respect the path of development selected by each nation in the light of its own national conditions, and object to any attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations. We should promote democracy, harmony, cooperation and common progress in international relations and make international relations more democratic. All sovereign States, large or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are equal members of the international community, and should be respected by the international community. The internal affairs of each country should be settled by its own people, the International matters should be handled through equal consultations among the countries, we oppose the big ones to bully the small and the strong bully the weak, the rich suppress the poor.

Mr. President, dear colleagues:

Listening to the voice of the people, conveying the wishes of the people, and upholding the interests of the people are the noble responsibilities of the parliaments of all nations. We should grasp the pulse of the times and follow the trend of development, to act as the active facilitator of the MDGs and the safe-guarder of world peace. The parliaments should supervise and support their own governments to implement the MDGs, to take peaceful and friendly policy and to properly handle sensitive issues in bilateral and international relations. Communications should be enhanced to build confidence and clear doubt, to push the international community working in a joint effort for peaceful cooperation. The parliaments should utilize their affluent resources in relations, talents and information to help friendly communications between governments, political parties, local authorities and people; to build bridges for economic and trade cooperation, to add building blocks for cultural exchanges, to develop international relations and make the relations more democratic.

We are happy to notice that, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), as a long history, large-scale and the most representative international inter-parliament organization, has set up an important arena for multilateral inter-parliamentary cooperation, and is playing more and more important role in dealing with international affairs. For quite a long time, IPU has kept its substantive interaction and coordination with the UN. It has done a lot of fruitful work in safeguarding world

peace, promoting democratic international relations, accelerating the economic growth and upholding human rights and the rights of women and children. These work received positive response from the international community. What's more, IPU has established and keeps perfecting the Speakers of Parliament mechanism, providing an important platform for the parliaments to discuss major international issues, expressing the voice of IPU in the form of declaration, and playing an indispensable role in implementing the MDGs.

Mr. President, dear colleagues,

China, as the largest developing nation of the world, has pursued the way of peace and development. It adopted the State policy of gender equality, resource conservation and environmental protection, and has taken actual actions to push forward the implementation of the MDGs. China has successfully solved the food problem of 1.3 billion people, the poverty population in rural regions decreased 240 million, which accounts 75% of the poverty reduction population of all the developing countries. The nine-year-compulsory education has been popularized in China, the illiteracy among the young and middle-aged people is eliminated. Numbers of students in university increased from 860,000 in 1977 to 22.9 million in 2009, the life expectancy at birth rises from 35 before 1949 to today's 73.

China also offers assistance to other developing nations within its capacity. China advocated building up cooperation forums with Africa, the Arabian nations, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific and Caribbean islands nations. The Asian Development Bank Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund of China and the China International Poverty Reduction Center were established. China relieved 380 debts in 50 poor nations and gradually offered zero-tariff treatment to 95 % commodities of the most underdeveloped countries in Africa which have diplomatic ties with China. China has provided more than 2,100 complete foreign aid projects to developing countries, including 150 schools, 61 hospitals, more than 200 agricultural projects and the training of 120,000 people. China does not only solve its own problems through development, but also brings opportunities for the whole world. Since joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, China imported goods worth of \$687 billion every year, created 14 million jobs for relevant countries and regions. Facing the negative impact of the world financial turmoil in 2008, China gives top priority to maintaining steady and relatively fast economic growth, became the first to achieve economic growth, contributed more than 20 percent to the world's economy growth, and more than 9% to the world trade growth.

Mr. President, dear colleagues,

The MDGs condense the common consensus of international community, represent the shared expectations of the people all around the world. China's NPC would like to work with other parliaments of the world to cope with the challenges and realize the MDGs to build up a harmonious world with lasting peace and common prosperity within the framework of IPU. ■

China mulls Criminal Law amendment to temper justice with mercy

Peng Dongyu



A Chinese judge is seen at work in this 2007 file photo. CFP

The current Criminal Law in China stipulates that 68 out of more than 480 crimes can invoke the death penalty, which makes the nation one of the countries with the widest scope of the capital punishment. However, harsh penalties are not part of China's tradition in the aspect of the criminal laws. Instead, the view of being cautious with penalties has dominated China's legal tradition since it had written records.

We are making great efforts to limit and abolish the use of death penalty and we have achieved remarkable progress in the aspect over the past 30 years, which took some Western countries several centuries to make.

The Standing Committee of the 11th National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature, finished the first reading to a draft of the 8th amendment to the Criminal Law during its 16th session in late August. The draft amendment received an overwhelming response from all walks of life. If the draft becomes law, it will be the first ever large-scale revision of China's Criminal Law since 1997.

The 8th amendment draft, as well as the previous ones, is a positive response to the changing situation in China. However, the previous amendments only focused on specifying the definition of certain crimes, while the latest one highlighted structural changes to improve the penal system consisting of the death penalty, life imprisonment and fixed-term sentences, aiming to further implement the policy of tempering justice with mercy with fewer death verdicts.

The Criminal Law, a law of great importance in the legislation system, not only urges all members of the public to obey laws, but prevents the abuse of penalties and safeguards basic human rights of all citizens, including the criminals. The amendment to the Criminal Law is not only closely related to people's everyday life, but also in the line with the expectations of a modern society to have an advanced legal system. The latest amendment draft is a notable progress in the sense of narrowing the scope of the death penalty reasonably and making the penal system more scientific. It is in line with a worldwide trend for lighter penalties and more advanced legal systems to better safeguard human rights. It also embodies a great perception into the changing social situation and a positive response to mainstream public concern over the issue.

Fewer death penalty offences

China currently stipulates that 68

crimes are punishable by the death penalty. However, the draft amendment eliminates capital punishment for 13 economic-related non-violent offences, a drop of 19.1 percent. It is expected to be the first time that the number of crimes subject to the death penalty has been reduced since China enacted its criminal law in 1979.

The 13 crimes no longer to be punishable by possible death include smuggling from the country prohibited cultural relics, gold, silver, and other precious metals, rare animals and their products; falsely issuing exclusive val-

The draft amendment eliminates capital punishment for 13 economic-related non-violent offences, a drop of 19.1 percent.

ue-added tax invoices to defraud export tax refunds or offset taxes; forging or selling forged exclusive value-added tax invoices; teaching methods for committing crimes, and robbing ancient cultural relics or ruins.

China is harsh on crimes that invoke the death penalty, yet it is too light with crimes that carry fixed-terms or life imprisonment, which is a structural flaw that the latest amendment draft is meant to address.

Many lawmakers said that the 13 crimes, which will not be subject to capital punishment if the amendment draft passes, are economic-related non-violent offences for which the death penalty was seldom, if ever, used in recent years. It will not have significant impact

on social stability or public security to drop the capital punishment for these crimes, yet it will help address the structural flaw in the penal system.

NPC deputy Bai Keming said that the new amendment is of great importance and necessity to reduce the numbers of crimes subject to the death penalty. It is more reasonable to adopt regulations and measures that prevent crimes and inspire people to be good citizens while the social development advances. The death penalty is the last resort that could not be abolished for now, but fewer criminals will be executed when we properly reduce the number of crimes subject to capital punishment. Generally speaking, the new amendment is a reasonable move that will boost the creation of a harmonious society.

"I totally agree to the proposal to narrow the scope of the death sentence," NPC deputy Mou Xinsheng said, noting that it is a worldwide judicial trend. China is a developing country with rising social conflict, which resulted in rampant, sometimes severe crimes. "It is unrealistic to abolish capital punishment, but it is absolutely possible to reduce the number of crimes that subject to the penalty."

Besides, China signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1998, which requires stringent limit on the use of the death penalty and demands that only the most heinous crimes be subject to the penalty. China's latest amendment draft exemplifies the world trend.

However, some other lawmakers remained cautious with dropping the death penalty for certain crimes, noting that the situation in China is very sophisticated as it witnesses rapid development and crimes are permeate in the country.

"It is a focal point to reduce the number of crimes subject to the death penalty, which drew nationwide attention. Therefore, the issue demands more prudent and comprehensive consideration.

We must make laws with scientific spirit,” NPC deputy Shi Taifeng said, citing economic frauds as an example.

“A full-fledged administration on economic-related activities in China is not yet in place. And economic scams may involve many people and threatens their benefits, which means such crimes may seriously hurt the social stability, thus there should be no hasty decision to drop the death penalty for these crimes,” Shi said. “We could uphold capital punishment for certain crimes but put strict limit on the use of it.”

As a matter of fact, it has always been an important issue to limit the use of the death penalty in the nation. Relevant authorities have introduced the policy of tempering justice with mercy several years ago. And the Supreme People’s Court has resumed the review and approval of all death penalty decisions since January 1, 2007 after the NPC Standing Committee revised relevant laws.

“The amendments send a signal to the judicial system that narrowing the scope of the death penalty could better protect people’s human rights, boost the judicial system advancement and educate the Chinese society to show more respect for life,” said Zhao Bingzhi, secretary-general of the Beijing-based Criminal Law Research Institute of China Law Science Society.

Extending fixed-term imprisonment

Reducing the number of crimes subject to the death penalty does not equal to a connivance at offences.

Some people worried that it will be unfair and may hurt the social justice if some criminals are exempt from the death penalty due to the amendment instead they are put behind the bars with a fixed-term imprisonment sentence that is not long enough.

In response to the concerns, the amendment draft provides stricter rules for commuting the death penalty with a reprieve and extends the minimum fixed-term imprisonment for those who committed multiple crimes.

The current Criminal Law stipulates that a death penalty with a reprieve will be commuted to life imprisonment when the two-year reprieve ended if the offender does not commit new offences during the reprieve period. The capital punishment could be reduced to a fixed-term imprisonment of 15-20 years if the offender made outstanding contributions to the nation during the reprieve period.

Reducing the number of crimes subject to the death penalty does not equal to a connivance at offences.

The latest amendment draft proposes that the death penalty could only be commuted to a 20-year imprisonment. Meanwhile, it stipulates that repeated criminals or criminals who get the death penalty for crimes including murder, rape, robbery, abduction, arson, explosion, poisoning or organized crimes are not entitled to further remissions once the capital punishment is commuted to a life-imprisonment or a 20-year imprisonment.

The draft also offered easier parole for criminals that fall into the category stated in the article 81-2 of the current Criminal Law to better educate and reform them.

In addition, the draft raises the minimum fixed-term imprisonment for criminals who commit multiple-offences with

the total imprisonment term amount to more than 35 years. The current limit of fixed-term imprisonment is 20 years, while the latest amendment draft raises the limit to 25 years.

The proposed changes mentioned above make significant improvement in fixing the current Criminal Law’s structural flaws.

“Fixed-term imprisonment sentences stipulated in the current Criminal Law are not necessarily long enough, which is an issue that concerns the whole legislation system and deserves further consideration when we revise the law in the future,” NPC deputy Li Lianning said, noting that the issue hampers the efforts to reduce the number of crimes subject to the death penalty and to crack down on crimes.

“For felonies, a 20-year imprisonment is still not long enough. It should be extended to 25 to 30 years,” Li added.

“The new amendment still fails to offer a fundamental solution to address the issue,” Lawmaker Xu Xianming said, acknowledging that there have been a lot of efforts.

According to some sociological studies, a country’s social security situation is barely related to the number of executions of the death penalty, he noted. China’s social security situation has been improved, instead of worsened, when the Supreme People’s Court resumed the review and approval of all death penalty decisions in 2007 and cut the number of executions sharply. The change backed the conclusion. The problem with the current Criminal Law lies with its penal system, which is consisted of fixed-term imprisonment, life imprisonment and the death penalty. The three categories of sentence are not structured reasonable enough. We could consider raising the fixed-term imprisonments significantly once we narrow the scope of the death penalty. We could lift the limit for fixed-term imprisonment from 20 years to 30 years. Beyond the limit, we could adopt

life imprisonment and then the capital punishment.

Leniency to offenders below 18 years or above 75

The draft amendment also allows for leniency to offenders below 18 years or above 75. Criminals aged below 18 when commit the offence will not be treated as repeat criminals. A convicted criminal below 18, or who has reached the age of 75, can be given a mitigated punishment. The death penalty is not to be applied to people above 75 at the time a crime is committed. A convicted criminal below 18, who receives a fixed-term imprisonment fewer than 5 years, is exempt from the duty to claim his or her criminal record.

Most lawmakers praised the new provisions, saying that they embody the humanitarian feature of China's civilized legislation system and that the new amendment will greatly boost the advancement of a harmonious society. However, the provision that exempts people above 75 at the time a crime is committed from the death penalty divided the lawmakers.

Deputies Yan Yixin, Jiang Xingchang, Bai Keming and Zhao Keming, among some other lawmakers, support the provision.

The provision embodies the policy of tampering justice with mercy and indicates China's legislation advancement, said Hong Hu, vice chairman of the NPC Legislative Committee.

Lawmaker Jiang Xingchang pointed out that the provision could be more lenient, lowering the age-limit that makes a convicted criminal qualified for the exemption to 70. He noted that China's law implementation usually allows leniency to senior offenders and a convicted criminal aged above 70 is rarely executed though the laws have no specific pro-

The death penalty is not to be applied to people above 75 at the time a crime is committed.

vision regarding the issue.

However, some other lawmakers are opposed to the provision.

"I don't think the provision is proper and I personally couldn't accept it," Lawmaker Wang Yunlong said, noting that amendment draft already stipulates that senior criminal can be given a mitigated punishment. "It is enough to have such a general principle."

Zhang Guiping said during the conference that "the provision does not fit China." Zhang worried that some people might take advantage of the provision and hire senior people for criminal purposes because people still maintain a clear mind even at the age of 75. And some people might wait and then commit a crime when they reach 75.

NPC deputy Liu Roufen suggested the nation should be more cautious with mitigated punishment for senior people, warning that the leniency could invoke some dire consequences, for example, some casino runners may hire senior people as substitutes to take legal responsibilities. The provision is intended to be lenient with senior people, but may get them into trouble instead.

Lawmaker He Yicheng from the Macao Special Administrative Region had a similar opinion regarding the provision.

Cai Lifeng, deputy chairman of the Standing Committee of Hunan Provincial People's Congress, said that it is better not to make such a provision

when we take the strong public expectations for national stability and social security. Or at least change the wording of the provision and put it as "usually the death penalty is not to be applied to people above 75 at the time a crime is committed." The change in wording will leave space for exceptions when we handle heinous crimes like murder and explosion to better safeguard the national security.

The latest amendment draft also highlights penalties for some new crimes. The draft lists tougher punishments for crimes by a criminal syndicate. Acts that endanger the public, including drunk driving, street racing, defaulting on payment to employees and human organ trading, have been written into the draft amendment as crimes.

The 8th amendment draft to the Criminal Law is based on the implementation of the law in recent years and in line with the central government's requirement for judicial system reform. The draft involves many issues and required a lot of discussion and opinion solicitation, Li Fei, deputy director of the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee, told a press conference on August 28 by the General Office of the NPC Standing Committee.

"It is common that the NPC Standing Committee made suggestions for revision to the amendment draft during the review," Li said.

The draft amendment is publicized on www.npc.gov.cn, NPC's official website, for public opinion.

In most cases, a draft law will be read two or three times before being voted for adoption.

"The amendment draft will not be submitted for further review and the final approval until we improve it with more thorough discussions," Li Fei said, adding that judicial authority or other relevant government departments as well as the public could make suggestion for revision to the amendment draft. ■

How to ensure China's food security

NPC Standing Committee solicits opinions from nine ministries

By Liang Guodong



China confronts unprecedented challenges in maintaining its food security this year due to natural disasters such as frequent droughts and floods as well as fluctuations in domestic and international grain markets.

When the crunch came, the Standing Committee of the 11th National People's Congress (NPC) heard the State Council's reports on the nation's food security during its 16th session and held joint conferences at the Great Hall of the People, mak-

ing inquire about the issue and putting the work under stringent supervision.

Commissioned by Wu Bangguo, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, Hua Jianmin and Zhou Tienong, both vice-chairmen of the NPC Stand-

ing Committee, hosted the conferences. Uyunqing, vice-chairwoman of the NPC Standing Committee, together with 21 committee members of the top legislature, deliberated the reports and put forward more than 20 questions. While fully recognizing the government's efforts in maintaining food security, the lawmakers were very concerned about the stiff challenges. Their inquiries involved multiple aspects ranging from farmlands, farmers, water resources, to science and technology, financial policy and external conditions that are associated with a robust and sound development of agriculture.

As that, officials from nine ministries, namely the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Land and Resources, the Ministry of Water Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, People's Bank of China, China Banking Regulatory Commission, China Insurance Regulatory Commission and the State Administration of Grain pickly up the inquiries in an honest, positive and harmonious way. The meeting lasted about three hours.

Encouraging farmers to plant crops

Farmers' enthusiasm is directly associated with the prices and the costs of grain. Though the government has canceled agricultural tax, offered farmers subsidies and adopted minimum protection prices in recent years, farmers are still not satisfied with the de facto situation that grain production still brings low profit.

Lawmaker Sun Wensheng expressed his deep worry. He said that the fact that planting trees, vegetables or grass, not to mention investing in real estate, brings fatter profits than planting crops seriously hurt farmers' interest in farming.

Sun's comment was echoed by a number of lawmakers' observation. Lawmaker Yin Chengjie said his field surveys to the country's grain producing strongholds revealed that the profits by growing grain

crops, especially corn, rice and wheat, have been dwindled year on year. As a result, grain producing tends to be marginalized in some areas.

As a result, lawmakers paid great attention to what measures should be taken in implementing the government's incentive policies and encouraging farmers to plant more crops. "What's the government's plan to further enhance the effectiveness of incentive policies? How to ensure these policies are consistent and steady?" NPC deputy Ma Fuhai asked firstly.

Vice Financial Minister Zhang Shaochun noted that it is a difficult task to keep raising farmers' income because China's agricultural sector is still weak.

It is a difficult task to keep raising farmers' income because China's agricultural sector is still weak.

"The government will improve policies concerning subsidies to farmers and agricultural sector, encouraging them to plant more crops," said Zhang. He added that more direct subsidy payments, such as for seed and agricultural machinery purchase, will be given to farmers, especially those in main grain producing areas.

"On the one hand, the government will make sure that farmers could make more profits from growing grains and from raised prices of grains. On the other hand, direct subsidies from the government will help farmers decrease the cost so as to raise their income," he explained.

Many members of the top legislature also noted that local governments should place greater importance on gain production.

"The central government has issued the No.1 documents concerning agriculture for several years in a row. However, we have found that some local governments failed to put rural affairs on top of their agenda," lawmaker Li Qianyuan said. He said that it is mainly because grain growth cannot bring out great revenue to local finance – it is especially true with the main grain-producing areas.

Lawmaker Jin Shuoren echoed Li's opinion, saying that financial difficulties bottlenecked the development of major grain producing counties, making them vulnerable in facing natural disasters, which in turn severely hampers the grain production.

What is the way out? "The central government will improve the existing preferential policies and offer greater support to main grain producing areas based on the local governments' financial situation," Vice Financial Minister Zhang said. He added that there will be more financial transfers from the central government to local governments in grain-producing areas based on their sizes, grain outputs and financial situation, making sure that the areas could catch up with the other parts of the country in aspects concerning improving local farmers' livelihood, the infrastructure and the public services. Zhang said the central government will also offer greater rewards to main grain-producing counties, encourage them to establish networks of grain and edible oil reserves and exempt the local governments from funds set aside to tackle grain production risks.

Most stringent policies to protect farmlands

The lawmakers also paid attention to the implementation of the policies that demand the most stringent protection on farmlands and the most stringent requirement for the use of land.

The top priority to ensure food security

is to protect fertile farmlands, especially paddy fields, lawmaker Yang Bangjie said, citing a Chinese proverb “As long as the green hills last, there’ll always be firewood to burn.”

Yang noted that the country has lost many of its farmlands, paddy fields in particular, in main grain-producing areas to urban constructions, development zones and highways due to the changes in the way they use their land thanks to the rapid economy growth over the recent years.

Wang Yunlong, director of the NPC’s Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, has wrapped a field survey in several provinces and regions. He called for more effective implementation of the stringent policies regarding the protection and the use of farmland. He noted that China’s per capita share of arable land is merely 1.4 mu (0.093 hectares), ranking 126th in the world.

“The government has to protect farmland strictly and maintain the size of grain-producing land, banning illegal uses of farmland,” he said.

The farmland protection situation, which is grim, drew lawmakers’ attention.

“The Ministry of Land Resources said in its reports that China has maintained a balance between the amount of land that is requisitioned and that reclaimed in the past 11 years. Then why does the nation’s farmland keep dwindling?” lawmaker Yang Bangjie asked, calling for measures to ensure a real balance and the protection on farmland, especially fertile farmland.

Wang Shiyuan, vice minister of the Ministry of Land and Resources, asserted that the balance is preserved and said that the farmland shrink is quite reasonable, noting that a lot of farmland was not suitable for farming any longer due to ecological concerns. But he admitted that there are multiple problems concerning land uses including low efficiency and inadequate land reserves.

The vice minister said that the land authority will strictly implement the most stringent land policies. First, the authority will carry out stricter macro control and regulations on land use planning. Second, the authority will promote efficiency in land use. Third, the authority will submit reports about inspections on land use to the NPC and publicize the results for public supervision. Fourth, the authority will explore incentive schemes to promote farmland protection. Fifth, the authority will improve laws and regulations concerning land use and protection, such as the revision of the law on land management.

It is difficult to further raising grain production, which will be impossible without more government investment in the sector with the emphasis on agricultural technology.

Some other lawmakers asked for more accurate statistics about the amount of China’s farmlands.

“It is impossible to skirt around the question of how many farmlands we have now. So what is the accurate figure?” lawmaker Yan Yixin asked right after Wang finished his speech. The lawmaker noted that some local governments’ statistics about the size of the farmland contradicted each other.

“According to Chinese law, the land resources authority conducts routine survey on land use every year based on

statistics we got during the first national land survey in 1996. The latest survey conducted in 2009 showed that China has 1,827 million mu (121.8 million hectares) of farmland,” Wang said, noting that the State Council is preparing for a second national land survey since 2006 and plans to finish the survey within three years. The new round survey will adopt high-tech including satellite remote sensing to ensure accuracy and reliability.

More government investment into agricultural sector

China’s grain output has been increased for six years in a row as of last year. What’s more, the output has reached a record high of over 50 billion kilograms since 2007. One of the most important driving forces behind the steady growth was the increasing input in agricultural sector, which inspired farmers to plant more grain crops. The notable achievements also mean that it is difficult to further raising grain production, which will be impossible without more government investment in the sector with the emphasis on agricultural technology.

Statistics suggest that technology contributes 50 percent to the grain production growth in China. The figure is 70 percent in developed countries while it stands as high as 90 percent in Israel where resources are scarce. The gap between China and developed countries in this aspect alarmed lawmakers.

“The State Council’s reports concerning the nation’s food security decided to improve the network for agricultural technology innovations. Grass-roots institutions for technology promotion make an important part of the innovation system,” lawmaker Lü Wei asked the Vice Agricultural Minister Wei Chao’an to introduce the agricultural technology promotion at county-level.

“Since 2005, the State Council for-

mulated a guideline, the so-called No.30 Document, to push forward the establishment of a network for agricultural technology promotion. The government has done a lot of work concerning the program,” Wei said, adding that the agricultural authority will work out plans to step up facility construction and personnel training with more government investment.

Some other lawmakers also shared their views on the issue.

“The issue to promote agricultural technology is a long-standing problem. There is still a lot of work to do,” said lawmaker Liu Zhenwei, who is in good command of knowledge of rural affairs. He said that agricultural technology promotion in many places is stagnant due to the lack of financial support, citing a survey conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture on grass-root technicians and farmers.

Lawmaker Zou Ping, who is a senior agronomist with Chuxiong Institution of Agricultural Science in Yunnan Province, agreed. She said that many agricultural technology promotion facilities in ethnic minority areas in China’s western region failed to get enough funds due to tight government budget and many specialists quit their jobs because of poor payments.

Some lawmakers called for more government support, such as funds and personnel policies, for the development of these institutions.

Government investment on agricultural infrastructure is equally important, lawmakers said.

“When it comes to raise the comprehensive grain production capacity, it is an important measure to enhance agricultural infrastructure, especially the network of water resources,” said lawmaker Lü Wei. She wanted to know what the agriculture authority has done to improve the water resources network, especially those small-scale ones, which are crucial for individual villages and families.

“China is well served with the net-

work of water conservancy for farmlands thanks to large scale construction over the past decades,” Vice Water Resources Minister Hu Siyi said. But he also admitted that the network needs to be improved, adding that the government will explore better methods to increase farmers’ involvement in operating and maintaining the water resources network.

Guo Fenglian, a farmer-turned-lawmaker, asked the water resources authority about the policy to encourage farmers’ participation in the construction of the small-scale network of water conservancy for farmlands.

In response, Vice Water Resources Minister Jiao Yong said that the government will allocate more funds to the network construction and grant more subsidies to farmers to increase their involvement in the projects. The water resources authority will also enhance the network in key counties and collect funds from different channels and work together to finance the projects. In addition, the water resources authority will step up adapting methods for better regulations on the projects.

Foreign investment in agricultural sector raises concern

Foreign investment have tapped into China’s agricultural sector and related industries in recent years, which put many lawmakers on alert.

“Who control the food supply control the people,” lawmaker Zhu Yongxin said, noting that international investment has sped up the pace of entering China’s agricultural sector, especially the seed supply trade. Zhu cited some agricultural experts as saying that foreign investment’s entry may weaken China’s grip on its agricultural sector. It may also squeeze China’s small- and middle-sized enterprises out of the business, hurt the nation’s competitiveness in the global market. In addition,

it may pose more challenges to China’s macro control and regulation policies.

Lawmaker Hu Yanlin echoed Zhu’s view.

“How do we tackle the risks brought about by international investment in China’s agricultural sector? Do we have an effective mechanism to approve and oversee foreign investment into grain industry ranging from production and storage to processing and marketing? Do we have any plan detailing how much should foreign investment get involved in the sector?” the two lawmakers asked during the conference.

Zhang Xiaoqiang and Peng Sen, both vice ministers of the National Development and Reform Commission, said in response that the flow of overseas investment does pose some hidden perils to agricultural sector though it has brought in some advanced technologies and better management into China. As a countermeasure, China has set up restrictions on foreign capital concerning seed breeding as well as the processing of soybean, rapeseed and other seeds for edible oil. In addition, the government will accelerate the amendment of the Catalogue for the Guidance of Foreign Investment Industries (2007).

“We will stick to the opening-up policy. Meanwhile, we will enhance regulations on overseas investment and macro control and regulations on key industries in the framework of WTO rules for a fair market and sound development,” Peng Sen said. he noted that the government will build a national security supervision mechanism for foreign-funded companies’ merger and acquisition in China as soon as possible. Such a mechanism will also be applied to key agricultural products. Meanwhile, the government will boost the development of domestic agricultural sector and of agro-science and technology, seeking to breed home-made fine seeds, including paddy rice and wheat seeds. ■



The grain output in Heilongjiang Province surpasses 50 billion kilograms by October 28. The province is the largest grain producer in China. Farmer Ren Lixia from Farm 865 held a bunch of rice. Wang Jianwei

Get prepared for scarce with reserves

By Li Xiaojian

“Who controls the energy can control whole continents; who controls the food supply controls the people; who controls money can control the world,” Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State of the US noted back in 1970s when he talked to the media about the importance of food security. The view was well accepted – after all, people can live without playing skittles, but no one can survive without water and food.

The work has faced great challenges

in food security over the past several years due to multiple factors including the climate changes and the growing gap between food supply and demand. Food security is especially important to China, where a large population lives. The strategic issue, which concerns the overall situation, is related to economic development, social stability and the nation’s independence. It has been on top of the agenda of the Chinese government.

The Standing Committee of the 11th

National People’s Congress (NPC) is very concerned about China’s food security and pays great attention to the issue.

Zhang Ping, minister of the National Development and Reform Commission, addressed the top legislature’s concern on August 26 when he was commissioned by the State Council to make a report concerning the nation’s food security at the 16th session of the 11th NPC Standing Committee.

“Both the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council have placed great importance on food security. China has made notable achievements in its agricultural sector, feeding a population of 1.3 billion by sticking to the policy of boosting the grain production and basically preserving self-sufficiency for food,” Zhang said in the report.

Besides, China has made eye-catching progress in grain production and marketing in recent years after the government enhanced macro-control and regulating mechanism and preferential policies for farmers concerning grain production, Zhang added.

Prior to the meeting, the NPC’s Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee had sent a number of panels composed of its 10 chairman and vice-chairmen, as well as 10 members, to 15 provinces, regions and cites between May and July for field surveys to better understand the situation of China’s food security.

The next day after the meeting, the 11th NPC Standing Committee held a themed-inquiry, urging related government departments to strictly implement the central government’s policies concerning food security.

Grain production capacity on steady rise

China’s comprehensive grain production capacity has been on a steady rise over the past several years thanks to mea-

asures to improve agriculture infrastructures, according to the State Council's report.

The nation has been actively promoting the development of large-scale production bases of grain for commodity market and carrying out projects featuring the production of high-quality grain and high-yielding grain, especially in grain production strongholds. The government has implemented the most stringent policies to protect the country's arable land. China also improved the irrigation networks across the countryside to increase farmlands' production capacity, the report said.

The central government has allocated 48.7 billion yuan (\$7.26 billion) for the renovation of a total of 8,150 reservoirs with security hazards since 2004, to better handle possible floods and droughts and safeguard agriculture production. The irrigation networks, fine seeds and agricultural machinery have reached more farmland between 2004 and 2009, resulting in the increase of grain output and the improvement of grain quality.

It was the efforts to improve the agricultural infrastructure that offset the dire impacts of natural disasters. The annual general grain output has hit over 500 billion kilograms for three consecutive years despite the frequent natural disasters such as droughts, low temperatures and floods hit the country this year. The yield of summer crops hit 123.1 billion kilograms (123 million tons) this year, down a little bit from that of last year, but still ranked the third greatest harvest in record.

The natural disasters did hurt the grain production this year, Chen Xiaohua, vice minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, told the top legislature during the inquiry. But the official said that the key to achieve the grain output target lies with the yield of autumn crops, which usually accounts for 70 percent of the annual grain output. "The farming of autumn crops is going well so far. We are confident that we will have a bumper harvest this year."

Meanwhile, the government cancelled agriculture tax and offered multiple subsidies to facilitate grain production and raised the minimum protection prices for government purchases at a steady pace. The government also introduced incentive policies to encourage grain production and allocated more funds to help main grain production areas tackle possible risks caused by price fluctuations. And the government has set aside funds to promote modern agriculture and agricultural projects with competitive advantages. The incentive policies inspired farmers and local governments as well. As a result, the amount of grain producing land reached 1,635 million mu (109 million hectares) in 2009, a 144-million-mu (9.6-million-hectare) increase from that of 2003.

Abundant grain reserves and self-sufficiency for food

Members of the 11th NPC Standing Committee as well as the public were also concerned whether the grain prices in China would be subject to the global grain prices which fluctuate violently and soar greatly this year due to impacts of climate changes, natural disasters and rise of rigid demand.

In response, Zhang Xiaoqiang, vice minister of the National Development and Reform Commission, told the lawmakers that the increasing global grain prices would not produce significant impacts on China's grain prices, noting that the domestic grain market is barely associated with the global market. He added that, except for soybean, China's imported wheat, corn and rice only accounts for less than 1 percent of the domestic production, which means that China is capable of meeting its demand for staple grains on its own. Moreover, China has an abundant grain reserves thanks to harvests over the past six years. The ratio

of grain reserves to total consumption in China is much higher than 18 percent, an internationally recognized threshold indicating food security. The reserves enable China to tackle the fluctuations of global grain prices properly.

In the first half of this year, the average purchase prices for rice, wheat and corn in China witnessed an increase of 12.3 percent from those in the same period of last year, according to statistics. However, the grain prices have tended to be stable since July after the authorities put more reserves into the market and tightened supervision on grain market. Currently the grain supply and demand are fairly balanced. It was expected that the grain prices would not fluctuate significantly in the second half of this year.

China has built a mechanism in which grain prices are set in a free, unified and open market with orderly competition since the nation loosened its grip on grain prices and marketing and started the reform of the grain distribution system in 2004. Meanwhile, the government has established and improved the network of grain and edible oil reserves, said the report.

"The grain reserves network has played an important role in preserving a stable grain market and stable grain prices in China in recent years when the global grain prices fluctuated violently due to frequent natural disasters," said Minister Zhang Ping.

Zhang added that China's grain production has grown over for six years in a row since 2004 thanks to the nation's reasonable policies and measures. The grain output hit 530.8 billion kilograms (530.8 million tons) in 2009, 100.1 billion kilograms (100.1 million tons) more than that of 2003. China has met more than 95 percent of the grain demand on its own.

The steady growth of grain production over the past years insulated the nation from stiff challenges stemmed from the global food crises, global financial crisis and natural catastrophes, including the



Two children play corns at Dongsheng village, Suihua city, Heilongjiang Province. *Xinhua*

disasters caused by prolonged low temperatures, icy rain and heavy snow and the violent earthquakes in Wenchuan, Sichuan Province and Yushu, Qinghai Province. The rising grain production has played an important and fundamental role in preserving a stable and relatively rapid economic growth and a stable and harmonious society.

Challenges remain

Food security, according to the concept accepted by the international community, is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The concept emphasizes not only stable and sufficient supply of food in a long term, but also the food safety and affordability.

There are three major indicators to assess a country's food security situation, as the United Nations Food and Agricul-

ture Organization (FAO) stated: It is at least 95 percent self-sufficient for food. The ratio of its grain reserves to total consumption is no less than 17-18 percent; and its annual per capita share of grain is no fewer than 400 kilograms.

Yin Chengjie, a member of the 11th NPC Standing Committee and vice director of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, noted that China has successfully maintained food security thanks to steady and rapid growth of grain production since the reform and opening-up. The success could be measured in several ways, according to Yin. First, the annual per capita share of grain in China is 398 kilograms, higher than the world's average level. Second, China has been 95 percent sufficient for food for more than 10 years in a row. Third, China's ratio of grain reserves and total consumption reached 40 percent, much higher than the alerting level set by the FAO, which is 17-18 percent. Fourth, the grain prices have remained stable in China. Fifth, China has been improving and enhanc-

ing its network of grain reserves over the years.

Generally speaking, the situation of food security in China is quite favorable, he said. "However, we have to recognize that it is a long-term mission to maintain the country's food security. The government may confront new challenges to address the food issue while it speeds up the urbanization and industrialization. We have to be keenly aware of the possible difficulties and pressures," Yin added.

He noted that the efficiency of China's grain producing is relatively low while the increase of rigid demand for grain is huge. He added that China's limited arable land and fresh water resources have begun to place more significant restrictions on the grain production. And there is an urgent need for improvement on the country's agricultural infrastructures. In addition, some foreign enterprises have entered China's agricultural sector, posing severe challenges towards the nation's food security.

Some other lawmakers of the 11th NPC Standing Committee also submitted proposals at the inquiry held on August 28, expressing concerns on improving the quality of labor, agro-science and technology and the rural financial policies as well proposing methods to tackle the possible risks China may face.

Minister Zhang pointed out in the report that China would strictly implement the Outlines Regarding the State Mid- and Long-Term Grain Security Plan Period (2008-20) to maintain basic food self-sufficiency. The government would boost the comprehensive grain production capacity and improve the grain distribution system with a wide variety of measures, such as more government input, favorable policies and stringent regulations on farmland protection. Meanwhile, the nation will step up establishing a well-functioning food security safeguard system with a sufficient supply and abundant reserves that adapt to the market-based economy and China's actual conditions. ■



A bird's-eye view of Zhouqu, Gansu Province on November 13. November 15 marked the 100th day after the Zhouqu mudslide that engulfed hundreds of people. *CFP*

China vows to reconstruct Zhouqu by end of 2012

LANZHOU (Xinhua) -- China plans to complete the reconstruction of mudslide-devastated Zhouqu County in Northwest China's Gansu Province before the end of 2012. The plan estimates reconstruction costs at 5 billion yuan (about \$750 million).

Houses will be rebuilt and infrastructure will be restored in both urban and rural areas of the county before the end of 2012, the State Council, China's cabinet, said on November 10 on the central government's official Web portal, www.gov.cn.

The central government will mostly finance the reconstruction but donations, bank loans and other resources will also be needed, the plan said.

By early November, workers have finished clearing debris that nearly blocked a river running through Zhouqu County, three months after the disaster caused a

1.8-km long blockage across the river. A massive rain-triggered mudslide slammed the county on August 8, leaving 1,501 dead and 264 missing.

After more than 730,000 cubic meters of debris was removed, the water level of the Bailong River returned to normal, Zhang Fumin, director of the debris-removal work, said on November 5.

Zhang said the work was completed 55 days ahead of schedule and that authorities will now focus on reconstructing the river's embankments.

The Chinese government said in October it will spend 1 billion yuan (\$150.2 million) to prevent geological disasters in the region, after it dispatched a team of 210 experts to identify geological hazards in Zhouqu in September.

More than 800 million yuan will be used in areas with hidden risks of geological disaster. Over 100 million yuan

will be used to establish agencies and buy equipment for precautions of possible disasters, said Shi Huaxiong, head of Gannan's Land and Resources Bureau, on October 21.

A team of 210 experts have been identifying geological hazards in Zhouqu since mid-September. Their work is nearly complete and the experts are working on construction designs to prevent disasters. All prevention work is expected to be completed by 2012, Shi added.

In another development, more than 400 survivors who remain homeless after the mudslide have been moved into homes or school dormitories in the county seat ahead of winter.

Eighty-eight of 129 households of Shachuan Village had moved to low-rent houses in Zhouqu, provided by the government, and the rest would move to dormitories by the end of October, said

Yang Enmao, chief of the county's Civil Affairs Bureau.

The county government was organizing water and electricity supplies for the survivors who had been living in tents since the disaster, said Yang. The survivors would receive one set of thermal underwear, cotton-padded clothes, and one coat per person, while the county government had stored some relief materials to help the needy through the winter.

Daytime temperatures in Zhouqu are currently reaching 20 degrees Celsius, but they can plunge to minus 20 degrees Celsius in winter.

Senior high schoolers of the county began a new semester on a usual date, September 1, which is the first day of school in many parts of China, but at a place 400 kilometers south of Zhouqu, the provincial capital of Lanzhou.

After the county was hit by massive mudslides, two primary schools were damaged and high schools are now being used by these pupils. So high schoolers, altogether more than 3,000, were transferred to four schools in Lanzhou and Dingxi City.

Daytime temperatures in Zhouqu are currently reaching 20 degrees Celsius, but they can plunge to minus 20 degrees Celsius in winter.

"The new dormitory has everything -- bed sheets, tooth brushes, slippers, toilet paper, you name it", said Wang Wentian, whose house was destroyed. Fortunately, her family was not at home when the mudslides struck.

"I got a school bag, tooth brush, tooth paste and towel," said Wang Jiahao, a pupil of No. 2 Primary School.

Many students and over 40 teachers were killed in the mudslide. In No. 1 Primary School alone, nine teachers and 78

pupils died.

"Many teachers were killed and so I was worried that my children might not be able to attend school. So today I am very happy to be dropping them off at school," said Wang Kexian, who has been living in a tent since the disaster.

To replace the deceased teachers, 54 teachers from neighboring areas have been dispatched to Zhouqu, and 12 volunteer teachers will arrive by the end of August, said Guo Yongming, deputy chief of the county education bureau.

Only one student, Gao Golmud, missed the first day of school in teacher Yang Bin's class at No. 1 Primary School.

"Gao lost his mother in the mudslide. He is a good kid. He will return to school after his mother's funeral," said Yang.

Zhouqu has two primary schools, two junior high schools and one senior high school. The primary schools were damaged in the mudslide, but fortunately students were not attending lessons at the time as it occurred at night during the summer vacation.

Students of No.1 High School, the only senior high, will be transferred to Gansu's Lanzhou and Dingxi cities and start the new semester on September 1. And the school buildings will be used by pupils of the two primary schools, said Dan.

"The new school is very far from my home. My kids have to walk for an hour and I am a little worried about their safety," said Wang Kexian.

The disaster is weighing heavily on the minds of Zhouqu's children.

"Whenever it rains, I get scared, since I am afraid another mudslide will come," said Shu Xiaohui, a 9-year-old girl.

It was a near miss for Shu and her father. They heard the mudslide coming and run out of their house just before it was engulfed.

Counseling will be provided to all students to help them overcome their trauma, said Han Lezhong, head of the No. 3 Junior High. ■

(Xinhua)



Reconstruction projects go smoothly in Zhouqu after the devastating mudslide. The picture taken on November 17 shows one of the two 800-cubic-meter water tanks. Song Changqing

In memory of the US Senate President Pro Tempore Ted Stevens

An old american man's affection towards china

Lü Congmin



Wu Bangguo, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, meets with Mr. and Mrs. Stevens in Great Hall of the People in June, 2010. *Zhong Sheng*

Former US Senator Ted Stevens, who was the Senate President Pro Tempore, died on the evening of August 9, 2010 when a small plane crashed in a remote mountain area of Alaska, killing all the nine passengers on board. Both the American and Chinese people lost a senior statesman and long-time friend. NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo, vice-chairmen Lu Yongxiang and Sheng Huaren, sent telegrams to Mrs Stevens to express their heartfelt condolence and sincere sympathy.

The death of Stevens was so abrupt

that Sheng Huaren, Jiang Enzhu and the author of the article, who accompanied him to visit China not long ago, felt surprised. Stevens was a straight forward and energetic man, who never bothered others to carry luggage for him and could climb all the way to the highest watch tower of Badaling Great Wall when he visited Beijing. The grievous news came to Beijing from the other side of the ocean, arising my memory of the old American man.

It seems that Ted Stevens and I had a deep bond. We first met in April and October of 1972, when I visited the US with

the Chinese table-tennis and Chinese medicine delegations. US congress leaders and some congressmen, including Stevens who had been a federal senator for four years, received us at the Capitol Hill. Before his political career in Washington, Stevens had served many years in the state of Alaska, from state representative to majority leader and then the president pro tempore. What makes him become a close friend of Chinese people is his legendary experience during World War II. Stevens joined in the US army in the 1940s, when the world anti-fascism war was in its full swing. In October, 1944, the 21-year-old Stevens was dispatched to the China-Burma-India (CBI theater), and served in the US 14th Air Force (also known as Flying Tigers) with General Chennault as commander. He flew C-46 and C-47 transport planes mostly between China and Burma, delivering materials and personnel, in support of Chinese people fighting against the Japanese invaders. The unforgettable experience at that time forged his China affection. Stevens said many times that after his retirement, he would like to spend some time in China, especially returning to the places he had combated during the war. He missed those places very much.

To satisfy the old man's desire, the NPC Standing Committee invited Ted Stevens, together with his wife Catherine and their daughter Lily Becker as well as his long-time assistant James, to visit China in June this year. Considering his war memories in China, NPC Standing Committee Vice



The then US President George W. Bush, accompanied by Mr. Stevens (4th from the right) and Daniel Ken Inouye (4th from the left), meets NPC Standing Committee Vice-Chairman Sheng Huaren in June 2005. *Zhong Sheng*

Chairman Sheng Huaren arranged and accompanied Stevens to visit Nanjing Anti-Japanese Martyrs' Museum and Nanjing Monument to the Aviator Martyrs. The unique museum registered the brave deeds of pilots from China, United States and Soviet Union fighting together against Japanese armies in China during the World War II. Names of 3,304 martyrs, including the members of "Flying Tigers", are carved on the monument standing on top of the cemetery. Stevens laid a wreath at the monument, on which it said "In honor of General Chennault and the 14th Air Force – Flying Tigers – and all those who sacrificed their lives in the resistance war against the Japanese invasion."

They visited Nanjing Anti-Japanese Aviation Museum afterwards. The items displayed in the museum brought back Stevens' memory to the war 60 years ago. He said, "My friendship with the Chinese people started from those days, I have deep feeling with China, and memories of fighting together with Chinese friends are so clear to me, they are to be remembered for the lifelong." Being the first visitor of the "Flying Tigers" after the formal launch of the museum since September, 2009, he donated his 10 old pictures in Flying Tigers uniform, and a two-side silk "escap-

ing map" possessed by members of the Flying Tigers. In return, the museum sent him a model of C-47 transportation plane. Stevens was deeply moved, saying that the model is very precious because he had flown that type of plane during the war. Today only in Alaska, one can find this kind of planes in service.

On the guest book of the museum, Stevens wrote "On behalf of all US Army airmen who joined your air force to defeat the invading Japanese, I want to express our appreciation of those who fought in your country in WWII. The comradeship we enjoyed in war should live on forever." After the visit, the Stevens couple and Sheng planted three "Friendship trees". "It is good for those American veterans who have helped the Chinese people in the anti-Japanese war to come and have a look at this exhibition, if there is such a group visiting to China, I would volunteer myself as the team leader and tour guide," Stevens said.

Many aged people are nostalgic when recalling the stories deep-rooted in their memory. Those days in Yunnan and Guangxi flashed back to him frequently, said Stevens, adding he can't forget his 21st birthday when flying his plane. Sheng said there is a Chinese TV series

"West Yunnan 1944" telling that history of Flying Tigers. Stevens was so excited and hoped to watch it. Sheng then gave him a set of DVD of the series, which only has Chinese version. Stevens said that his daughter would help him interpret into English.

As a friend of Stevens, we feel not only deep sorrow but also mountains of regrets towards his death. During trip to Beijing, Hefei, Nanjing and Shanghai, Stevens said several times that, though he was 87, his health condition still allowed him to do more work. He would like to do something pragmatic to promote the relationship between United States and China, especially the cooperation in the fields of energy, resource, trade and environment protection. With his connection and influences in the US Congress, he hoped to facilitate and improve the exchange mechanism between the top legislation bodies of the two countries. He also hoped to hear suggestions from Sheng and other Chinese friends. His eyes shone with confidence and expectations when he talked. We really regret that these heartfelt words have become his last testament. He will not be able to practice those unfulfilled wishes, but the trees he planted will grow taller and stronger thanks to the caring from his

friends and colleagues with the same good wishes.

The name of Ted Stevens should be remembered in the history of Sino-US friendship. He witnessed not only the bitter past of Chinese people in the war times, also the changes and development in the New China. The bombing of Kunming by Japanese invaders has left deep impression on Stevens, who felt sympathy for the Chinese people facing domestic troubles and foreign invasion. He has visited China many times after 1976 as a friend and messenger. Stevens often told his American colleagues the dramatic changes of China, especially the achievement of the New China. He warned the people should not look at China in a biased way; it was dangerous to rush to a conclusion or make policies just based on newspaper reports. Only through the on-the-spot investigations and direct communications, could the both countries understand each other.

In the eyes of Stevens, Sino-US friendship is an eternal course between the two nations. Either he visited China, or received the Chinese delegations in the US, he would prefer to ask his daughter Lily to participate, with the aim to let her inherit his affection towards China. He gave his daughter this name as he loved the Chinese lily so much. Inspired by her father, Lily chose Chinese history and law as selective courses when she studied at Stanford University. As a founding member of “Boalt Chinese Law Society” at the school of law, UC Berkeley, she managed to invite Professor Xin Chunying to give lectures on Chinese law. Now, Lily Becker is the co-founder of Orrick Law firm. Taking the instructions of his father in mind, she addresses herself to the Sino-US exchanges in the field of law, and also devotes herself to non-governmental communications of the two countries.

In his 40 years as state and federal senator, Stevens paid great attention to Sino-US relations, and the exchanges between the American people and Chinese people. In 1981, he came to China as a member of

the second American senator delegation, the company including Sen. Jackson, Ms. Snow (wife of the famous journalist Edgar Snow) and Ms Anna Chan (wife of General Chennault). Comrade Deng Xiaoping met the delegation and had a pleasant talk with the guests. For Stevens, it was a public visit with a personal purpose as well. He was dispatched by the new Reagan government to seek better relations with China. Besides, he and his second wife got married for just three days. The couple decided to spend their honeymoon on the land that he had ever fought.

Being one of the most senior senators



Mr. Stevens (3rd from the right), Daniel Ken Inouye (2nd from the left) and other US visitors pay a visit to the Bird's Nest – the National Stadium – which was still under construction. Zhong Sheng

in the US, Stevens had a mammoth influence on US' China policy. He played a positive role in the establishment of Sino-US diplomatic relation, supported to grant Most-Favored-Nation treatment to China and to build permanent normal trade relations with China. Moreover, he supported China's bidding of the Beijing Olympic Games and Shanghai World Expo, opposed the senate to pass a groundless amendment to criticize China's human right condition. Besides, he worked hard to build the exchange mechanism between Senate of US

and National People's Congress (NPC) of China. It was the first time that the US Senate to establish a high level exchange with an Asian country, and a communist country. This action confronted opposition from the US Congress. However Stevens and his colleagues firmly insisted their resolution, which was approved and initiated under the “Authorization Act of the State Department, Fiscal Year 2004-05” of the Senate.

His foresight on this issue, his rigidity and honesty could be clearly traced from his working meeting with NPC Standing Committee Vice Chairman Sheng Huaren in Shanghai on December 1, 2003, as well as the formal summit talks with Sheng in Hawaii on January 3, 2004, accompanied by Senator Inouye Ken. I wrote a report “Hawaii Witnesses the History” to recall this meeting, since the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by both parties in Hawaii to build a China-US Congress (Senate) Meeting Mechanism opened a new dimension for the exchanges between NPC and the US Senate. It was a great beginning for the parliament exchanges of the two countries. The MOU defined the concrete items about high-level visits, the composition of working groups from two sides, the frequency of meetings, setting-up of executive secretary, and information sharing under the framework of exchange mechanism. It was mutually agreed, within this framework, formal meetings should be held on topics about the problems in China-US relations, as well as other international and regional situations. The two sides wished to further normalize the conversations and build long-term work mechanism while learning from the existing experiences. As for the significance of the mechanism, Stevens had ever said, “the fast change of situation and the quick development of Sino-US relations required the US Congress to communicate with the NPC with a totally new concept. Establishing such an exchange mechanism has been in my mind for quite a long time. I believe, it



Participants attending the Sino-US parliament meeting pay a visit to Lijiang River, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in August, 2006. *Zhong Sheng*

will be a historic event, and be warmly received by the people of both countries. As time goes on, all of us will become part of the history.”

Once an American journalist asked him, “Why would the US Congress establish such a regular exchange mechanism with a country of complete different ideology?” He replied without any hesitation, “Isn’t it feasible for people with different ideologies to make friends and build cooperation?” His simple but wise reply illustrated an important principle in today’s international relations.

The practice in the past few years has proved that the exchange mechanism between China’s NPC and US Congress worked smoothly. Both parties tried to maintain the continuity and stability of the mechanism, which witnessed the changes of congresses and leadership of the State. Besides, both Ted Stevens and Inouye Ken paid special attention to absorb more senators, especially the young senators, to enhance their understanding of China and experience personally the importance of Sino-US relationship.

Being an experienced politician with profound strategic foresight, Ted Stevens has always shown a clear attitude toward the sensitive issues concerning China’s core interest. With deep understanding of China both in the past and at present, he

possessed a different perspective on China issues, thus drew conclusions differing from others. On August, 2004, he led the US senator delegation to China; it was the first general meeting after the launching of the exchange mechanism. Once arrived, he expressed the wishes to pay homage at Chairman Mao Memorial Hall. China side arranged quickly. Stevens, as well as some other senators Inouye Ken, Forest and Hollins, paid respects to Mao’s remains by bowing seriously.

He noted that Mao Zedong was a great man and the US side was not eligible to give a comment. Mao had helped the Chinese people standing up and winning respect from the rest of the world. There could be no today’s China without Mao’s contribution, Stevens said. The movement of the delegation won the respect of his Chinese colleagues.

The talks that Stevens made in Beijing and some other cities also left deep impression on my colleagues and I. He said, “There is only one China in the world, Taiwan should not be independent. US doesn’t support Taiwan to seek independence by force. We stick to the one China policy forged by the US presidents since 1979, and we will stick to the policy in the future.” In the farewell banquet in Kashi, Xinjiang, Stevens said, “Today is a lovely day; we will round off our visit under the

beautiful grape trellis. This visit is historical. The US delegation paid special attention to the talk with Chinese leaders and three working conversations within the exchange team. We have discussed various issues of mutual concerns. Through this visit, we feel that US-China relation should be further developed, as US-China relation is of great importance to the peace and stability of the world. We have different views on some issues, but we can work together to solve them. Comparing with the differences, the confidence to each other and cooperation are far more important. In the US Congress, there are opposition towards such exchanges. But I think US should improve the understanding of other countries, know the real opinion from other countries and seek common understandings for cooperation. For important countries like China, we need to have more contacts. Many senators agree with me. I will pass on the concerns of China to the US Government and Congress.”

Among more than 500 members of US Congress, few of them have real understanding of China. We hope more and more congressmen will watch China in an objective, rational and friendly way, as Stevens has did.

Stevens brought his family to China last June, saying he was coming to visit relatives and friends. Either in the meeting with Chairman Wu Bangguo, or in the reception banquet hosted by Vice Chairman Lu Yongxiang, or in the reunion with Sheng Huaren, Jiang Enzhu, Hu Kangsheng, Zhou Wenzhong, Xin Chunying and me at Beihai Park, Stevens could not hide his excitement. Indeed, he and his Chinese friends had built not only good working relations but also intimate personal friendship. Time flies and the world changes. The affection of an old American man towards China has weathered the test of time. When commemorating our old friend Stevens, we hope the China-US relations to keep healthy and stable – a target that he had pursued for decades. ■



The Shanghai World Expo 2010 closes on October 31, 2010. Four Chinese young men and women had photos taken in front of the China National Pavilion. *CFP*

City of glamour
Huizhou, China

