

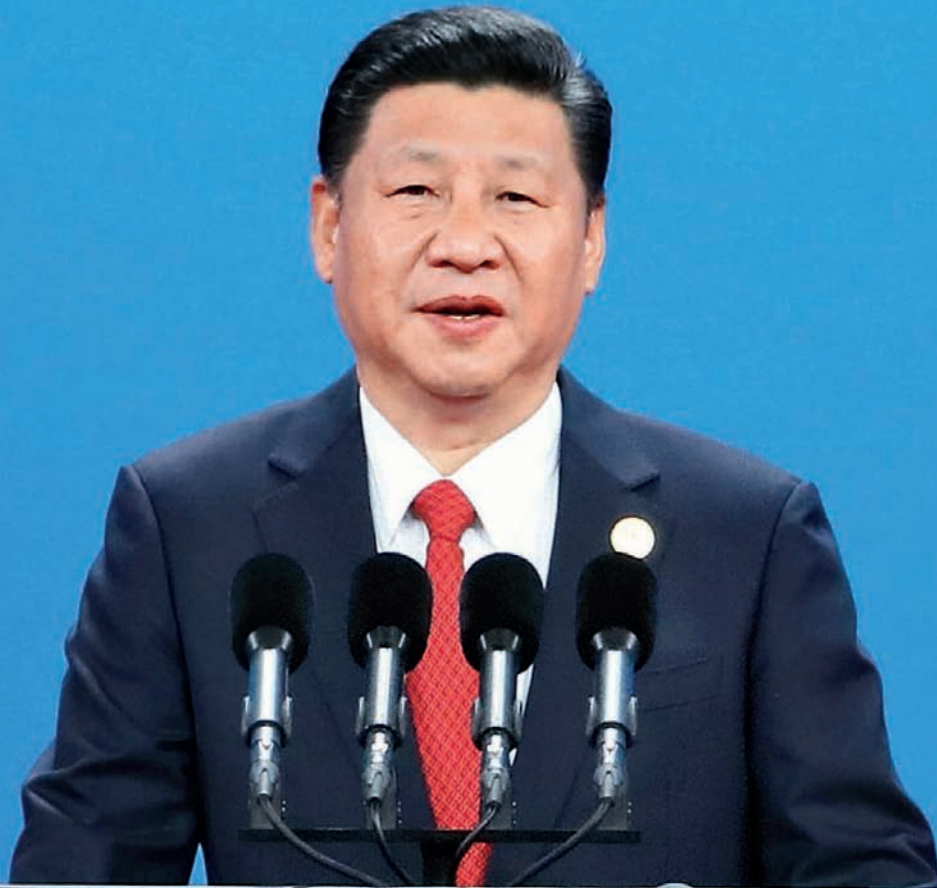
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回歸祖

President Xi Jinping greets the crowd upon his arrival in Hong Kong on June 29. Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, attended celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland on July 1, and the inauguration of the fifth-term government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). He also inspected the HKSAR. *Sheng Jiapeng*

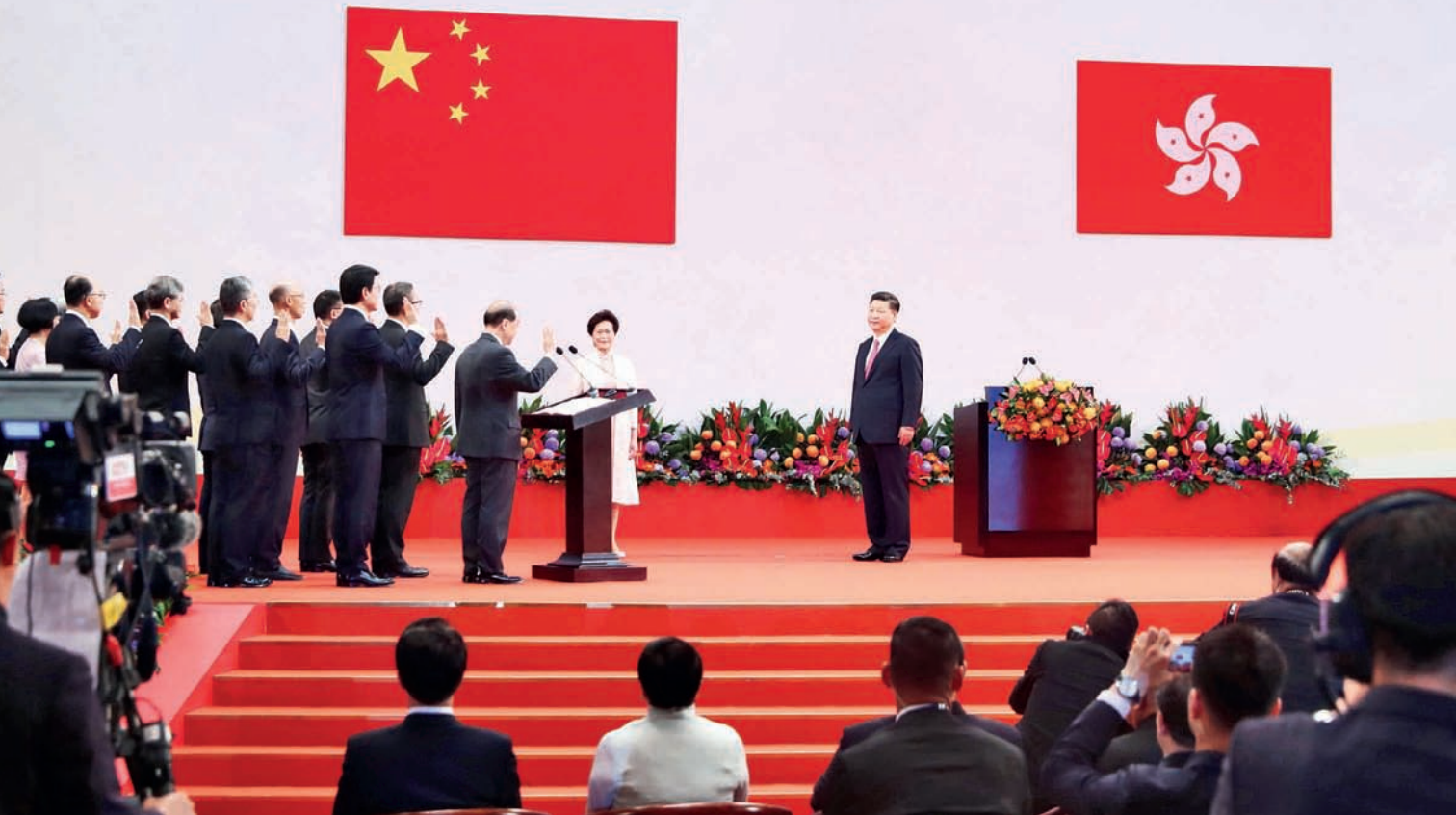
Principal officials of the fifth-term government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region take their oaths before President Xi Jinping (R), while newly installed Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor (2nd R) looks on, at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center on July 1. *Ju Peng*



President Xi Jinping inspects Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Garrison in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, June 30, on the eve of the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to China. *Li Gang*



國二十周年大會暨香港特別行政區



President Xi Jinping talks with Junior Police Call (JPC) members when visiting the JPC Permanent Activity Center and Integrated Youth Training Camp in Hong Kong on June 30. *Sheng Jiapeng*

President Xi Jinping (C) attends a signing ceremony of collaborative agreement on the development of the Hong Kong Palace Museum at the West Kowloon Cultural District in Hong Kong on June 29. *Lan Hongguang*





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COVER: President Xi Jinping delivers a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum (BRF) for International Cooperation in Beijing on May 14. *Wang Ye*



General Editorial

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Vision into action and initiative into commitments

By Yu Lintao



History regards the Western colonial system of the 19th and 20th centuries, represented by the former British Empire, as the first rudimentary globalization. Then came the US-led multinationalization process featuring transnational corporations' business expansion globally, regarded as "Globalization 1.0." But today, with the world standing at a crossroads rocked by waves of anti-globalization, even Britain and the United States, the standard bearers and beneficiaries of the first phases of globalization, have growing voices advocating parochialism.

Against this backdrop, China, both the victim and beneficiary of globalization, has picked up the banner. By proposing the Belt and Road Initiative—the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative—which is based on the principles of policy coordination and inclusive cooperation, China has laid the foundation for a new type of globalization



President Xi Jinping addresses the leaders roundtable meeting at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation on May 15. Ma Zhancheng

characterized by common development.

Four years after President Xi Jinping first outlined the concept, the first high-level meeting on the initiative—the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation—held in Beijing on May 14-15 showed the international community's keen interest in the initiative. The two-day meeting attended by 29 foreign heads of State and government, chiefs of international organizations as well as high-level representatives from more than 130 countries also marked the initiative's evolution from notion to action, reassuring onlookers that it is a pursuit of concrete efforts, not empty talk.

Dong Manyuan, vice president of China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), assessed it as a road for not only China's development, but also for meeting the requirement of countries along the routes for economic development. The idea of common development lying at the core of the initiative is what has been resonating with the international community.

"The prime task of most countries is pursuing their domestic economic expansion. But many countries are meeting bottlenecks. So the idea of common development advocated by the Belt and Road Initiative based on the principle of construction through consultation is very appealing," Dong said.

Besides, it is seeking to rebalance today's heavily skewed world economy. According to Zhang Yansheng, chief researcher at the China Center for International Economic Exchanges, the initiative aims to create effective demand by increasing effective supply to rebalance the world economy. While some countries along the routes have problems of excess capacity, some face severe production capacity shortages. Therefore, by creating platforms for international cooperation in capacity building, it can well push forward the industrialization process of countries which have been left behind in the age of globalization.

Pragmatic needs

According to Dong, many countries along the Belt and Road are still developing. Therefore they are lagging behind in infrastructure and industrial bases. There are both internal and external causes for their underdevelopment.

Of the 48 nations on the UN's list of least developed countries as of May 2016, around one third lie along the Belt and Road, such as Afghanistan, Nepal, Myanmar and Yemen. According to data from the United Nations Development Program, Myanmar's per-capita income is around \$702 as its industrialization has been severely affected by power shortage. Among the 10-million-plus households, only around 34 percent have access to electricity.

Tajikistan, another country on the route, is severely hampered in its economic development due to its mountainous location and poor transportation infrastructure. So though Tajikistan is one of the world's major cotton producers, it is struggling to develop its textile industry. In Nepal, another mountainous country, unreliable power supply and poor transport networks are the most severe economic bottlenecks, hindering job creation and the delivery of goods and services.

Dong, an expert on the Middle East, pointed out that the infrastructure of some countries in that region is also relatively poor. Besides, their industrial structure is incomplete and lacks diversity.

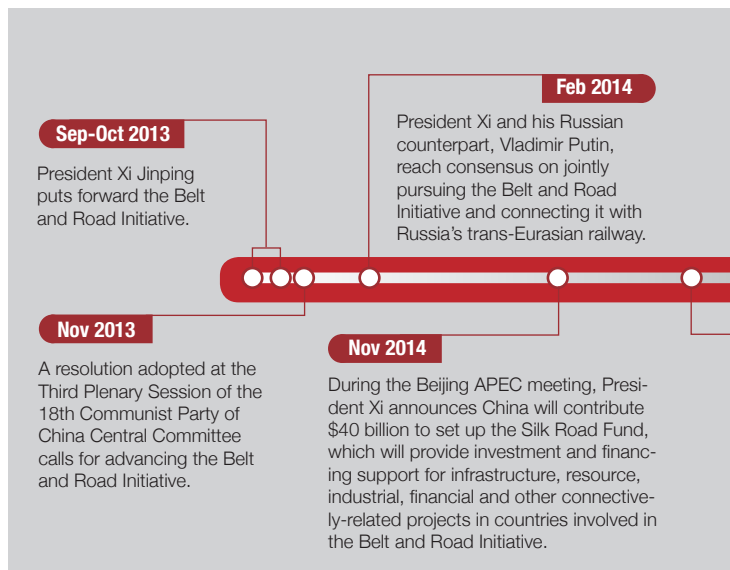
What's more, due to foreign interventions, many countries

in the region have suffered political turbulence in recent years. The prevailing chaos more than ever underlines the importance of peace and improvement of people's livelihoods. With Western countries allegedly concerned only about regime changes and not regional development, the Belt and Road Initiative has become a popular choice for the underdeveloped world to meet their pragmatic needs for development.

The initiative to connect Asia with Europe, Africa and beyond by reviving ancient trade routes and creating new trade and infrastructure networks is bearing results. For instance, the Chongqing-Xinjiang-Europe International Railway which connects China's Chongqing Municipality and Germany's Duisburg City is now an important trade route, accelerating the circulation of commodities between China, Russia and Central Asian and European countries. The 2-km-long train covers the 12,000 km to Duisburg in 13 days.

Helga LaRouche, founder of Schiller Institute, a German think tank, described the response to the railway in Europe. "The Serbian people are extremely happy about [the railway between Budapest and Belgrade] that will shorten travel time from eight hours to three," she said. In 1994, an EU transport conference agreed to build 10 transport corridors in the Balkans, Italy and Spain, but nothing was done. "So the Serbians say, thanks to China [the railway to be built]. It's a shame that we have not been able to build this ourselves and that the EU has not provided any money."

LaRouche, who has traveled to many countries along the Belt and Road, said several Western countries like Belarus, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal wish to participate in the initiative to promote their own growth and become hubs along



the initiative.

Its effect is also evident in Africa, creating confidence that underdevelopment and poverty will be overcome. LaRouche said at a recent international conference in Hamburg, the African representatives talked about Chinese investment in infrastructure, railways, hydropower plants and other projects in their countries. "There is for the first time in Africa the possibility to overcome underdevelopment and poverty," she said.



Liu Xingze (L, front), a Chinese technician, works with his Kenyan counterparts to upgrade the Lamu Port in northeastern Kenya on May 10. Pan Siwei

Progress of the Belt and Road Initiative

Nov 2015

China and 16 Central and Eastern European countries adopt the Medium-Term Agenda for Cooperation, in which they vow to make full use of the opportunities offered by the Belt and Road Initiative.

Dec 2015

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, a multilateral financial institution committed to financing infrastructure construction in Asia and projects under the Belt and Road Initiative, is established.

Aug 2016

At a symposium on the Belt and Road Initiative, President Xi says more than 100 countries and international organizations have participated in the initiative.

Jan 2017

A China-Europe freight train becomes the first of its kind to reach London.

Mar 2015

The National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce together issue the first master plan for the initiative, titled Vision and Actions on Jointly Building the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road.

Mar 2016

The Belt and Road Initiative is designated as a major objective in China's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20).

Sep 2016

During the G20 Hangzhou Summit, President Xi Jinping pledges that the Belt and Road Initiative will share opportunities presented by China's development with other countries along the routes to achieve common prosperity.

May 14-15, 2017

The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation is held in Beijing.

“[The Africans said] if the Europeans continue to be so against [the Belt and Road], they will be sidelined.”

“I have never heard Africans having that self-confidence,” she added. “The Europeans would only go to Africa and say you have to have democracy and unite but they would not give any development [assistance]. And the Africans were angry but didn't know what to do. But now with the Chinese help they feel much more confident and say, ok, if you don't want to be part [of our development], then we don't need you.”

Ndubuisi Christian Ani, an Ethiopian researcher at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies in capital city Addis Ababa, called the Belt and Road “totally in line with Africa's much-desired need for infrastructure and economic development.”

At the leaders roundtable of the Belt and Road Forum, President Xi stressed that the initiative is open to all. He said with the world facing the challenges of sluggish trade and investment, wobbling economic globalization and increasingly unbalanced development, not to mention conflicts and terrorism, only by aligning policies and integrating economic factors and resources globally can countries create synergy to promote world peace, stability and shared development.

In the past four years, Chinese businesses have invested more than \$50 billion in countries along the routes. China has signed cooperation agreements with over 40 countries and international organizations and carried out framework cooperation on production capacity with more than 30 countries.

The Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, China-Laos Railway and Hungary-Serbia Railway are to be built. Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway has been inaugurated. The Gwadar Port in Pakistan and Piraeus Port in Greece have been upgraded. A 3.37-km-long water pipeline project, completed by a Chinese company in a Jordanian township, is among the latest infrastructure projects. A total of 500,000 people living in an area of extreme water shortage now have access to water 24 hours a day, thanks to the project.

China is working with other countries involved in the initiative to promote trade and investment facilitation and improve the business environment. In Kazakhstan and other Central

Asian countries, the customs clearance time for agricultural produce exported to China has been slashed by 90 percent. Trade between China and other Belt-and-Road countries in 2014-16 exceeded \$3 trillion.

Globalization 2.0

Professor Peter Drysdale of Australian National University believes the initiative is more than a growth engine for the global economy.

“It is not only a very important element in stimulating trade growth and economic recovery but also in pushing back against the forces of anti-globalization in the Atlantic region,” Drysdale said.

He sees the initiative as a framework for deepening international economic cooperation through a platform of open regionalism. This platform promotes economic integration by strengthening policy, infrastructure, trade, financial and people-to-people connectivity. “This is critical at a time when the open global economic regime is under challenge,” Drysdale stressed.

Since the international financial crisis in 2008, globalization has slowed down. In 2016, the proportion of global gross exports in GDP declined to below 20 percent. Brexit and US President Donald Trump's series of protectionist trade policies all display an anti-globalization tendency in developed countries. A United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in January estimated that the global foreign direct investment in 2016 was around \$1.5 trillion, falling 13 percent from a year ago.

Wang Huiyao, president of the Center for China and Globalization, said with “Globalization 1.0” facing setbacks, the Belt and Road Initiative is providing the world with a new choice for globalization.

The initiative is enriching the contents of globalization, he said. The new type of globalization is China's contribution to the international community as a major country, Wang said.

Jiang Zhida, a researcher on the Belt and Road Initiative with CIIS, described the new type of globalization represented by the Belt and Road as not single-sided business expansion

but stressing policy coordination and people-to-people connectivity. “Focusing on infrastructure upgrading and international production capacity cooperation, it stresses win-win cooperation based on the demand of the receiving parties, trying to cultivate the development ability of these countries,” Jiang said. “From the perspective of international relations, it advocates justice and equity as well as openness and inclusiveness.”

Shi Ze, another researcher with CIIS, pointed out that the new globalization has the participation of both the West and the East. And it attaches more importance to the development of the real economy and people’s livelihoods than to mere capital investment. Besides, it is also an approach to address the challenges of global governance.

Robert Magyar, executive director of North Head, a Beijing-based public affairs consultancy, said today, many sectors were departing from the old model owing to new technologies, information sharing, and a more interactive way of accessing services and goods. The Belt and Road Initiative has a good chance to break the old patterns of trade and development and, at the same time, to allow China to demonstrate that global cooperation is the only way to secure a prosperous and peaceful future for all.

Common commitment

With the adoption of a joint communiqué at the leaders roundtable, the forum unveiled a clear way for future cooperation. Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi told China Central Television that the forum has clarified an assortment of projects to be implemented within the framework of the initiative. Moreover, China signed cooperation agreements with 14 international organizations on assistance programs.

China announced it will provide assistance worth 60 billion yuan (\$8.7 billion) in the coming three years to developing countries and international organizations participating in the Belt and Road Initiative to improve people’s well-being. In addition, there will be emergency food assistance worth 2 billion yuan (\$290 million) to developing countries and an additional \$1 billion to the Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation.

LaRouche envisions the Belt and Road Initiative as becoming a “true world land bridge.” “It will not only bring economic prosperity to all participating countries, but also serve as a true basis for a peace order for the 21st century,” she forecast. (Beijing Review) ■

Keywords on Belt and Road Initiative

– Belt and Road Initiative

The Belt and Road Initiative – China’s proposal to build a Silk Road Economic Belt and a 21st Century Maritime Silk Road in cooperation with related countries – was unveiled by President Xi Jinping during his visits to Central and Southeast Asia in September and October 2013.

The initiative focuses on promoting policy coordination, connectivity of infrastructure and facilities, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and closer people-to-people ties through extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, with the goal of bringing benefits to all.

– Silk Road Economic Belt

The proposed economic belt is considered the longest economic corridor in the world – and potentially the most dynamic – connecting the Asia-Pacific region in the east with developed European economies in the west.

– 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

Starting with the launch of individual projects that are expected to help spur a wider range of cooperative activities, it envisions a network of interconnected markets linking the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, South Asia, West Asia, North Africa and

Europe, and a strategic partnership for the South China Sea and the Pacific and Indian oceans.

– Spirit of the Silk Road

Throughout the millennia, interaction along this route has shaped the Silk Road spirit, which is embodied in solidarity and mutual trust, equality and mutual benefit, inclusiveness, a disposition to learn from each other, and cooperation in finding win-win solutions.

– Silk Road Fund

The Silk Road Fund was established in Beijing on December 29, 2014, following President Xi Jinping’s announcement on November 8 that China would contribute \$40 billion for this purpose. The fund will support infrastructure and resource development and industrial cooperation in the countries along the land and sea Silk Roads.

– Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is a regional inter-governmental development institution focused on supporting infrastructure development. It is the first multinational financial institution sponsored

by China. As of the end of March 2017, the bank’s membership had reached 70, second only to that of the World Bank.

– Steering Group for the Belt and Road Initiative

A steering group for the Belt and Road Initiative has been established at the national level to study important issues related to planning, policy and projects, and to provide guidance and coordination in the implementation of the initiative.

– Joining Hands to Build a Silk Road Economic Belt and a 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road – Vision and Actions

The document explains the background of the initiative, and outlines its guiding principles and broad objectives, and the priority areas and mechanisms for cooperation.

– Five-Pronged Approach

In his speech at Kazakhstan’s Nazarbayev University on September 7, 2013, President Xi Jinping proposed building a Silk Road Economic Belt by promoting policy coordination, road connectivity, unimpeded trade, currency convertibility and closer people-to-people ties. (Xinhua)

Joint Communiqué of the Leaders Roundtable of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation



The photo taken on April 21 shows the construction site of the China-Maldives Friendship Bridge. The bridge, which connects Malé, capital of Maldives, to the airport island Hulhulé, serves a symbol of Sino-Maldivian friendship. *Xinhua*

1. We, President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China, President Mauricio Macri of the Republic of Argentina, President Alexander Lukashenko of the Republic of Belarus, President Michelle Bachelet Jeria of the Republic of Chile, President Milos Zeman of the Czech Republic, President Joko Widodo of the Republic of Indonesia, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan, President Uhuru Kenyatta of the Republic of Kenya, President Almazbek Atambayev of the Kyrgyz Republic, President Bounnhang Vorachith of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte of the Republic of the Philippines, President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation, President Doris Leuthard of the Swiss Confederation, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of the Republic of Turkey, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of the Republic of Uzbekistan, President Tran Dai Quang of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Prime Minister Hun Sen of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Prime Minister Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama of the Republic of Fiji, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras of the Hellenic Republic, Prime Minister Viktor

Orban of Hungary, Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni of the Italian Republic, Prime Minister Najib Razak of Malaysia, Prime Minister Jargaltulgyn Erdenebat of Mongolia, State Councillor Aung San Suu Kyi of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Prime Minister Beata Szydlo of the Republic of Poland, Prime Minister and President-elect Aleksandar Vucic of the Republic of Serbia, President of the Government Mariano Rajoy Brey of the Kingdom of Spain, and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, attended the Leaders Roundtable of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation on 15 May 2017 in Beijing. We also welcome the participation of Secretary General Antonio Guterres of the United Nations, President Jim Yong Kim of the World Bank Group, Managing Director Christine Lagarde of the International Monetary Fund. The Leaders Roundtable was chaired by President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China.

General Context

2. We are mindful that the world economy is undergoing profound changes, presenting

both opportunities and challenges. This is an era of opportunity, where countries continue to aspire for peace, development and cooperation. The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the set of Sustainable Development Goals at its core provides a new blueprint of international cooperation.

3. In this context, we welcome bilateral, triangular, regional and multilateral cooperation where countries place emphasis on eradicating poverty, creating jobs, addressing the consequences of international financial crises, promoting sustainable development, and advancing market-based industrial transformation and economic diversification. We note with appreciation that various development strategies and connectivity cooperation initiatives have been put forward, providing broad space for strengthening international cooperation.

4. We further recognize the challenges that the world economy faces. While it is currently experiencing modest recovery, downside risks remain. The growth of global trade and investment remains tempered, and the rules-based multilateral trading regime is yet to be strengthened. All countries, especially developing ones, still face common challenges.

es of eradicating poverty, promoting inclusive and sustained economic growth, and achieving sustainable development.

5. Noting that the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (The Belt and Road Initiative) can create opportunities amidst challenges and changes, we welcome and support the Belt and Road Initiative to enhance connectivity between Asia and Europe, which is also open to other regions such as Africa and South America. By providing important opportunities for countries to deepen cooperation, it has achieved positive outcomes and has future potential to deliver more benefits as an important international initiative.

6. We also emphasize the opportunities which can be created by communication and coordination among other global, regional and national frameworks and initiatives for promoting cooperation in connectivity and sustainable development, such as 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Agenda 2063 of the African Union, Ancient Civilizations Forum, APEC Connectivity Blueprint, ASEAN Community Vision 2025, Asia-Europe Meeting and its group on path-finder of connectivity, Caravanserai Customs Initiative, China and Central and Eastern European Countries Cooperation, China-Europe Land-Sea Express Route, East-West Middle Corridor Initiative, EU-China Connectivity Platform, EU Eastern Partnership, Eurasian partnership based on the principles of equality, openness and transparency, Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America, Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, Main Directions for Economic Development of the Eurasian Economic Union until 2030, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Trans-European Transport Networks, Western Balkans 6 Connectivity Agenda, WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

7. We reaffirm our shared commitment to build open economy, ensure free and inclusive trade, oppose all forms of protectionism including in the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. We endeavor to promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system with WTO at its core.

Cooperation Objectives

8. We stand for enhancing international cooperation including the Belt and Road Initiative and various development strategies, by building closer collaboration partnerships,



Local residents sing and dance beside of a locomotive along the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway on January 11. Constructed by China Road and Bridge Corporation, the railway was officially completed and opened to traffic on May 31, marking a new chapter in the history of rail transportation of Kenya. Sun Ruibo

which include advancing North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation.

9. We reiterate the importance of expanding economic growth, trade and investment based on level-playing field, on market rules and on universally recognized international norms. We welcome the promotion of industrial cooperation, scientific and technological innovation, and regional economic cooperation and integration so as to increase, inter alia, the integration and participation of micro, small and medium enterprises in global value chains. Attention should be paid to tax and fiscal policies, prioritizing growth and productive investment.

10. We stand for strengthening physical, institutional and people-to-people connectivity among all countries. The least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries deserve special attention to remove bottlenecks of development and achieve effective connectivity.

11. We endeavor to expand people-to-people exchanges, promote peace, justice, social cohesion, inclusiveness, democracy, good governance, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and women empowerment; work together to fight against corruption and bribery in all their forms; to be more responsive to all the needs of those in vulnerable situations such as, children, persons with disabilities and older persons; and help improve global economic governance, and ensure equal access by all to development

opportunities and benefits.

12. We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through taking urgent action on climate change and encouraging all parties which have ratified it to fully implement the Paris Agreement, managing the natural resources in an equitable and sustainable manner, conserving and sustainably using oceans and seas, freshwater resources, as well as forests, mountains and drylands, protecting biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife, combating desertification and land degradation so as to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions in a balanced and integrated manner.

13. We encourage the involvement of governments, international and regional organizations, the private sector, civil society and citizens in fostering and promoting friendship, mutual understanding and trust.

Cooperation Principles

14. We uphold the spirit of peace, cooperation, openness, transparency, inclusiveness, equality, mutual learning, mutual benefit and mutual respect by strengthening cooperation on the basis of extensive consultation and the rule of law, joint efforts, shared benefits and equal opportunities for all. In this context we highlight the following principles guiding our cooperation, in accordance with our respective national laws and policies:

a) Consultation on an equal footing: Honoring the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law including

respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries; formulating cooperation plans and advancing cooperation projects through consultation.

b) Mutual benefit: Seeking convergence of interests and the broadest common ground for cooperation, taking into account the perspectives of different stakeholders.

c) Harmony and inclusiveness: Acknowledging the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognizing that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development.

d) Market-based operation: Recognizing the role of the market and that of business as key players, while ensuring that the government performs its proper role and highlighting the importance of open, transparent, and non-discriminatory procurement procedures.

e) Balance and sustainability: Emphasizing the importance of economic, social, fiscal, financial and environmental sustainability of projects, and of promoting high environmental standards, while striking a good balance among economic growth, social progress and environmental protection.

Cooperation Measures

15. We affirm the need to prioritize policy consultation, trade promotion, infrastructure connectivity, financial cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, and we highlight concrete actions, in accordance with our national laws and regulations and international obligations where applicable, such as:

a) Pursuing dialogue and consultation in order to build synergies in development strategies among participating countries, noting the efforts to strengthen cooperation in coordinating development of the Belt and Road Initiative with other plans and initiatives as mentioned in Paragraph 6 and to promote partnerships among Europe, Asia, South America, Africa and other regions.

b) Conducting in-depth consultation on macroeconomic issues by optimizing the existing multilateral and bilateral cooperation and dialogue mechanisms, so as to provide robust policy support for practical cooperation and the implementation of major projects.

c) Strengthening cooperation on innovation, by supporting innovation action plans for e-commerce, digital economy, smart cities and science and technology parks, and by encouraging greater exchanges on innovation and business startup models in the Internet age in respect of intellectual property rights.

d) Promoting practical cooperation on

roads, railways, ports, maritime and inland water transport, aviation, energy pipelines, electricity, fiber optic including trans-oceanic cable, telecommunications and information and communication technology, and welcoming the development of interconnected multimodal corridors, such as a new Eurasian Land Bridge, Northern Sea Route, the East-West Middle Corridor etc., and major trunk lines to put in place an international infrastructure network over time.

e) Maximizing synergies in infrastructure planning and development by taking into account international standards where applicable, and by aiming at harmonizing rules and technological standards when necessary; fostering a favorable environment and predictability for infrastructure investment by private capital; promoting public-private partnership in areas that create more jobs and generate greater efficiency; welcoming international financial institutions to increase support and investment for infrastructure development.

f) Deepening economic and trade cooperation; upholding the authority and effectiveness of the multilateral trading system, and working together to achieve positive outcomes at the 11th WTO ministerial conference; promoting trade and investment liberalization and facilitation; enabling the general public to benefit from trade.

g) Expanding trade by nurturing new areas of trade growth, promoting trade balance and promoting e-commerce and digital economy, welcoming the development of free trade areas and signing of free trade agreements by interested countries.

h) Advancing global value chains development and supply chain connectivity, while ensuring safer work places and strengthening social protection systems; increasing two-way investment, and enhancing cooperation in emerging industries, trade and industrial parks and cross-border economic zones.

i) Enhancing cooperation in ensuring the protection of the environment, of bio-diversity and of natural resources, in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change, in promoting resilience and disaster-risk reduction and management, and in advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency.

j) Regarding the process of customs clearance, strengthening cooperation on information exchange and on developing mutual recognition of control, mutual assistance of enforcement, and mutual sharing of information; enhancing customs cooperation with a view to facilitating trade including by

harmonizing procedures and reducing costs, and in this regard, strengthening cooperation in protecting intellectual property rights.

k) Jointly working on a long-term, stable and sustainable financing system; enhancing financial infrastructure connectivity, by exploring new models and platforms of investment and financing and improving financial services; assessing the opportunity to better serve local financial market; and encouraging development-oriented financial institutions to play an active role and strengthen cooperation with multilateral development institutions.

l) Contributing to a stable and equitable international financial system; promoting openness and connectivity among financial markets, including through mutual cooperation on payment systems and the promotion of financial inclusion; encouraging financial institutions to establish commercial presence in relevant countries and regions; promoting bilateral local currency settlement and cooperation agreements, and facilitating the development of local currency bonds and stock markets; encouraging dialogues to enhance financial cooperation and fend off financial risks.

m) Promoting people-to-people exchanges and bonds by deepening practical cooperation on education, science, technology, sport, health, think-tank, media, capacity building including through internships.

n) Encouraging dialogues among civilizations, cultural exchanges, promoting tourism and protecting the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Our Vision for the Future

16. Our joint endeavor on the Belt and Road Initiative and seeking complementarities with other connectivity initiatives provide new opportunities and impetus for international cooperation. It helps to work for a globalization that is open, inclusive and beneficial to all.

17. We reiterate that promoting peace, mutually-beneficial cooperation, and honoring the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law are our shared responsibilities; achieving inclusive and sustainable growth and development, and improving people's quality of life are our common goals; creating a prosperous and peaceful community with shared future for mankind is our common aspiration.

18. We congratulate China on successfully hosting the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. (Xinhua)

From G20 Hangzhou Summit to Belt and Road forum, Xi Jinping's global prominence on the rise



Participants for the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation pose for a group photo at the Beijing Yanqi Lake International Convention & Exhibition Center on May 15. Yao Dawei

He is known as the helmsman of the world's second-largest economy and chief of the largest political party as well as an ardent champion of globalization and an enthusiastic football fan.

Now, President Xi Jinping appears to be reaffirming another international title as the architect of a grand plan to better connect countries along and beyond the ancient Silk Road.

The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing from May 14 to 15 is a perfect illustration of China's rising international status and also, Xi's growing influence.

The images of Xi hosting 29 heads of State and government from across the world, as well as leaders of key international organizations, at the two-day forum bring back memories of eight months ago when the president chaired the G20 Summit in Hangzhou.

All G20 economies were represented at the Belt and Road forum, which is attended by some 1,500 representatives from over 130 countries and over 70 international organizations.

It is estimated that those countries account for more than two thirds of the global population and 90 percent of the world's total gross domestic product.

By any standard, the forum – covered by over 4,000 journalists – is the most prestigious international gathering China has ever launched and one of the highest-level assemblies in the world.

As China is preparing for the 2017 BRICS Summit in Xiamen in September, analysts say it has become increasingly clear that the past few years marked China's transition from a player in global affairs to a leader of the global agenda.

Xi's stature as a responsible statesman has ascended in the process.

He presided over the APEC Beijing meeting in 2014 and



President Xi Jinping appears to be reaffirming another international title as the architect of a grand plan to better connect countries along and beyond the ancient Silk Road.

explained what had inspired him to come up with the Belt and Road Initiative nearly four years ago.

The Belt and Road Initiative “does not exclude or target any party,” Xi told the summit where he spoke of the myriad challenges the world faces: sluggish trade and investment, wobbling economic globalization, increasingly uneven development, impact from the massive flow of refugees and migrants, as well as wars, conflicts and terrorism.

The words echoed a keynote speech he made on May 14 when he called the initiative a “project of the century” in a world “fraught with challenges.”

Only by coordinating national policies and integrating economic factors and development resources on a greater global scale can countries build synergy and promote world peace, stability and common development, Xi said on May 15.

Under these circumstances, the world has every reason to draw wisdom and strength from the ancient Silk Road, and advance cooperation in the Silk Road spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, he continued.

“We need to seek win-win results through greater openness and cooperation, avoid fragmentation, refrain from setting inhibitive thresholds for cooperation or pursuing exclusive arrangements, and reject protectionism,” he said.

Thus far, Xi’s Belt and Road vision has been backed with concrete action.

To date, 68 countries and international organizations have signed agreements with China on Belt and Road cooperation. Total trade between China and other Belt and Road countries exceeded \$3 trillion between 2014 and 2016, and Chinese investment in these countries surpassed \$50 billion.

A multi-dimensional infrastructure network is taking shape, one that is underpinned by economic corridors featuring land-sea-air transportation routes and information expressways and supported by major rail, port and pipeline projects.

“President Xi played a major role in bringing about all these positive changes by offering Chinese wisdom and solutions to the world and by dovetailing other countries’ development strategies with the Belt and Road,” said Wang Yiwei, professor at the School of International Studies at Renmin University of China.

“The Belt and Road Initiative fits well with Xi’s vision of a community of shared future for mankind. It is an important part of his governance theories, just like the concept of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development, and supply-side structural reform,” he said.

“Xi has shown he has what it takes to lead, not just in China, but also on the global stage, through the initiative,” he said. (Xinhua) ■

the G20 Hangzhou Summit last year, charting the course for global growth and navigating world economic recovery.

In January, he defended globalization and free trade at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland against a new global reality that seems to be tilting toward protectionism.

His strong domestic appeal, especially as the “core” of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and its Central Committee, has also helped project influence overseas.

He is viewed as the avant-garde for reform and the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation, and a staunch squasher of corruption.

The Belt and Road forum in Beijing might bolster his influence further, both within China and beyond, especially with just a few months to go before the 19th CPC National Congress convenes in the second half of this year, at which new leadership will be elected.

Addressing a roundtable summit of leaders on May 15, Xi



Employees from Xuanhua Loxa Machinery Factory, Beiqi Foton Motor Co.Ltd. work on a production line on May 15. Since its establishment in 1996, Foton has become one of the leading international suppliers of commercial vehicles and transportation solution. *Chen Xiaodong*

Foundations of the Road

Xi's keynote speech at the Belt and Road forum highlights three types of power

By Fang Zhenghui

President Xi Jinping's keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation on May 14 offers a profound view on the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road (Belt and Road) Initiative from the perspectives of history and reality, and vision and action, as well as involving mind and matter. It is undoubtedly full of inspiration and power.

The speech demonstrates the power of conviction, the kernel of the Silk Road spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit. Throughout history, our forefathers kept moving forward regardless of facing billowing waves, rugged mountains and endless deserts. With the same conviction to which they steadfastly adhered in building a

road of peace, prosperity, openness, innovation and civilization, we have taken solid steps to implement the Belt and Road Initiative and achieved significant achievements over the past four years. Both history and reality show that, with common conviction, we can develop a shared vision and forge strong synergy.

The speech emphasizes the power of culture in the pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative. Culture builds bridges of mutual understanding between the peoples of different countries. No matter how diverse the cultures, they share common features. The Silk Road spirit encompasses not only cultural integration drawn from our history, but also people's aspiration for cultural exchanges today, spurring us to pursue the initiative.

The speech presents China's image as a responsible major country and displays the power of responsibility. China has made great efforts to enhance policy consultation, trade promotion, infrastructure connectivity, financial cooperation and people-to-people exchanges among countries along the Belt and Road routes since the initiative was proposed. At the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, President Xi introduced new programs to further implement the initiative. This consolidates China's image as a responsible major country, translating vision into action, and initiatives into commitments; this, in turn, bolsters the confidence of the countries involved and the international community in general in promoting the initiative. (Beijing Review)

Guiding Principles for the Belt and Road Initiative

A road for peace

The pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative requires a peaceful and stable environment. We should foster a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation; and we should forge partnerships of dialogue with no confrontation and of friendship rather than alliance. All countries should respect each other's sovereignty, dignity and territorial integrity, each other's development paths and social systems, and each other's core interests and major concerns.

A road of prosperity

Development holds the master key to solving all problems. In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we should focus on the fundamental issue of development, release the growth potential of various countries, achieve economic integration and interconnected development and deliver benefits to all.

A road of opening up

We should build an open platform of cooperation and uphold and grow an open world economy. We should jointly create an environment that will facilitate opening up and development, establish a fair, equitable and transparent system of international trade and investment rules and boost the orderly flow of production factors, efficient resources allocation and full market integration.

A road of innovation

We should pursue innovation-driven development and intensify cooperation in frontier areas such as digital economy, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology and quantum computing, and advance the development of big data, cloud computing and smart cities so as to turn them into a digital Silk Road of the 21st century. We should spur the full integration of science and technology into industries and finance, improve the environment for innovation and pool resources for innovation.

A road connecting different civilizations

In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we should ensure that when it comes to different civilizations, exchange will replace estrangement, mutual learning will replace clashes, and coexistence will replace a sense of superiority. This will boost mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual trust among different countries.

(Source: President Xi Jinping's speech at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation)



Chinese and Serbian engineers discuss the construction plan of a railway that was built by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corp. in Serbia on April 29. Wang Huijuan



A Chinese instructor teaches Chinese to local Pakistanis on December 31, 2016, in order to facilitate better exchange between the two peoples. Liu Tian



Zhang Dejiang (R), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin, in Moscow, capital of Russia, April 19. *Liu Weibing*

Zhang Dejiang visits Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus and Russia

Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress (NPC), paid an official goodwill visit to Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus and Russia from April 12 to 21 at the invitation of Latvian Parliament Speaker Inara Murniece; Lithuanian Parliament Speaker Viktoras Pranckietis; Chairman of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus Mikhail Myasnikov and Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly Vladimir Andreichenko; Russian Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matviyenko and Chairman of the Russian State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin.

China, Latvia pledge to increase parliamentary exchanges, cooperation

China and Latvia have pledged to enhance parliamentary exchanges and step up their all-round cooperation.

Chairman Zhang Dejiang and Latvian leaders agreed on this during his three-day visit to the country, which ended on April 14.

While meeting with Latvian President Raimonds Vejonis, Zhang hailed the stable growth of bilateral ties over the past years, especially since the 25th anniversary of their diplomatic ties last year.



Zhang Dejiang (R), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, meets with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, Belarus, April 18.
Liu Weibing

Calling Latvia a trustworthy good friend and partner of China in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region and the European Union, Zhang said China greatly appreciates the positive attitude of the Latvian government, parliament and society in developing friendly cooperation with China.

Vejonis said Latvia-China ties are experiencing an all-time high, adding that he believed Zhang's visit would promote the further growth of bilateral cooperation in various areas.

He said he hoped to cement all-round cooperation with China and upgrade bilateral ties.

During his meeting with Latvian Prime Minister Maris Kucinskis, Zhang said the Belt and Road Initiative, put forward by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, had witnessed important progress in China's cooperation with countries along the route.

"China appreciates Latvia's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative, and the successful hosting of the fifth China-CEE summit late last year," Zhang said, urging to make full use of existing bilateral mechanisms to facilitate stronger cooperation.

China encourages its enterprises to invest in Latvia, and hopes to increase agricultural and wood product imports from the country, he added.

Zhang called on Latvia to play a positive role in cementing Europe-China cooperation, and promote trade and invest-

China has always advocated that all countries, no matter big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are equal members of the international community, Zhang said.

ment liberalization and facilitation.

Considering China as Latvia's most important partner in Asia, Kucinskis said his country is ready to play a greater role in the Belt and Road Initiative and CEE-China cooperation. He welcomed Chinese companies to participate in Latvia's infrastructure projects, including ports and a joint railway project in the Baltic Sea area.

During their talks, Zhang and Latvian Parliament Speaker Inara Murniece agreed to boost closer parliamentary cooperation, consolidate political trust and facilitate cultural exchanges.

Murniece said the Latvian parliament expects to forge closer ties with the Chinese NPC to contribute to the sustained growth of bilateral relations.

Zhang and Murniece signed an MOU regarding cooperation between the legislative bodies of the two countries.

During his stay in Riga, Zhang met with leaders of various parties of the Latvian parliament, calling on them to support friendly ties with China. He also paid a visit to the National Library of Latvia.

China, Lithuania agree to build stronger ties

China and Lithuania have agreed to facilitate closer cooperation and stronger ties as Chairman Zhang Dejiang concluded his visit to the Baltic country on April 16.

Zhang visited Lithuania on April 14-16.

"The history of China-Lithuania ties shows that it could achieve stable and healthy growth as long as the two countries respect each other, treat one another equally, understand and support each other on issues regarding respective core interests and major concerns," Zhang told Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė.

Zhang said China-Lithuania relations have entered a mature and stable new stage.

China has always advocated that all countries, no matter big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are equal members of the international community, Zhang said.

He vowed joint efforts with Lithuania to cement understanding and trust, and boost bilateral ties up to a new high.

China's stable economic growth will offer more development opportunities for various countries including Lithuania, Zhang said.

Grybauskaitė, for her part, said Lithuania highly values its relations with China, sticks to the one-China policy and respects China's core interests.

She pledged to strengthen high-level exchanges and practical cooperation with China.

In his meeting with Lithuanian Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis, Zhang hailed the sound momentum of bilateral



Zhang Dejiang (L), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, meets with Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė in Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, April 14. *Li Tao*

cooperation in all areas. “The two-way trade volume saw an increase last year regardless of the sluggish world economy, which reflected the potential of bilateral trade cooperation,” Zhang said.

The cooperation between both sides in such areas as transport logistics and infrastructure has witnessed remarkable progress under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative and the cooperation mechanism between China and 16 CEE countries, Zhang said.

Launched in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative is a massive economic and trade project for common development and prosperity in countries along its routes in Europe, Africa and Asia.

Zhang called for Lithuania to offer policy support for cooperation between companies of both sides.

China highly treasures its relations with Europe, firmly supports the European integration, and regards Lithuania as an important partner in the European Union (EU), Zhang said, urging the country to contribute to closer China-EU ties.

Skvernelis told Zhang that Lithuania is ready to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative and the CEE-China cooperation, vowing to cement cooperation with China in transportation, agriculture, technology and tourism.

He appreciated China’s support for Lithuania’s export of agricultural products.

Zhang also held talks with Speaker Viktoras Pranckietis of Seimas, the Lithuanian parliament.

Calling parliamentary exchanges an important component of bilateral ties, Zhang urged the two legislative bodies to



Zhang Dejiang (L), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, meets with Latvian President Raimonds Vejonis in Riga, Latvia, April 12. *Liu Weibing*

The Belt and Road Initiative is a massive economic and trade project for common development and prosperity in countries along its routes in Asia, Europe and Africa.

forge closer links, consolidate political trust, enhance communications of policies and laws, share governance experience and expand exchanges between the people, parties and localities.

Pranckietis vowed to boost exchanges with the Chinese NPC to contribute to bilateral friendship and overall relations.

During his stay in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius, Zhang visited Vilnius University and its Confucius Institute.

China vows to cement all-round strategic partnership with Belarus

Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee Zhang Dejiang pledged to cement the all-round strategic partnership with Belarus during his three-day visit to the country on April 16-18.

During his meeting with Belarusian President Alexander

Lukashenko, Zhang said the decision of Chinese President Xi Jinping and President Lukashenko in 2016 to forge a comprehensive strategic partnership featuring mutual trust and win-win cooperation was an all-round blueprint and had upgraded bilateral ties.

“My current trip aimed to implement the consensus of the two State leaders, and facilitate rapid growth of ties at a high level,” said Zhang.

China hopes to make the 25th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic ties this year a new starting point to strengthen political trust and strategic coordination, develop an all-weather friendship, expand all-round cooperation and build a community of shared interests and future, he said.

The two countries firmly support each other on issues regarding respective core interests and major concerns, which serves as a solid foundation for their bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership, Zhang said.

“China will continue to support Belarus’ independent domestic and foreign policy as well as its choice of a development path that suits its national conditions,” he added.

Lukashenko, for his part, said Belarus will always be China’s close friend and partner, vowing to boost friendly exchanges and political trust with China and enhance cooperation in such areas as investment, finance and tourism.

When meeting with Belarusian Prime Minister Andrei Kobyakov, Zhang said China considers Belarus as an important partner in the Belt and Road Initiative, urging the two sides to step up cooperation under the initiative, identify priority sectors for combining their development strategies, make full use of bilateral cooperation mechanisms, and draw plans for key areas and priorities of cooperation.

Proposed by China in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative is a massive economic and trade project for common development and prosperity in countries along its routes in Asia, Europe and Africa.

Zhang praised the progress of the China-Belarus Industrial Park, calling on both sides to facilitate pragmatic cooperation in various areas.

Kobyakov said it is a common aspiration of both sides to deepen win-win cooperation, adding Belarus attaches great importance to the building of the industrial park, and hopes to expand investment and trade of high-tech and high value-added products, and offer a sound environment for the implementation of bilateral cooperation projects.

Zhang also held talks with Chairman Mikhail Myasnikovich of the Belarusian Council of the Republic (the upper house of the National Assembly of Belarus), and Chairman Vladimir Andreichenko of the House of Representatives (the lower house of the National Assembly of Belarus).

Calling the two countries’ legislative bodies firm supporters and builders of the China-Belarus friendship, Zhang hoped both sides would maintain a sound momentum for cooperation, share governance experience, improve the legal environment for win-win cooperation, and boost cooperation in such areas as education and culture.

Echoing Zhang’s proposals, Myasnikovich and Andreichenko said Belarus hopes to learn from China’s experience, and facilitate substantial cooperation and exchanges between legislative bodies.

Zhang and the two chairmen signed a joint statement concerning cooperation between the NPC and the National As-

sembly of Belarus.

They visited the China-Belarus Industrial Park, which was named Great Stone. Zhang said it was important to improve the investment environment and management, as well as speed up investment attraction, encouraging companies from both sides to make the park a highlight of bilateral cooperation.

Zhang also visited the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War, and laid a wreath at the Victory Monument in Minsk.

China, Russia eye stronger partnership

China and Russia agreed to boost their strategic partnership of comprehensive coordination during the three-day visit of Chairman Zhang Dejiang to Moscow.

Zhang has been in Russia since April 18. He met Russian President Vladimir Putin, and the two discussed ways to strengthen cooperation between the two countries, particularly between the two legislatures.

Zhang hailed the growing bilateral ties under the leadership of Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, noting the partnership has broader room and greater potential for development than ever before.

A complex international situation has underlined the significance of China-Russia friendship, Zhang said.

The priorities of the two countries’ legislative bodies are to safeguard and promote bilateral ties, he added.

Putin said that sound Russia-China relations have seen an increase in economic and trade cooperation, more progress in major projects, vigorous cultural and people-to-people exchanges, and cooperation at the local level.

Putin expressed confidence in the prospect of Russia-China ties, saying the two legislative bodies shall maintain close ties.

In separate meetings with Valentina Matviyenko and Vyacheslav Volodin, the top leaders of the upper and lower houses of the Russian parliament, Zhang said China and Russia should support each other on issues mutual concern and that serve their core interests.

Zhang encouraged law makers from both countries to use the Belt and Road Initiative and Eurasian Economic Union as opportunities to strengthen ties.

He also called on both sides to promote cultural and people-to-people exchanges and further coordinate in multinational organizations, such as the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum, to safeguard international justice.

For their parts, Matviyenko and Volodin said Russia and China have enjoyed a closer friendship thanks to the high-level ties between the countries’ legislative bodies.

Zhang co-chaired with Matviyenko the third session of the cooperation committee of China and Russia’s legislative bodies, where he called on both sides to share experiences, promote trade and seek an overall growth in relations.

During his stay in Moscow, Zhang also met with representatives of the Russia-China Friendly Association and congratulated the association on its 60th anniversary.

Zhang also laid a wreath at the Tomb of Unknown Soldiers at Red Square in downtown Moscow, visited the Lenin Mausoleum and the offices of the widely known media group Russia Today. (Xinhua) ■



Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, arrives at the Macao International Airport, in Macao, south China, May 8. *Pang Xinglei*

Zhang Dejiang urges Macao SAR to keep practicing ‘one country, two systems’

Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (NPC), wrapped up his three-day inspection of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) on May 10, calling on the SAR to make greater efforts to keep being a good model of successfully practicing “one country, two systems.”

Since Macao’s return to the motherland more than 17 years ago, the SAR has witnessed overall progress in socio-economic life, with remarkable achievements made in practicing “one country, two systems,” Zhang said.

He noted the effective implementation of the central government’s overall jurisdiction, the full guarantee of the SAR’s

right to a high degree of autonomy and the sound function of the administration-led system.

Zhang called on the SAR to earnestly implement the important instructions of President Xi Jinping on the SAR’s work and make concerted and redoubled efforts to work for the development of the SAR and the motherland.

Zhang, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, arrived in the Macao SAR on May 8.

In a speech delivered at the airport upon arrival, Zhang conveyed the sincere greetings and wishes from President Xi Jinping, the central government and people of all ethnic

groups across the country to Macao compatriots.

During his inspection, Zhang met with Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Ho Hau Wah and Macao SAR Chief Executive Chui Sai On separately and spoke highly of their contributions to the motherland as well as the Macao SAR.

While hearing report on the work of the SAR government, Zhang noted that the current SAR administration has seized the strategic opportunities brought about by the country's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20) and the Belt and Road Initiative and pushed ahead with Macao's role as "one center, one platform."

Macao is striving to become a world tourism and leisure center and a platform for business and trade cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

Zhang noted that the current SAR administration has made positive progress in promoting appropriate diversification of economic development and increasing improvement of people's livelihood.

At a symposium attended by more than 150 representatives from all walks of life in the SAR, Zhang called for cherishing the successful experience of the SAR's development, and accurately following through the principle of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law.

He also called for further implementing the central government's overall jurisdiction over the SAR and the SAR's right to a high degree of autonomy in accordance with law so as to push for the economic development and the improvement of people's well-being.

The mainstream values of promoting outstanding Chinese culture and loving the country and Macao should be carried forward, so as to continuously expand the forces of loving the country and Macao, and to nurture the talent for the Macao SAR's development, Zhang said, adding that a solid foundation in this regard should be laid.

When inspecting the SAR's Legislative Council, Zhang noted that the SAR's Legislative Council has earnestly performed its duties to support, coordinate and supervise the SAR government according to law, and has contributed significantly to Macao's prosperity and stability, rule of law and social advancement.

Zhang also met with the SAR's judges and prosecutors when inspecting the SAR's judicial organs, and encouraged them to firmly establish consciousness about the Constitution and the Basic Law.

In meeting with representatives from Macao's education sector, Zhang said educators should always stick to right direction and lead students to build character, learn knowledge, gain innovative thinking and serve the country.

He hoped young students to have high aspirations and connect individual fates with the development of the country and the SAR, and cherish deep love for the country and the SAR, as well as aspirations to serve them.

During his inspection, Zhang was also briefed on the construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and visited "Joy in Abundance" Family Support Center of the Women's General Association of Macao.

He also met with heads of the central government agencies and key Chinese-funded institutions in the Macao SAR. (Xinhua) ■



Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, hears briefings by principal officials of Macao Special Administrative Region government on their work in Macao on May 8. Pang Xinglei



Zhang Dejiang (R), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, shakes hands with representatives from all walks of life in Macao Special Administrative Region on May 9. Li Xueren



Zhang Dejiang (C), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, meets with representatives from Macao's education sector on May 10. Pang Xinglei



A high-ranking symposium commemorating the 20th anniversary of implementing the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on May 27. *Li Tao*

China commemorates 20th anniversary of implementing HKSAR Basic Law

China held a high-ranking symposium on May 27 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of implementing the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

Addressing the symposium, which was held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) Zhang Dejiang called for comprehensive and precise implementation of the principle of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law.

Zhang called the HKSAR Basic Law "a product of ingenuity of a great era," which fully embodies the shared desire of all Chinese including Hong Kong compatriots and has demonstrated great vitality.

Successful implementation

Enacted in accordance with China's Constitution, the Basic Law specifies the guidelines of "one country, two systems", and "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" with a high degree of autonomy.

The Basic Law is a good law which accords the actual conditions of the nation and the HKSAR and is able to provide a fundamental guarantee for the great cause of "one country, two systems" and withstand the test of practice, Zhang said.

The practice of the Basic Law over the past 20 years shows that the fundamental purposes of safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests as well as maintaining Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability must be adhered to in order to advance the cause of "one country, two systems," Zhang noted.

Best arrangements

HKSAR Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying said at the symposium that the principle of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law are the best constitutional arrangements for both the HKSAR and the country.

With the combined advantages of "one country, two systems", Hong Kong can participate in the country's major development strategies including the national 13th Five-Year Plan and the Belt and Road Initiative, while serving as



Zhang Dejiang (R, front), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, attends a high-ranking symposium commemorating the 20th anniversary of implementing the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on May 27. *Li Tao*

a “super-connector” between the mainland and the rest of the world at the same time, Leung said.

The coordinated and joint development of the HKSAR and the mainland would not only improve their overall competitiveness, but provide the world new experiences of cooperation between regions of different systems, thus enriching “one country, two systems,” he said.

Elsie Leung, deputy director of the Commission for the HKSAR Basic Law of the NPC Standing Committee, said the implementation of the Basic Law has helped realize the “one country, two systems” concept, stabilize the relationship between the central government and Hong Kong, and clarify the legal status of the HKSAR.

As the Basic Law was well received by Hong Kong citizens, a seamless and stable transition has been achieved with Hong Kong’s capitalist system and life styles unchanged, its legal system improved, judicial independence ensured, democracy developing step by step, and external affairs in sound shape, she said.

To correct misinterpretations

Noting that some people have developed misunderstanding of the policy of “one country, two systems” and the Basic Law, Zhang called for efforts in raising public awareness and correcting deliberate misinterpretation of the Basic Law.

“We should resolutely oppose statements and deeds that distort, challenge or even violate the Basic Law to uphold its unshakable authority,” said Zhang.

Zhang also stressed that power exercised by the HKSAR is delegated by but not separated from the central government and under no circumstances should anyone be allowed to challenge the power of the central government in the name of a high degree of autonomy.

The political system of the HKSAR is neither one of separation of powers nor a legislative-led or judiciary-led system, but an executive-led system with the chief executive at its core, Zhang explained.

Hong Kong’s long-term prosperity and stability can only be based on accurate understanding and strict and full implementation of the Basic Law, according to Song Zhe, deputy head of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council.

Defending the Constitution

National identity based on the Constitution is the core value for making and enforcing the Basic Law, said Han Dayuan, a law professor of Renmin University of China, urging efforts to promote the Constitution and make it a powerful guarantee for the prosperity, stability and sustainable development of Hong Kong.

Zhang also called for special attention on strengthening education of the young people in Hong Kong about the country’s national conditions and the rule of law to instill in them a strong sense of national identity, of being Chinese and the rule of law. (Xinhua) ■

A legislative milestone

China adopts new basic principles of the civil law to reflect current situation

By Song Zhihong

Compiling a civil code suited to China's socialist market economy and the interests of the people is vital for national prosperity and public well-being, and has been a long-cherished dream of generations. In 2014, during the Fourth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, it was decided that a civil code would be compiled by 2020.

It was planned to be developed in two steps: first, adopting basic principles for regulating civil activities, and then compiling five individual books on property, contract, tort liability, marriage and inheritance.

The General Provisions of the Civil Law are the opening chapter of the civil code, and is to replace the General Principles of the Civil Law adopted in 1986 as the latter has become outdated. The General Provisions embody modern characteristics, China's culture and foreign experiences.

The General Provisions, adopted at the fifth session of the 12th National People's Congress on March 15, will take effect on October 1, 2017.



Reflecting Chinese character

The civil laws enacted before the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 were influenced by German jurisprudence, and the influence persists. On the other hand, China is a socialist country, so its legal system after 1949 has been naturally affected by ideas on civil law from the former Soviet Union.

Since the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy and the development of its socialist market economy, China has become more and more open. Its legal theories and practices have drawn extensively on the outstanding achievements of human civilization, and this is reflected in the General Provisions.

Meanwhile, as China's international status rises, it has become increasingly more confident in its own system and culture. Its legislation, including civil laws, embodies Chinese characteristics, which has created a spillover effect. For instance, the General Principles of the Civil Law adopted in 1986 reflect distinct Chinese characteristics in its style and layout.

The General Principles clearly spelled out the basic civil law principles in one chapter and civil liabilities in another. This innovative practice has been commended by some foreign scholars and emulated by some countries.

The General Provisions also reflect China's traditional cultural values, such as love, faith, justice and harmony; and socialist core values, such as freedom, equality, justice, the rule of law and patriotism. For instance, it stipulates that those dishonoring heroes and martyrs or their portraits and affecting the public interest would bear civil liability.

Keeping up with the times

The General Provisions have been drafted to reflect social development. While dropping outdated provisions in the General Principles, it has added provisions to emphasize environmental protection and equal protection of property rights.

The principle of paying an equivalent compensation has been omitted as it applies to commodity exchanges rather than civil activities. It was included in the General Principles because when it was drafted, property relations were put above personal relations. Thanks to social and economic development, civil laws are becoming more and more people-oriented and more important in regulating personal relations.

The statements that civil activities should follow State policies where there are no relevant provisions in the law and that civil activities shall not undermine State economic plans are also no longer included.

As the legal system improves, State policies are no more norms governing civil activities. Meanwhile, as the market economy develops, fewer national economic plans are mandatory, and they too are no more guidelines for civil activities.

The General Provisions add "a green principle," that is, it stipulates that civil activities should be conducive to resource saving and ecological environment protection. It not only regulates relations between people, but also that between people and nature. This enshrines China's traditional emphasis on harmony between human and nature, the green development concept promoted since the 18th National Congress

of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the international idea of sustainable development.

The General Provisions also uphold public ownership, the foundation of the socialist economy according to the Constitution, while offering equal protection to property rights. It also ensures that civil subjects can enjoy civil rights according to law.

Article 113 of the General Provisions stipulates that property rights of all civil subjects shall be protected equally. This is in line with the central leadership's decision to improve property rights protection.

Civil rights protection

The General Provisions have enumerated various civil rights to highlight the importance given to respecting and protecting civil rights.

It improves on the General Principles by stipulating, for the first time, that a natural person's personal freedom and dignity are protected by law, and so are his or her personal rights arising from marriage and family relations. For the first time, it also clearly provides that a natural person enjoys the right to privacy, and his or her personal information is protected by law.

The General Provisions of the Civil Law are the opening chapter of the civil code, and embody modern characteristics, China's culture and foreign experiences.

Personal rights have been given a higher priority. Previously, they came after property rights, creditor's rights and intellectual property rights. Now the order has been changed, indicating personal rights have greater importance.

The General Provisions have kept up with the Internet era by specifying protection of personal information, data and virtual property. This is a pioneering move in the world.

It specifically stipulates, "Any organization or individual needing to obtain others' personal information shall do so in accordance with the law and ensure information security. No organization or individual may illegally collect, use, process or transmit personal information, or illegally sell, buy, provide or disclose others' personal information."

Innovative classification

How to classify legal persons in the General Provisions was a subject of long debate.

In the traditional civil law system, legal persons are generally divided into corporations and foundations. However, such classification does not suit China's national conditions. The General Provisions classify legal persons into three categories: for-profit, non-profit and special legal persons.

Special legal persons include government organizations, rural collective economic organizations, urban and rural

cooperative economic organizations, and community-level self-governance organizations. This innovative classification echoes China's practical needs.

Moreover, unincorporated organizations are listed as the third type of civil subjects, alongside natural persons and legal persons. According to the General Provisions, an unincorporated organization is not a legal person, but an organization that can engage in civil activities in its own name according to law. Unincorporated organizations include sole proprietorship enterprises, partnership enterprises and professional service organizations that do not

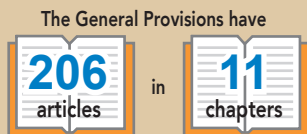
have a legal personality.

Whether partnership organizations can be listed as civil subjects other than natural persons and legal persons has been debated in many countries. The General Provisions list unincorporated organizations in a separate chapter as a type of civil subject, which is a breakthrough in international civil law theories.

All in all, the General Provisions, keeping abreast of China's current conditions and drawing upon historical and international experiences, mark a new milestone in civil law legislation. (Beijing Review) ■

A brief introduction of the General Provisions of the Civil Law

The General Provisions of the Civil Law were adopted at the fifth session of the 12th National People's Congress on March 15. It will take effect on October 1, 2017. The civil law regulates personal and property relationships between civil subjects with equal status, that is, between natural persons, legal persons and unincorporated organizations.



The decision to compile a civil code by 2020 was made by the central leadership in 2014. The civil code was planned to be developed in two steps:

- 1 Adopting the basic principles for regulating civil activities.
- 2 Compiling five individual books, respectively on



Highlights:

1 The interests of fetuses are protected.

Article 16: A fetus is deemed to have capacity for civil conduct in cases involving inheritance, acceptance of gift and the protection of its interests. But if the fetus is stillborn, its capacity for civil conduct does not exist from the beginning.



2 The age limit for minors to have limited capacity for civil conduct is lowered from 10 to 8.

Article 19: A minor aged 8 or above shall be a person with limited capacity for civil conduct and may engage in civil activities yielding pure benefits or other civil activities appropriate to his or her age and intellect; in other civil activities, he or she shall be represented by his or her agent ad litem or participate with the consent of his or her agent ad litem.



Article 20: A minor under the age of 8 shall be a person having no capacity for civil conduct and shall be represented in civil activities by his or her agent ad litem.

3 Guardianship can be revoked under some circumstances to protect the rights and interests of wards, particularly children.

Article 36: A people's court will revoke the guardianship of a guardian at the request of an individual or organization concerned, make necessary temporary custodial arrangements, and designate a guardian to the best interest of the ward according to law, if the guardian is found guilty of:



- Seriously damaging a ward's physical and mental health;
- Putting the ward in a state of danger and distress because the guardian is not willing to perform his or her custodial duties, or fails to perform his or her custodial duties, and refuses to entrust the duty of care, in part or in whole, to any other person;
- Carrying out other acts that seriously infringe upon the lawful rights and interests of the ward.

The individuals and organizations concerned referred to by this include: Other persons qualified for guardianship according to law, residents committees, villagers committees, schools, medical institutions, women's federations, disabled persons' federations, organizations protecting minors, seniors' organizations established according to law, civil affairs departments and other organizations.

When individuals and organizations referred to in the preceding paragraph, other than the civil affairs department, fail to apply to the people's court for revocation of the guardian's qualification, the civil affairs department shall apply to the people's court.

4 Personal information and virtual assets are protected, which is important in the Internet era.



Article 111: Natural person's personal information is protected by law. Any organization or individual needing to obtain other's personal information shall be do so in accordance with law, and ensure information security. No organization or individual may illegally collect, use, process or transmit personal information, or illegally sell, buy, provide or disclose other's personal information.

Article 127: Stipulations on the protection of data and virtual property in other laws shall be abided by.

5 Limitation of action is extended from two years to three years except the law stipulates otherwise.



Article 188: Except as otherwise stipulated by law, the limitation of action regarding applications to a people's court for protection of civil rights shall be three years.

A limitation of action shall begin when the entitled person knows or should know that his or her rights have been infringed upon. However, the people's court shall not protect his or her rights if 20 years have passed since the infringement. Under special circumstances, the people's court may extend the limitation of action.



Wang Penghui, a college student, leads the students from Dongguan Minzu Primary School in Liaocheng, East China's Shandong Province, reading General Provisions of the Civil Law on April 26. Zhao Yuguo

The General Provisions of the Civil Law: the achievement of a great era

By Qiao Xiaoyang

The fifth session of the 12th National People's Congress (NPC) passed the General Provisions of the Civil Law with an overwhelming majority vote and prolonged applause among 2,838 delegates, representing the first step in the formulation of a civil code. When the draft was still under review, the Law Committee of the NPC conducted five rounds of deliberation to solicit opinions and suggestions from all walks of life. Since the public spoke highly of the General Provisions upon its promulgation, as chairman of the Law Committee of the NPC, I couldn't help feeling gratified. It is important to point out that the General Provisions are the achievement of a great era. More importantly, it will lead to the accomplishment of a civil code that honors an even greater era.

I. Civil code comes along with the development of the era

Before coming into power, the Communist Party of China (CPC) enacted the Land Law and the Marriage Law in the liberated areas. Those two laws became one of the first laws since the founding of People's Republic of China in 1949, serving as a token of new era as well as a cornerstone of the rule of law. Hereafter, legislative work of civil law went through ups and downs. It went well when national development was on the right track and people were living and working in peace and contentment. On the contrary, it was held up when the case

was to the opposite. It is unrealistic to push forward codification of civil law during the times of planned economy. Comrade Deng Xiaoping proposed to draft civil law at the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee in 1978. Since then, legislative work on civil law was carried out along with the drive of reform and opening-up. As a result, 33 civil and commercial laws have been made as of 2016, safeguarding the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

We are living in a great era. As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, “The Communist Party of China is leading Chinese people to great victories. The Chinese nation with 5,000 years civilization is marching towards modernization. The socialism with 500 years of history has created a right and pragmatic path in the world’s most populous country, making scientific socialism shine with new vigor and vitality in the 21st century. The New China with 60 years history has made remarkable achievements that attracted global attention. As the biggest developing country, China became the world’s second largest economy in a short span of 30 years and got rid of poverty, and created earthshaking miracles in the history of human society, making the Chinese nation shine with new vigor and vitality.” After 96 years of revolution and reform, the Chinese people, led by CPC, have changed the destiny of our nation and realized social development, marching towards an all-round well-off society while chasing the Chinese Dream of the national rejuvenation. In the context of such a great era, the Fourth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee decided to compile a civil code and to establish a legal system that suits an all-round well-off society, in a bid to consolidate legal foundation for the Chinese Dream. This decision is not only a reflection of the law of social development but also a call of the age. As a matter of fact, the General Provisions of the Civil Law were born because of the great era.

II. Civil law protects people’s interests and responds to people’s concern

It is in the nature of civil law to protect people’s personal and property rights, which is also the fundamental purpose of our Party. To compile the civil code and enact the General Provisions of the Civil Law is to put the Party’s purpose into practice and to respond to people’s concern.

Since the 18th National Congress of CPC, the CPC Central Committee, with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core, put up efforts to promote balanced economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological progress and coordinated implementation of the Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy (which refers to making comprehensive moves to finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, deepen reform, advance the law-based governance of China, and strengthen Party self-governance). General Secretary Xi delivered the speeches, raising new concepts, new ideas and new strategies on governance. According to a series of important documents issued by CPC Central Committee, we should adhere to the leadership of the Party, the dominant role of the people, equal rights of the people under the law; improve socialist legal system with Chinese characteristics, develop the coun-

try based on the rule of law, and protect people’s rights and interests in accordance with the law; stick to people-oriented notion and socialist core values; improve legal system with emphasis on fair rights, fair chance and fair regulation, protect personal and property rights as well as basic political rights of the people; optimize legal environment for socialist market economy so as to safeguard property, integrated market, equal exchanges, fair competition and effective supervision, to establish property protecting system centered with fairness, and to enhance protection of the property right of every natural person and all economic organizations with any form of ownership; to provide equal and comprehensive protection in order to make the public feel safe about their wealth; to ensure the legal person of rural collective economic organizations and maintain their rights and interests, etc. All those important policies are closely connected with people’s vital interests; respond to people’s need, and demonstrate the Party’s fundamental purpose of serving the people.

To compile the civil code and enact the General Provisions of the Civil Law means to carry out the policies adopted by CPC Central Committee by means of law, so as to protect people’s vital interests. Besides explaining the purpose and subject of the law, the General Provisions of the Civil Law rule that “the personal rights, property rights and other legitimate rights and interests of civil subjects are protected by law, no organization or individual may infringe upon such rights and interests”, setting basic tone for the civil code. The General Provisions inherit the rule of civil law and respond to people’s major concern. Its essential stipulations are as follows: First, all civil subjects are equal so that the personal rights, property rights and other legitimate rights and interests of civil subjects are protected by law; Second, civil subjects enjoy independence and can establish, alter and terminate civil legal relations according to their own intentions; Third, civil subjects engaging in civil activities shall follow the principles of fairness; Fourth, make more realistic and practicable rules on guardianship; Fifth, consolidate civil system with socialist characteristics, advocate socialist core values, and stick to green principle; Sixth, recognize legal person of rural collective economic organization and make specific rules on heroic behavior and protection of martyrs. The General Provisions met with widespread approval among all social circles thanks to the implementation of the requirements of CPC Central Committee and reflection of people’s will as well as respect for people’s fundamental interests.

III. Civil law is a social science that should follow legislative rules

In 1954, Comrade Mao Zedong said that the establishment of the Constitution is a science. Likewise, making civil law is not only a science but one of the most profound ones. Civil activities involve basic needs of people’s life. Therefore, how to make explicit rules on sophisticated social life is not an easy task.

During the process of formulating the General Provisions, I was impressed by five legislative rules: First, respect the diversity of people’s life and protect people’s creativity.

The General Provisions of the Civil Law are the opening chapter of the civil code, and embody modern characteristics, China's culture and foreign experiences.



The General Provisions of the Civil Law are adopted at the fifth session of the 12th National People's Congress on March 15. VCG

For example, since Company Law has stipulations on sole-proprietorship enterprises, some people believe that there is no need to include individual industrial and commercial households in the General Provisions, which was not adopted in the end due to the fact that the 59 million individual industrial and commercial households in China are created by people at the beginning of reform and opening-up. Second, set rules on civil activities, some of which are compulsory but most are optional, ensuring civil subjects' freedom under the law. For example, the General Provisions rule that the determination of a legal guardian should follow certain order. But could guardianship be decided by agreement among eligible persons? The answer is yes. The stipulation on guardianship only becomes compulsory when disputes arise. Third, emphasize both rights and obligations but not the law of jungle. For example, civil subjects engaging in civil activities shall follow the principle of fairness in determining reasonably the rights and obligations of all parties concerned; Civil subjects shall fulfill obligations in accordance with the law and agreement reached between all parties concerned when exercising their legitimate rights; Civil subjects that fail to fulfill civil obligations shall be held accountable. Fourth, the purpose of civil law is to create a better society through the protection of the rights of each individual. A sound society is the basis for all human beings to live in. That is why the General Provisions regarding socialist core values as fundamental principles for civil activities. For example, no civil subject engaging in civil activities may violate laws or go against public order and good customs or undermine national interests, social and public interests and legitimate interests of others. Fifth, civil law should be easy to understand as written in legal language. For example, a natural person may enjoy civil rights from birth to death, but he or she has no capacity to exercise civil rights until becoming an adult. As a result, the term "capacity for civil rights" and "capacity for civil conduct" are created. Moreover, some legal terminologies, such as "exclusion period" which is easy for professionals to understand but not for ordinary people, was changed into simpler terms upon suggestions of the members of the NPC Standing Committee.

In a word, the General Provisions indicate scientific and democratic legislation. General Secretary Xi Jinping held a meeting of the Standing Committee of Political Bureau, CPC Central Committee, to review the work report on the formulation of the General Provisions. Chairman Zhang Dejiang and Vice Chairman Li Jianguo of the NPC Standing Committee held four rounds of discussions to listen to opinions from all social circles as well as conduct field investigations in localities. The NPC Standing Committee conducted three rounds of deliberation on the draft. The draft was publicized online to collect opinions each time and was sent twice to NPC deputies for suggestions. The Law Committee of the NPC and the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee studied closely each suggestion and made 150 revisions during deliberation. As a whole, the promulgation of the General Provisions is a successful practice of making laws under the leadership of the Party. It will exert a profound influence on the compilation of civil code and the nation's legislative course as well. ■

(The author is a member of the NPC Standing Committee and chairman of the Law Committee of the NPC)

The General Provisions of the Civil Law:

a basic law governing China's civil system

By Li Shishi



The General Provisions of the Civil Law, which was passed with an absolute majority vote at the 5th session of the 12th National People's Congress, will enter into force on October 1, 2017. Being a symbol of the firm first step in the formation of the Civil Code in China, it is of utter importance to protect the lawful rights and interests of the civil subjects, properly adjust civil relations, safeguard social and economic order, meet the needs in developing socialism with Chinese characteristics, and advance socialist core values.

The General Provisions are the opening chapter that plays a dominant role in the Civil Code. On the one hand, the General Provisions stipulate the basic principles and common rules that have to be observed in all civil activities, and thus become the command of the following chapters. On the other hand, each chapter makes operational provisions for respective civil system on the basis of the General Provisions. Based on the General Principles formulated in 1986, the General Provisions not only built the basic framework of China's civil law system but also provided basis for the compilation of each chapter by absorbing the universally applicable and guiding principles from the civil law system. It is fair to say that the General Provisions lay out the pillars of the Civil Code. There are altogether 11 chapters and 206 articles in the General Provisions with stipulations on the basic principles, natural person, legal person, unincorporated organization, civil rights, agent, civil responsibilities, and limitation of action and period calculation. More impressively, there are numerous highlights and innovations in this legislation.



Zhang Dejiang (C, back), chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, presides over a symposium on the draft general provisions of civil law in Beijing on October 10, 2016. *Sheng Jiapeng*

The General Provisions are the opening chapter that plays a dominant role in the Civil Code.

On the basic principles of civil affairs and application rules of laws

Basic principles of civil affairs epitomize the core values of civil law, reflect the purpose, guidelines and orientation of civil legislation, and therefore serve as the basic criteria for civil subjects to engage in civil activities and judicial organs to conduct civil-related judicial activities. On the basis of the General Principles and experiences from civil-related legal practices in the past 30-odd years, the General Provisions make it clear that personal rights, property rights and other legitimate rights are under the protection of laws, and no organization and individual shall violate these rights. The five traditional civil basic principles, namely equality, voluntariness, fairness, honesty and law-abiding, have been further established in a bid to embody the spirit of socialist core values. Concurrently, the green principle is newly added to encourage civil subjects to conserve resources and protect ecosys-

tem while engaging in civil activities. Making green principle a basic principle in civil law reflects the requirement of the times, meets the need to protect the environment and maintain a balanced ecosystem while entering a crucial period to build a moderately prosperous society in an all-around manner, implements the new concept of development since the 18th CPC National Congress, fits well into the basic national conditions that China is a densely populated country which needs to properly handle the relationship between people and resources, and is conducive to promoting the harmony of people and nature.

With regard to the application rules of civil laws, the General Provisions make the following stipulations. First, civil disputes should be settled according to law. When there is no applicable legal provision in place, we can resort to customs, but the customs shall not contravene good morals. Civil relations are very complicated. For a matter that is not provided in law, it is helpful to resolve disputes if the people's court can handle them according to folk customs or established practices under certain circumstances. Second, if other laws have special provisions on civil relations, they will apply. Copyright Law, Patent Law, Insurance Law and other specialized civil and commercial laws cover not only civil legal relations, but also administrative legal relations and special commercial rules. Hence, they are less likely and not suitable to be included in the Civil Code. This rule has clarified the relations between the Civil Code and those specialized civil and commercial laws.

On the civil subject system

Civil subject is the participant of civil relations, bearer of civil rights, performer of civil obligations as well as undertaker of civil responsibilities. The General Provisions use three chapters to elaborate on the three categories of civil subjects including natural person, legal person and unincorporated organization.

Natural person is the major civil subject that engages in civil activities. Natural person must develop its capacities for civil rights and civil conduct. Natural person is born with the capacities for civil rights which enables him or her to bear rights and perform obligations. However, natural person still needs to develop its capacities for civil conduct so as to transform these rights and obligations into reality. Capacities for civil conduct refers to the qualifications for natural person to independently conduct civil juristic act, bear civil rights and fulfill civil obligations. In reality, every natural person has the abilities for civil rights, yet not all of them are equipped with the capacities for civil conduct. Taking into consideration the differences of natural person's age, intellect, mental health conditions, the General Principles categorized the capacities of civil conduct as full capacities, limited capacities and disability. Based on this, the General Provisions make the following improvement:

First, new provisions are added to protect the interests of fetus. Natural person's civil rights ability starts from its birth. The fetus, in principle, does not have the ability before its birth. However, it is necessary to grant the fetus some civil rights abilities in order to protect its rights of inheritance as well as to accept gift of property. It is provided in the General Provisions that the fetus is considered to enjoy civil rights abilities when it comes to the protection of the fetus' rights of inheritance and acceptance of gift of property.

Second, the age limit of minors with limited capacities for civil conduct is lowered to 8 from 10 in the General Principles. The thinking behind the scene is that with the rapid progress in education and our society as a whole, there has been considerable improvement in the children's cognitive ability, adaptability and affordability. Therefore, properly lowering the age floor conforms to the characteristics of the minor's mental and physical development, helps them to engage in civil activities that well suit their age and intellect, and better respects the minor's self consciousness and protect their legitimate rights.

Third, the guardianship system has been improved. Guardianship is a legal system to protect the legitimate rights and interests of persons without or with limited capacities for civil conduct so as to make up for their deficiencies in civil abilities. The General Provisions make improvement on the guardianship system, making it clear that family guardianship should be the foundation, social guardianship should be the supplement, and state guardianship should be backstop. It also clarifies the obligations of fostering and supporting between parents and children, enlarges the scale of persons under guardianship, reinforces the guardian functions of the government, improves the system of withdrawal, and makes clear stipulations on the systems like testamentary guardianship, protocol guardianship, designated guardianship and enforcement of guardianship responsibilities.

The fetus is considered to enjoy civil rights abilities when it comes to the protection of the fetus' rights of inheritance and acceptance of gift of property.

Legal person, which is set up according to law, is the organization entitled to civil rights abilities and civil conduct capacities, independently enjoys civil rights and undertakes civil responsibilities. The system of legal person is a basic system in civil law. Improving this system, which is a key subject in formulating the General Provisions, is of great significance to promoting the socialist market economy. The General Principles divide legal persons into four categories, namely enterprise legal persons, legal persons of government units, legal persons of institution and legal persons of social groups. With China's rapid social and economic development as well as emergence of new forms organizations, there have been considerable changes in the definition of legal persons. The classification in the General Principles can neither cover the newly-emerging types of legal persons nor catch up with the development in the reform of social organizations. Therefore, it is necessary to make relevant adjustment and improvement. As legal persons are persons prescribed by laws, different sectors may have different conceptions over the classification of legal persons. For instance, some divide legal persons into for-profit and non-profit legal persons, some divide legal persons into association legal persons and consortium legal persons, and others divide legal persons into public legal persons and private legal persons, etc. Different countries have varied classification of legal persons in their civil laws as well.

With reference to the basic framework in the General Principles over the classification of legal persons and in order to meet the needs to reform social organizations, the General Provisions divide legal persons into for-profit legal persons, non-profit legal persons and special legal persons according to their different purposes and functions. Regarding the for-profit and non-profit legal persons, the General Provisions enumerate several typical categories such as corporate legal persons, institution legal persons, association legal persons, foundation legal persons and legal persons of social service organizations. Other legal person organizations, either existing or potential ones, may fall into the categories of for-profit and non-profit legal persons according to their characteristics.

The General Provisions also prescribe the following special legal persons. The first is legal persons of government units which are set up according to the Constitution as well as relevant laws and regulations with the purpose to perform public management functions. The second is legal persons of rural collective economic organization which have distinctive Chinese characteristics. As provided in the Constitution and the Property Law, rural collective economic organizations, as representatives of the farmers, collectively exercise the ownership of rural collective lands and have the rights to independently conduct economic activities. In the deliberation of the General Provisions, many proposed to clearly grant rural collective economic organization with the status of civil



Residents and workers from neighborhood committee at Xujiatang Street in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province study the newly-adopted General Provisions of the Civil Law on April 18. Local people's procuratorates and neighborhood committees organize activities among residents to study the General Provisions. Peng Zhaozhi

Since the reform and opening-up, China has attached great importance to civil rights protection.

subject. In the light of the importance and complexity of this issue, right after the first reading on the draft, the top legislature conducted a special investigation and extensively solicited opinions from the general public. After thorough investigation and research, we believe that giving legal person status conforms to the spirit of the central government over deepening reform, helps to improve the operational mechanism and enhance the vitality of rural collective economy. The third is legal persons of autonomous mass organizations at the grassroots level. Mass organizations like villagers committees and residents committees also have special features in their establishment, alteration and termination, and it is necessary to make them special legal persons. Besides, the General Provisions also clearly stipulate, according to relevant provisions in the Property Law, that villagers committee can perform the functions of rural collective economic organization where it is absent. The fourth is cooperative economic organizations in both urban and rural areas such as supply and marketing cooperatives. This kind of organizations is commonly or mutually beneficial and can also engage in business activities

with outside world. Therefore, they are prescribed as special legal persons after obtaining the legal person status according to law.

With China's rapid development, a big number of organizations that do not have legal person status are conducting all kind of civil activities in their own names. Giving these organizations status of civil subjects helps them to conduct civil activities and better connect with provisions of other laws. Based on this, the General Provisions provide that non-legal person organizations are the ones that do not have legal person status but can engage in civil activities in their own names including sole proprietorships, partnerships and professional service providers without legal person qualifications. The General Provisions also provide that in case the assets of non-legal person organizations fall short to pay off debts, their sponsors or founders should undertake unlimited responsibilities. Where otherwise provided for by law, such provisions shall prevail.

On the protection of civil rights

Protecting civil rights is an important task of civil legislation. Since the reform and opening-up, China has attached great importance to civil rights protection. The General Principles have a special chapter that makes provisions on the personal and property rights of civil subjects. Later, the Contract Law, the Property Law and the Tort Liability Law also

made relevant provisions on the protection of civil rights. The General Provisions followed the practice of the General Principles and set up an exclusive chapter to provide all kinds of civil rights enjoyed by civil subjects in a comprehensive and systematic manner. This chapter is meant to meet the requirements of the central authority on legalizing the protection of civil rights and improving the system of property rights, highlight respect and strengthen protection on civil rights, and lay a solid foundation for civil rights provisions in the Civil Code and special law of civil and commercial affairs.

The General Provisions make the following stipulations. First, with regard to personal rights, natural persons' personal freedom and dignity is under the protection of laws. Natural persons are entitled to rights to life, health, body, name, portrait, reputation, honor, privacy and marital autonomy. In the information society, protection of natural persons' personal information is especially important. The General Provisions have made specific stipulations that natural persons' personal information is under the protection of laws. Any organization or individual, in a need to obtain other people's personal information, has to obtain these information according to law, ensure its safety, and shall not illegally collect, use, process and transmit these personal information, not even illegally trade, provide or disclose other people's personal information. Second, with regard to property rights, it is of practical significance to strengthen protection on property rights in a bid to reinforce the general public's sense of safety, vitalize social confidence, safeguard social fairness and justice, and give better play to the public initiative to create greater social wealth. The General Provisions provide that property rights of civil subjects are under equal protection of law. Civil subjects are entitled to the rights to property, debt, inheritance, stock share and other investment. Third, with regard to intellectual property, the General Provisions make summarizing stipulations on intellectual property to command other specific laws so as to strengthen protection on property rights, promote scientific innovation and build an innovation-driven country. Fourth, in order to meet the needs of the development of internet and big data, the General Provisions stipulate that in case other laws have provisions on the protections of data and virtual property, such provisions shall prevail. Fifth, in order to regulate the exercise of civil rights, the General Provisions provide that the civil subjects should perform the duties either prescribed by law or agreed upon by parties concerned while exercising civil rights. Civil subjects shall not sabotage national interest, public interest and lawful interest of other people by abusing civil rights. In addition, the General Provisions also make connecting stipulations on protecting the civil rights of vulnerable population groups that in case other laws have provisions on protecting the civil rights of minors, elderly, disabled, women and consumers, such provisions shall prevail.

On the civil juristic act and agent system

Civil juristic act is the act of civil subjects to intentionally establish, alter and terminate civil legal relations. It is an important system for civil subjects to realize his or her intentions in civil activities like signing contracts and making a will. The agent system is a system in which the civil subjects exercise civil juristic act through an agent. With the rapid



College student volunteers paint cartoons on electric poles with the aim to promote the General Provisions of the Civil Law in Liaocheng, Shandong Province on May 7. Zhao Yuguo

Civil juristic act is the act of civil subjects to intentionally establish, alter and terminate civil legal relations.

social development, the agency activities are becoming more extensive and complicated. In order to protect the lawful interests of the principals and the third party, it is imperative to further regulate the agency activities and maintain transaction safety.

On the basis of the General Principles and the Contract Law, the General Provisions make the following supplements to the civil juristic act and agent system. First, it enriches the definition of civil juristic act which includes not only legal juristic act but also invalid, revocable and validity pending act. This change not only respects the willingness of civil subjects but also holds the civil subjects accountable for his or her behavior which is helpful to raise the civil subjects' consciousness of rules and responsibilities. Second, the rule on declaration of will is newly added in the General Provisions. Declaration of will is the outer expression of inner will of the civil subjects concerning the specific legal effect, which constitutes the foundation for civil juristic act. The General Pro-



visions make stipulations on its manner of action, entry into force and withdrawal. Third, it improves the effectiveness rule of civil juristic act. While providing the effective conditions for civil juristic act, the General Provisions also make revisions and supplements respectively to revocation of act concerning major misunderstanding, fraud, coercion and obvious unfairness as well as invalid act of malicious collusion. Fourth, it perfects the common rules of agent and principal-agent system.

On the system of civil responsibility and limitation of action

Civil responsibility is the legal consequence or, in other words, a kind of punishment if the civil subject fails to perform his or her civil responsibilities. Clearly defining legal responsibilities is helpful to guide civil subjects to raise the awareness of fulfilling lawful or agreed obligations, prevent and punish behaviors that violate civil obligations, and practically protect the rights and interests of obligee.

With regard to civil responsibilities, the General Provisions make the following stipulations. First, the civil subjects should fulfill civil obligations and undertake civil responsibilities according to relevant legal provisions and agreement with parties concerned. Second, the General Provisions list

major approaches to undertake civil responsibilities including cessation of infringement, restitution of property, reinstatement, indemnity for damage and punitive damages, etc. Third, in order to remedy social ethos, encourage courageous conduct and advance socialist core values, the General Provisions prescribe that in case the salvor causes harm to the aided person while performing emergent rescue act, the salvor shall not undertake any civil responsibilities. It also provides that if one is harmed while protecting the civil rights of other people, the infringer shall undertake all responsibilities, and the beneficiary can make appropriate compensation. In case there is no infringer, the infringer escapes or is incapable of undertaking civil responsibilities, and the victim has made a claim for compensation, the beneficiary should make appropriate compensation. Fourth, it unequivocally highlights protection on the reputation and honor of heroes and martyrs. Heroes and martyrs are the demonstration of national ethos and the benchmarking to lead social conduct. Strengthening protection on the name, reputation, honor and portrait of heroes and martyrs is of great significance to encourage the public to revere heroes and martyrs, punish evil-doers and encourage people to do good, and safeguard the public interest of our society. Accordingly, the General Provisions stipulate that one should undertake civil responsibilities if he or she infringes the name, portrait, reputation and honor of heroes and martyrs or harms the public interest.

Limitation of action is a legal system providing that if the obligee does not exercise rights during the statutory period, his or her rights are not under protection. This system encourages the obligee to exercise rights in time and helps maintaining transaction order and safety. The General Provisions mainly make the following stipulations. First, the general limitation of action is now extended to 3 years from 2 years previously prescribed in the General Principles so as to keep abreast with the change of times, build a society with good faith and better protect the lawful rights of the creditors. Second, a special starting point of limitation of action is newly prescribed for the minors who suffer from sexual assault in an attempt to provide those minors with an opportunity to seek legal remedy once they reach adulthood. Third, circumstances not applicable to limitation of action are clearly defined including request for cessation of infringement, removal of obstacle and elimination of dangers, request of obligee to return property, request for payment of alimony, allowance and maintenance, as well as other requests that are not applicable to limitation of action according to law.

The aforementioned basic civil systems prescribed in the General Provisions highlights protection on civil rights, uphold socialist core values, displays distinctive elements of times and reflects typical Chinese characteristics. The General Provisions are the fruit we have achieved by adhering to the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the people being masters of the country and law-based governance. It is a model of scientific and democratic legislation as well as an opening chapter of the Civil Code which not only reflects the Party's view but also the aspiration of all Chinese people. ■

(The author is a member of the NPC Standing Committee and vice chairman of the Law Committee of the NPC)



A boy plays an electric toy at the Guiyang International Exhibition Center on May 28. *Ning Jian*

Promoting quality products for people's livelihood and overall development

It has been more and more important to improve the quality of products under the context of the overall reform and the economic “new normal”. As General Secretary Xi Jinping points out, the main thrust of the supply-side structural reform is to improve the supply quality, and the central task of improving the supply system is to improve quality of products and services.

To this end, the NPC Standing Committee launches the law enforcement inspection of Product Quality Law in March this year. On May 25, 2017, the inspection team holds the second plenary meeting in Beijing. The reporter learns from the meeting that the team has finished the inspection. In late June, the inspection work report has been submitted for consideration to the 28th meeting of the 12th NPC Standing Committee.

Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, instructs that “the strong sense of ‘quality first’ shall be upheld in the whole society”. Promulgated in 1993, Product Quality Law is the basic law regulating the field of product quality. Since the law coming into force over 20 years ago, it has played an indispensable role in lifting up product quality

and enhancing economic development.

As one of the priorities of inspection work of the NPC Standing Committee, the inspection of the enforcement of Product Quality Law is the first one since the law was revised in 2009.

Chairman Zhang makes a written instruction which goes as “The quality of products is the lifeline of companies, concerning people’s livelihood and the image of the country. Through the inspection, the comprehensive and effective implementation of the law shall be promoted and the strong sense of ‘quality first’ in the whole society be upheld. Improving product quality shall be taken as the major thrust to promote the supply-side structural reform, revitalize the manufacturing industry and improve people’s livelihood.”

According to China’s General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ), the overall quality of products has been improved steadily in recent years under the safeguard of Product Quality Law. Compared to developed countries, however, China has a considerable gap in the level of quality development, which is illustrated by the facts that some products’ level are quite low, the stan-

dard and reliability level is not high, the key technologies depends too much on the foreign countries, and the competitive strength of the exporting products is not strong. Currently, China accounts only 2 percent of the top 500 global manufacturing brands. To make things worse, rampant fake products in some places severely damage the normal market order and the image of the country.

The most visible example is that people traveling abroad rush to buy milk powder, rice cookers and toilet lids, showing that people are not satisfied with the quality of domestic-made products. With China's economy developing into the "new normal", there has existed the contradiction between the surplus of the middle and low -end products and the short supply of high-quality products. People are expecting to buy safer and better products and services. Lifting up product and service quality becomes the weak link in promoting the supply-chain structural reform and economical upgrading. Hence, the inspection conducted is of great significance to get a comprehensive knowledge of the existing contradictions and urge the law-enforcing organs to take effective measures to improve product quality significantly.

Four vice chairpersons of the NPC Standing Committee including Yan Junqi, Shen Yueyue, Zhang Ping and Arken Imirbaki, lead different inspection units to different municipalities and provinces. They lead 4 inspection groups to visit Tianjin, Hebei, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Hubei, Guangdong, Chongqing and Gansu.

During the inspection, the groups focus on finding out how the State Council and its related departments conduct the regulating work in accordance with the law, how the People's Supreme Court and the People's Supreme Procuratorate carry out impartial justice, how the companies fulfill their responsibilities, how the standards of products are developed, how the intermediary organizations such as testing agencies provide professional support and service, and how Product Quality Law shall be revised, etc.

In Hebei, considering the inadequate manpower in quality inspection and law enforcement, Yan Junqi stresses that the government shall create a fine market environment, encourage the social forces to get involved and establish a fair and effective dispute-solving mechanism. In Tianjin, Shen Yueyue points out that efforts shall be made to promote the strong sense of "quality first" in the society and to take improving product quality as the major thrust to carry out the supply-side structural reform. In Guangdong, Zhang Ping stresses that the market shall play a decisive role to force the companies to lift up product quality and the government shall play a better role to strengthen the quality inspection and strictly implement the law. In Chongqing, Arken Imirbaki points out that the ancillary and supporting regulations and codes of standards shall be further perfected so as to punish the acts of making and selling fake products in a harsher way.

In the meantime, the inspection team of the NPC Standing Committee also entrusts the standing committees of people's congresses of Liaoning, Jilin, Anhui, Shandong, Henan, Hunan, Guangxi and Ningxia to conduct the inspection in their respective localities.

Various measures including sampling inspection, field inspection, unannounced inspection and questionnaire surveys are taken to collect the truth and facts. The reporter learns from the second plenary meeting of the inspection team

that during the inspection, except listening to reports by local governments and their departments, people's courts and consumers' associations, the team goes to the grassroots and organize meetings attended by deputies from the grassroots, companies, technological supporting institutions, trade associations, specialists and scholars, and also consumers.

In order to get to know the truth and collect the facts, the inspection team conducts field inspection to some companies, technological service agencies and markets. Unannounced, the team inspects some producers and testing agencies. Random sampling inspections are also conducted to wholesale markets in suburban areas and small supermarkets and sales points of agricultural materials in the rural areas.

In Shanghai, Wuru, deputy chairman of the inspection unit and vice chairman of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee of the NPC, inspects some companies in an unannounced way. The unit goes to Shanghai Pentium Electrical Co., Ltd. and inspects its warehouse of raw materials and testing workshop, rapidly testing the company's products such as hair dryers, shavers and air purifiers. The reporter learns that unannounced visiting is frequently adopted during the inspection to grasp the real situation of the implementation of Product Quality Law.

It is worth mentioning that before the inspection, the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee of the NPC has made good preparations such as conducting research activities in Guangdong, Hunan, Beijing, Jiangsu, Shanghai and Sichuan. Also, since late February this year, the inspection team has conducted extensive online questionnaire surveys in which over 10,000 people provide their input and specific suggestions.

According to the supervision working plan of NPC Standing Committee in 2017, the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee held in late June has listened and considered the work report delivered by the inspection team. Yan Junqi stresses that the State Council and its related departments are supposed to study carefully the inspection report and the deliberations of the NPC Standing Committee, provide the corresponding policies and measures to solve the outstanding contradiction and problems, and submit a written report to the NPC Standing Committee in 6 months. The Financial and Economic Affairs Committee of the NPC shall do the follow-up work and ensure solid results will be achieved. (NPC) ■



Electric fans and air conditioners are displayed at a shopping mall in Zhengzhou, Henan Province on June 3, 2015. VCG

Jing Wei



Medication supply crucial to people's health

Drugs, as special goods curing diseases and saving lives, are of great concern of the Party and the central government. As President Xi Jinping emphasized on different occasions, the responsibility of drug safety is heavier than Mount Tai. Efforts should be doubled to improve integrated supervision and management, applying strictest standards for production and severest punishment for those who violate the law, holding the government officials accountable in a most serious way, thus to ensure drug safety for the whole society.

The Drug Administration Law, being the most important one in this area, was formulated in 1984, fully revised in 2001, and partly revised in 2013 and 2015. The Standing Committee of National People's Congress put it on the 2017 agenda for supervision, responding to critical concerns of the public. The inspection is planned to be finished in the first half of this year.

As instructed by Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee Zhang Dejiang, we need to be fully prepared before the inspection tour, extensively collecting information on the outstanding problems, and urging the departments concerned to improve administration.

According to the working plan, the inspection group is composed of Wang Chen, vice chairman and secretary-general of the NPC Standing Committee as the head, vice chairpersons including Chen Changzhi and Chen Zhu, and chairman of the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the NPC Liu Binjie. Vice Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee Li Jianguo also took part in the inspection. The group is divided into four teams, heading for Beijing, Heilongjiang, Jiangsu, Anhui, Shandong, Hunan, Sichuan and Yunnan for inspections during April and May. They altogether held 17 meetings to hear the re-

ports from governments of different levels, visited 41 companies of drug R&D, production and distribution, as well as 15 drug control organizations and medical care institutions. 10 round-tables were held to solicit opinions from grassroots organizations, drug production companies and medical care institutions.

The draft report has been concluded for the second internal discussion on May 31, and exchanged point of views with the departments concerned under the State Council. It has been submitted to the NPC Standing Committee for deliberation in late June.

Inspections in Shandong and Hunan

Li Jianguo's group went to Shandong Province on April 11 and stayed for five days, focusing on strengthening law enforcement, enhancing awareness of drug safety and ensuring good quality and rational price.

The group listened to the report made by Shandong Provincial Government and other related departments on drug supervision and the generic-drug-related issues, visited companies involved in production, wholesale and retail as well as medical institutions, and better understand in what way law enforcement is hampered and how to solve those problems.

"Our supervision should be problem-oriented, focusing on the urgent concerns of the public, including counterfeit drugs, substandard drugs, and artificially high price," said Li Jianguo. "Stipulations are there, so are the problems, mainly because companies producing and selling drugs don't observe the law, and the government fails to enforce the law in a responsible way. We need to give full play to the law in drug administration. Anyone who violates the law should be treated with zero tolerance, ensuring strictest standard, the



A pharmacist from the Cangzhou Central Hospital in Hebei Province picks medicines for patients on May 31, 2015. *Mu Yu*

'Our supervision should be problem-oriented, focusing on the urgent concerns of the public, including counterfeit drugs, substandard drugs, and artificially high price,' said Li Jianguo.

most rigorous supervision, the severest punishment and the most serious accountability."

Drug supervision system has been established, including administrative supervision and technological support, but muddled situation in recent years indicates problems still exist. As emphasized by Li Jianguo, reform and innovation should always be part of the resolution. We need to carry out reform of medical and health care system as identified by the 3rd Plenary Session of 18th CPC Central Committee. The reform is comprehensive, covering whole process of production, distribution, and utilization. As integrated and authorized system should be set up to make sure the capability of drug management being strengthened. Grassroots level supervision capability is to be increased, with competent and professional personnel carrying out the duty.

Li Jianguo's group was in Hunan Province from May 8 to 12, during which discussions were held with related departments under the provincial government and individuals who deal with the supervision. Li thought highly of the local practice in law enforcement. Drug quality is of vital importance to people's livelihood, said Li, and we have to bear in mind responsibility of supervision for drug safety. Grassroots experience will help increase efficiency and upgrade development

philosophy, improving capability and address major concern of the people.

The group visited drug production companies, hospitals, pharmacies, and medical industrial parks in Changsha and Yueyang, acquiring information about drug production, distribution and utilization, as well as suggestions on how to handle the existing problems.

Li gave special attention to short-supply drugs, saying that short-supply drug is related to people's health and safety, so we need to closely monitor the supply flow, applying divided and targeted measures to manage the supply, especially the cheap-but-effective drugs, the life-saving drugs, drugs for treating rare diseases and those for children.

Inspections in Beijing and Anhui

Wang Chen inspected law enforcement in Beijing from April 5 to 7. "We need to follow instruction of President Xi Jinping on drug management, intensifying legal guarantee and ensuring drug safety," said Wang.

The group fully affirmed the work done by Beijing Municipal Government after visiting Tongrentang Company, National Pharmaceutical Logistic Company, Peking University Third Hospital, Yuetan Medical Service Center, Beijing Sinovac Biotech Company, and Beijing Drug Control Institute. Problem-oriented approach was adopted during the inspection to better solicit opinions from all walks of life.

Drug safety, as a major issue of public security, is about individual health and social stability, especially for the megacity like Beijing. It was the first time to inspect enforcement of Drug Administration Law since it was enacted. Beijing has done a good job and accumulated various experiences. Wang said that the inspection should also be done in a legal and re-

sponsible way.

Wang's group went to Anhui Province on May 2 and stayed for four days. The group positively spoke of the work done by local government after listening to the report made by departments concerned. They went to and discussed with the Second Hospital of Anhui Medical University and Anhui Food and Drug Control Institute in Hefei city, the community health center and the Food and Drug Control Bureau in Bengbu city, as well as companies involved in drug production and distribution.

Wang praised what has been done in Anhui Province and emphasized that the principle proposed by President Xi Jinping should always be kept in mind, using the tool of law to address the root causes of problems in order to promote good governance for drug safety.

The inspection group held 2nd meeting in Beijing on May 31, hearing suggestions from related departments on draft report of the inspection. Wang pointed out that despite generally positive momentum, there are many challenges asking for doubled efforts to find way out. What we do is for the society to intensity legal awareness, improve drug management, settle problem and ensure sound development of pharmaceutical industry.

Inspections in Heilongjiang

Chen Changzhi's group stayed in Heilongjiang Province for inspection from April 11 to 15.

Heilongjiang is a major province of drug production with largest traditional Chinese medicine injection production and multiple famous drug brands. Round-tables were held for quite a few times, listening to the report of departments concerned under the provincial government, and exchanging point of views with representatives from drug production and distribution companies as well as medical care institutions.

After visiting companies, hospitals, and health centers in urban and rural areas, the group obtained a better understanding about system of management, evaluation and routine supervision, as well as the punishment standard, supply guarantee, R&D innovation, generic drug, company accountability, untoward effect, pharmaceutical management, drug utilization safety and advice for revising Drug Administration Law.

As shown in the inspection, the Party committee, the people's congress and provincial government attached great importance to drug administration. Remarkable progress was achieved in improving inspection system and carrying out responsibility in an innovative way.

Chen thought highly of the work done by the province and pointed out that drug safety is a matter of people's livelihood and public security. The NPC Standing Committee put law inspection high on the agenda, which is also the very first nationwide inspection done after its formulation. The inspection will help improve legal system, implement decisions made by the central government, responding social concern, increasing public awareness, and ensuring effective enforcement of the law.

Inspections in Yunnan and Jiangsu

Chen Zhu's group inspected Yunnan and Jiangsu from April 17 to 21.



An employee from the Xinjiang Uygur Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd works at the production line on April 18. The company is located in the Urumqi Economic & Technological Development Zone (Toutunhe District). Liu Xin

The group listened to reports made by the provincial and municipal level governments, held discussions with responsible persons from government, people's congress and other departments. They also visited a dozen of companies involved in drug R&D, production and operation, including Hongxiang Pharmaceutical Ltd., Yunnanbaiyao Group, Yuxi Medical and Pharmaceutical Ltd., Yuxi Baixingtang Pharmacy, Yuxi Wosen Biotech Ltd., Jiangsu Aosaikang Pharmaceutical Company, Jiangsu Jiuzhoutong Medical and Pharmaceutical Group, Jiangsu Huawei Medical Logistic Ltd., Taizhou Medical Engineering Center, Asilikang Pharmaceutical Ltd., Yangzijiang Pharmaceutical Group, Gaogang Baixing Pharmacy, etc. Chen also went to Yunnan Fuwai Cardiovascular Hospital and Pan-Asia International Cardiovascular Hospital.

The group recognized progress achieved in improving system, upgrading capability, implementing specific measures and innovating means of supervision. Work related to drug approval and evaluation, quality control in production and operation, untoward effect monitoring, and punishment for those who violate the law has also been carried out in a smooth way, maintaining a good momentum of drug safety.

As Chen pointed out that drug is a issue of critical concern among public. We have every reason to underline significance of inspection on the law enforcement, which urges the governments of various levels to observe the law in dealing with the problems, improving drug quality and balance demand and supply. Through concluding experiences and discovering problems during inspection, we propose feasible suggestions,



Wang Chen pointed out that despite generally positive momentum, there are many challenges asking for doubled efforts to find way out.

better preparing revision of the Drug Administration Law.

Chen Zhu added that the group will submit a report to NPC Standing Committee after classifying and analyzing difficulties in supervision system, drug supply, illegal drug ads and accountability of companies. It is expected that the inspection will help straighten out drug administration system and promote sustained development of pharmaceutical industry.

Inspections in Sichuan

Liu Binjie led a group to Sichuan Province on May 8.

Sichuan is a major province of drug production with a wide range of disciplines. Its output value of traditional Chinese medicine industry ranks first among provinces in western China and third in the whole country. The group listened to reports made by the provincial government as well as municipal governments of Chengdu, Zigong and Meishan, and discussed with representatives from companies involved in drug R&D, production and distribution as well as medical care institutions. The group also visited companies, hospitals

and health service center, better understanding supervision system, approval and evaluation mechanism, routine management, punishment for violation of laws, drug supply, research innovation, generic drug, accountability of companies, untoward effect monitoring, pharmaceutical management, safety of drug utilization as well as suggestions for revising the Drug Administration Law.

Generally speaking, the situation of law enforcement is good with efforts to implement positive measures, according to the group. Experiences accumulated in various places is worthy of being adopted by other cities.

As far as local legislation is concerned, many provinces have enacted local regulations or government acts based on local situations. For example, in 2007, Drug Control and Administration Regulation is issued in Jiangsu Province, with many specific principles proposed afterwards relating to drug registration, on-the-spot inspection, responsibility for drug production and operation, risk evaluation, and quality improvement, thus to make the supervision more systematic and efficient.

In Heilongjiang Province, a model of high-tech drug ads was used, featuring on-line approval and check as well as real-time reporting and opening to the public. In Sichuan Province, monitoring network is improved to strictly follow the principle of reporting untoward effect of drug production companies and medical institutions, setting up record management and market withdrawal system. In order to better understand public opinion and handle with emergencies, Sichuan has jointly signed collaboration agreement on drug safety with Chongqing, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Tibet Autonomous Region.

To better fight against drug-related crimes, a collaboration mechanism on food and drug inspection and law enforcement was established in eight provinces in Northeast and North China. Special campaign was launched to combat fake drug and protect brands, intensifying efforts to deal with producing and selling fake drugs and eliminating supervision blind spot. In Jiangsu Province, joint meeting mechanism is established among food and drug control administration, public security department, the court and the procuratorate, carrying out close collaboration to toughly combat drug-related crimes.

Drug quality needs to be improved and supervision capability increased, according to the group, which doesn't allow any ignorance. The suggestions on how to further revise the law were collected during the inspection, which will figure out a more effective way to enforce the law.

For new drug research which is of large investment, long cycle, high risk, and low return, our duty is to provide staunch support. Due to overlapping management, the quality of materials for making traditional Chinese medicine failed to be guaranteed, with excess level of pesticide and heavy metal, which is worrisome situation.

Some held that the law cannot meet demands of new times, failing to address problems such as new pattern of distribution. The definition of fake drug and substandard drug is not clear and accurate enough. It is suggested to intensify punishment for better deterrent effect, especially in area of producing and selling fake drugs, exaggerated advertisement, recycling and selling expired drugs, and adulterated herbal products. (NPC) ■

China supports free flow of information





Students and teachers from Jiangxi Modern Vocational Technology College participate an interactive game to learn Internet knowhow on juvenile security on May 7. Peng Zhaozhi



China's new cyber security law is not intended to manage foreign websites nor restrict the free flow of information, the country's internet regulator said on May 31.

China warned against infringement of its cyber sovereignty under the pretext of providing free flow of information. Preventing illegal information from entering China does not contradict supporting the free flow of information, the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) said in a statement.

"In the real world, all enterprises or individuals are required to observe laws of the countries they enter, and there should be no exception made in cyberspace," according to the statement.

China strictly manages the Internet within its borders and has banned the spread of illegal information via technical or other means. This embodies the country's cyber sovereignty and is a requirement for safeguarding national security and protecting the interests of its citizens, it said.

In addition, the law stipulates that Internet service providers should increase control on information released by their users and immediately stop the spread of information deemed illegal.

The regulation will not infringe privacy nor restrict free speech online, the CAC said adding that the regulation targets information already made public by Internet users not their personal communications.

The CAC reiterated that authorities aim to prohibit the spread of illegal information rather than impeding free speech.

The cyber security law was passed in November 2016 at the 24th meeting of the 12th NPC Standing Committee after a third reading. (Xinhua) ■



Spectators visit the Beijing Internet Science and Technology Expo on April 28. *Chen Xiaogen*

Cyber security law not a trade barrier

China's new cyber security law, which went into effect on June 1, is not aimed at limiting foreign companies' access to the Chinese market, the country's Internet regulator said on May 31.

The law is designed to safeguard China's cyberspace sovereignty, national security, public interest, as well as the rights and interests of citizens, legal persons and other organizations, said the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC).

"It does not restrict foreign companies or their technology and products from entering the Chinese market, nor does it limit the orderly, free flow of data," the statement said. "China is entitled to make laws and rules to regulate its cyberspace sovereignty following international practice."

Operators of key information infrastructure, including public communications and information services, energy and finance, are required to locally store personal information and vital data collected and produced by their services in China, according to the law.

If business needs require them to provide the data and information for overseas use, a security evaluation must be carried out, it added.

The provisions target those operating key information infrastructure, personal information and data that is vital to

the country, said the CAC, adding that personal information is allowed to flow abroad with the approval of individuals concerned.

"Such provisions do not prohibit cross-border data flow, nor restrict international trade," said the CAC, saying that cross-border data flow has been a prerequisite for economic globalization and the Belt and Road Initiative.

The CAC also refuted discrimination against foreign companies by a supporting regulation which requires Internet products and services related to national security undergo a security review. The regulation will go into effect on the same day as the cyber security law.

Reviews focus on whether the products or services are secure and sufficiently managed, and on assessing the risk of illegal control, disruption or interruption, the CAC noted.

They also evaluate the risk of providers using their products or services to illegally gather, store, process or make use of user information, it added.

"The security reviews will not target any country or region, they will not discriminate against foreign technology or products, nor limit their access to the Chinese market," said the CAC. "On the contrary, they will boost consumer confidence in such products and services, and expand their markets." (Xinhua) ■



China's top legislature announces plan for 2017

Chinese lawmakers will revise the country's law on administrative supervision to turn it into a State supervision law this year, according to a new plan released by the top legislature.

The bill aims to provide a legal guarantee for a centralized, unified, authoritative and highly efficient State-level supervision system, and is scheduled for deliberation at the National People's Congress Standing Committee for the first time in June.

Law revisions and new bills on public libraries, tobacco tax, vessel tonnage tax, prevention and control of soil pollution, international judicial assistance in criminal matters, community correction and basic medical and health care will also be submitted to the legislature for a first reading in 2017.

Meanwhile, the legislature will review amendments to laws on farmers' specialized cooperatives, people's courts and procuratorates, and the national anthem later this year.

In June the committee will continue deliberating or revising laws on intelligence, small and medium-sized enterprises, and water pollution. In August, the e-commerce law will be revised. (Xinhua)



Hangzhou

The Picturesque City

