

China Newsletter

(Supplement Issue, March 9, 2017)

1, A brief guide to the 2017 government work report

Highlights from 2017 Government Work Report

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/safea/2017-03/06/content_28448714.htm

SCIO briefing on 2017 government work report

<http://www.scio.gov.cn/32618/Document/1544326/1544326.htm>

China: Top 9 priorities for 2017

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017twosession/2017-03/05/content_28439859.htm

An acrostic to understand the 2017 government work report

<http://www.scio.gov.cn/32618/Document/1544474/1544474.htm>

2, Foreign Minister Wang Yi Meets the Press



On 8 March 2017, the Fifth Session of the 12th National People's Congress held a press conference, where Foreign Minister Wang Yi answered questions from domestic and foreign media on China's foreign policy and external relations.

Wang Yi: Friends of the press, good morning. Every year, the NPC schedules my press conference for 8 March. This gives me an opportunity to extend festive greetings in person to all the female journalists in this room. Indeed, I want to wish all women happiness and good luck. I also want to say a big thank-you to all members of the press. You have made an important contribution by building a bridge between the Chinese diplomacy and the public at home and abroad. Thank you for a job well done. Now I'm ready to take your questions.

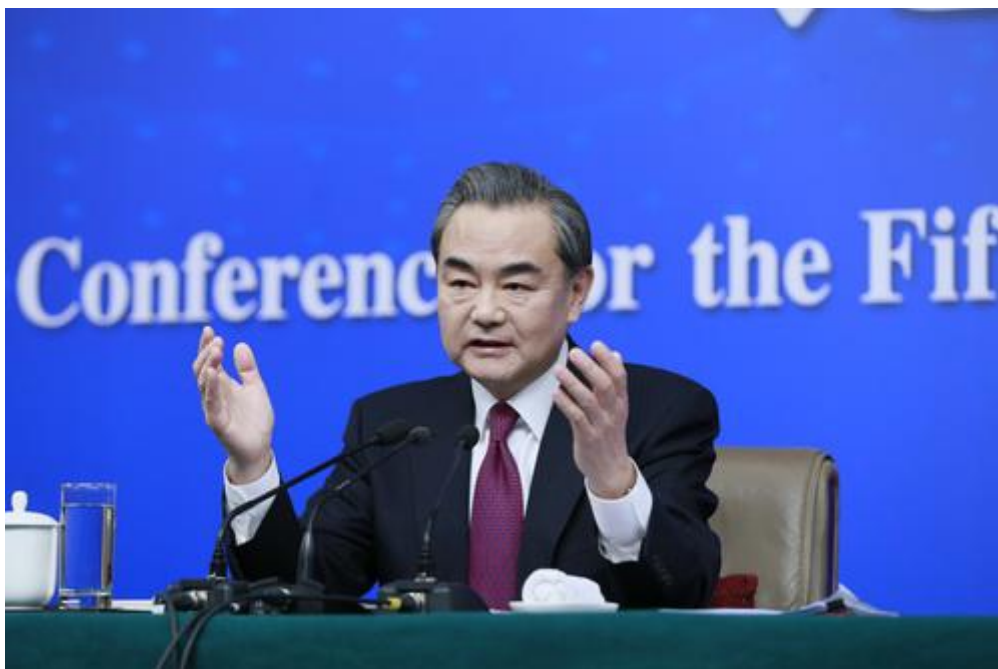


Xinhua News Agency: In May, China will host the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. Why does China want to hold the forum at this moment in time and what does China hope to achieve?

Wang Yi: In about two months' time, we'll hold the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing. We foresee that the heads of state and government from over 20 countries, the leaders of over 50 international organizations, over 100 ministerial-level officials and around 1,200 delegates from different countries and regions participating in the forum. In addition to the Leaders Roundtable, there will also be a High-Level Dialogue and six parallel panel discussions on the connectivity of policy, infrastructure, trade, finance and people. Beijing will once again be the center of global attention; the Belt and Road Initiative will continue to be a hot topic around the world.

The Belt and Road is China's initiative, but it belongs to the world. The idea came from China, but the benefits will flow to all countries. In the over three years since President Xi announced the initiative, the idea has caught on and cooperation has flourished. It has become the most popular public good and the international cooperation platform with the brightest prospects. The Belt and Road Initiative has been so successful because it meets the partner countries' urgent desire for more mutually beneficial cooperation and follows the open and inclusive principle of planning together, building together and benefiting together. With protectionism and unilateralism on the rise, the Belt and Road Initiative is a common cause where the participating countries roll up their sleeves and pitch in together. The initiative will help to rebalance economic globalization and make it more inclusive and equitable. It also represents an important attempt at building a community of shared future for all humankind.

We hope the forum will accomplish three things. First, review and build consensus, enhance the complementarity of countries' development strategies and set the goal of combining their strengths and achieving common prosperity. Second, examine key areas of cooperation and identify a number of major projects concerning physical connectivity, trade and investment, financial support and people-to-people exchange. Third, announce medium- to long-term initiatives, explore the establishment of an effective cooperation mechanism and build a closer and result-oriented network of partnerships.



NBC: President Trump is a leader quite like no other. How confident are you that compromises can be found on the most important challenges that concern both sides?

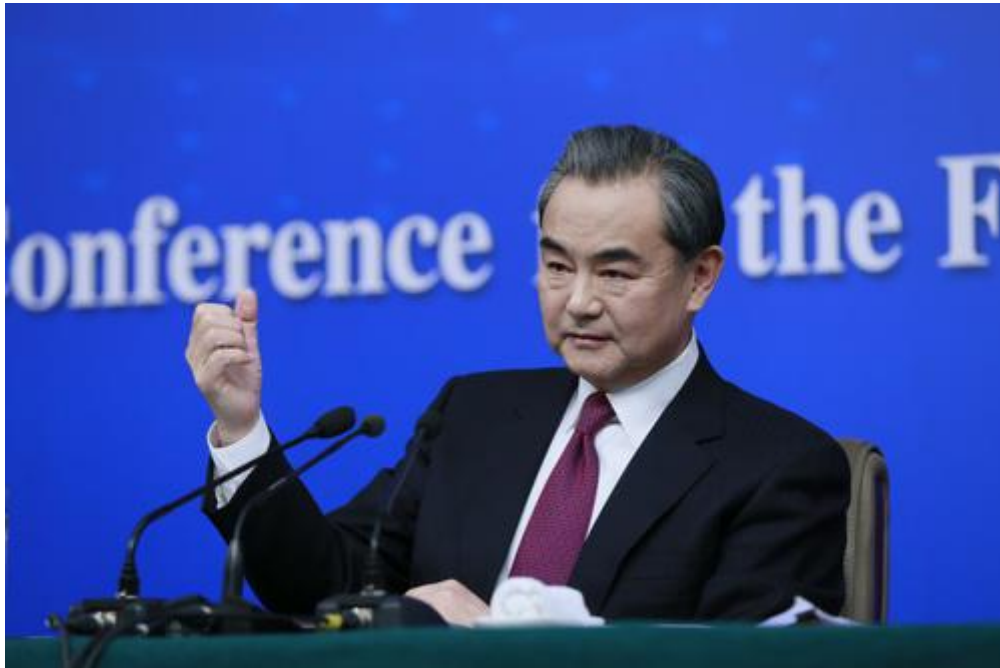
Wang Yi: Through the intense communication and joint efforts of both sides, the China-US relationship is transitioning steadily and developing in a positive direction. Last month, President Xi Jinping and President Trump had a very important telephone conversation where they reaffirmed the importance of following the one-China principle and pledged to push China-US relations to greater heights from a new starting point. The phone call has set the direction and paved the way for bilateral relations. The two sides are having fruitful communications on realizing exchanges between our Presidents and at other levels and expanding all areas of cooperation. As long as we act on the consensus reached between our Presidents, follow the principle of no conflict or confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation, then there is no reason why China and the United States cannot become good partners.

The importance of the China-US relationship, one between two major countries with global impact, is self-evident. Preserving and developing the China-US relationship is in the interest of our two peoples and the expectation of the international community. The three joint communiques have laid a solid foundation for China-US relations. Looking ahead, it's very important that we rise above two things.

First, we need to rise above the difference of our social systems. China and the United States have chosen different systems and development paths. The Chinese people have great confidence in our own social system and development path; we welcome efforts to build a better United States. In the age of progress and plurality, there is a compelling reason for China and the United States to respect each other, learn from each other, live together peacefully and realize common development.

Second, we need to rise above the zero-sum mentality. China and the United States have a growing set of common interests. The areas where we need to work together on far outweigh what divides us. In many ways, our interests are increasingly intertwined. We should pull our efforts to enlarge our shared interests rather than building one's success at the expense of the other, because it's just not possible.

It's been 38 years since China and the United States normalized diplomatic relations. The Chinese people often say, "When turning thirty, one should be able to stand firm; when reaching forty, one should no longer have any doubts." We hope that China and the United States can truly rise above the old ideas, open up new horizons and build a more robust and mature China-US relationship as it turns forty, so that we can put the minds of our two peoples and the whole world at ease.



People's Daily: In the last few years, China's diplomacy has been active and dynamic. If you are to use a few words to sum up China's diplomacy since the 18th CPC Congress, what would they be?

Wang Yi: Since the 18th Congress of the CPC, Chinese diplomats have risen to challenges and broken new ground. Under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core, we have accomplished a great deal and opened a new chapter in major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. Let me try to sum it up with three key words.

The first key word is vision. Grasping the trend of the times and the course of history, General Secretary Xi Jinping has put forward a series of new ideas and new thinking. For example, he has called for building partnerships that replace confrontation with dialogue, and alliance with partnership. Then, countries can build a new type of international relations underpinned by win-win cooperation. On that basis, we can build a community of shared future for all humankind. These new ideas and thinking reject the old concepts of alliance and confrontation and rise above the old approach of zero-sum games. They have distinct Chinese characteristics and major implications for the world. They are the guide to action for Chinese diplomats in the new era and will have far-reaching implications for human development and progress.

The second key word is initiative. Chinese diplomats have worked creatively to secure and advance our country's and people's interests. We have established a global web of partnerships, and provided an enabling environment and strategic support for China's

development. We have advanced the Belt and Road Initiative and opened a new chapter of openness and win-win cooperation. Putting people at the heart of diplomacy, we have improved consular mechanisms and procedures and effectively safeguarded the legitimate and lawful rights and interests of Chinese citizens and businesses abroad.

The third key word is consistency. In the face of instability and conflicts in many parts of the world, we have adhered to the path of peaceful development. In the face of skepticism over the existing international order and system, we have called for maintaining it and, where necessary, improving it. In the face of a growing backlash against globalization and rising protectionism, we have championed multilateralism and openness and inclusiveness. It's our responsibility as a major country to maintain consistency and continuity in our foreign policy, which can offset various uncertainties and demonstrate China's confidence and firmness of purpose.

Later this year, the CPC will hold its 19th National Congress. Chinese diplomats will continue to forge ahead, guided by the diplomatic thinking of General Secretary Xi Jinping. China will continue to be an anchor of international stability, an engine of global growth, a champion of peace and development and a contributor to global governance.



Reuters: The situation on the Korean Peninsula at the moment is extremely tense. North Korea has again test missiles this week. Does China think there will be war on the Korean Peninsula? What is China's strategy for preventing war from breaking out?

Wang Yi: Once again, tensions are rising on the Korean Peninsula. On the one hand, the DPRK has ignored international opposition and insisted on advancing its nuclear and

missile programs in violation of Security Council resolutions. On the other hand, the US and the ROK are conducting military exercises of an enormous scale and putting more military pressure on the DPRK. The two sides are like two accelerating trains coming towards each other with neither side willing to give way. The question is, are the two sides really ready for a head-on collision?

Given the situation, our priority now is to flash the red light and apply brakes on both trains.

To defuse the looming crisis on the peninsula, China proposes that, as a first step, the DPRK suspend its missile and nuclear activities in exchange for a halt of the large-scale US-ROK exercises. This suspension-for-suspension can help us break out of the security dilemma and bring the parties back to the negotiating table. Then we can follow the dual-track approach of denuclearizing the peninsula on the one hand and establishing a peace mechanism on the other. Only by addressing the parties' concerns in a synchronized and reciprocal manner, can we find a fundamental solution to lasting peace and stability on the peninsula. China's proposal, fully in keeping with resolutions 2270 and 2321, tries to get to the crux of the matter. To resolve the nuclear issue, we have to walk on both legs, which means not just implementing sanctions, but also restarting talks, both of which are set out in the Security Council resolutions.

The nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is mainly between the DPRK and the United States. China is a next-door neighbor with a lips-and-teeth relationship with the peninsula, so we're indispensable to the resolution of the nuclear issue. China has a strong commitment to denuclearizing the peninsula, to maintaining stability there and to resolving the issues peacefully. Indeed, China has done its level best to bring the DPRK and the US together and to chair the Six-Party Talks. We've also contributed to the adoption and implementation of Security Council resolutions. Going forward, to continue my earlier railway metaphor, China will continue to be a "switch-man". We will try to switch the issue back to the track of seeking a negotiated settlement. And I wish to emphasize that nuclear weapons will not bring security, the use of force is no solution, talks deserve another chance and peace is still within our grasp.



CCTV & CGTN: Some people believe that the era of Western domination is coming to an end; it is China and the other emerging economies that hold the key to the future. How does China view the shifting balance of power in the world? Later this year, China will host the BRICS Leaders Meeting. What do you hope to accomplish?

Wang Yi: The BRICS countries are representative of the emerging economies. Over the years, the fortunes of the BRICS may have risen or fallen and BRICS each face their own set of challenges. However, as President Xi Jinping has put it, the BRICS are like five fingers, each with its own strength; when the BRICS come together, we form a fist that can punch. As long as we stay united, the BRICS will not lose its luster; rather, it will shine more brightly than ever.

This year, BRICS will enter into its second decade. As the Chairman this year, China will work with other BRICS countries to review experience, plan the future, usher in the second "golden decade" of BRICS cooperation and provide BRICS' input for world peace and development. We hope to accomplish four things this year.

First, in terms of political and security cooperation, we will make full use of the meeting of national security advisers, build consensus for holding a stand-alone foreign ministers' meeting and demonstrate the strength of BRICS cooperation to the world.

Second, in terms of practical cooperation, we will fully implement the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership, enhance policy coordination at the macro level and the complementarity of our development strategies, announce a number of solid initiatives and add more substance to BRICS cooperation.

Third, in terms of people-to-people exchange, we will implement the agreements of our leaders and hold BRICS cultural festival, film festival, sports meet and so on to expand all areas of people-to-people exchange and build stronger public support for BRICS cooperation.

Finally, in terms of South-South cooperation, we will explore the modality of "BRICS plus". By holding outreach dialogues with other major developing countries and organizations of developing countries, we hope to establish a more extensive partnership, widen the BRICS' circle of friends and turn the BRICS into the most impactful platform for South-South cooperation.



TASS: After Trump became US President, the world has made a lot of commentary on Russia-China-US relations. Do you think there will be any change in the triangular relationship?

Wang Yi: Let me tell you at the outset that China-Russia relations are in excellent shape and we have great confidence in this relationship.

We have a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination not because it's convenient; it's a strategic decision reached by both sides on the basis of our fundamental interests. The relationship has stood the test of international vicissitudes. It is as strong as it's ever been and our mutual trust has reached a historic high. The relationship will not be affected or weakened by any external factor. We welcome any improvement in Russia-US relations, which will be an important piece of good news for the world. This year, the Presidents of China and Russia will have multiple face-to-face meetings, which will take our relationship to new heights. China and Russia will also improve strategic coordination on international and regional issues and act as a stabilizer in the otherwise turbulent world.

As for the China-US-Russia relationship in the new era, it should not be "a seesaw game". The three countries should work with rather than against each other. We should pursue win-win rather than zero-sum outcomes. The three countries can develop a positive and healthy relationship, so that we can jointly fulfill our responsibilities for world peace and development.





Global Times: In 2016, China re-established diplomatic relations with Gambia, and Sao Tome and Principe. Earlier this year, Nigeria demanded that the Taiwan mission there take off its placard and move out of the capital. People in China hailed the news. They believe that should the Taiwan authorities stray further from the one-China principle, they will have no future. Could we have your comment on it?

Wang Yi: There is only one China in the world, and Taiwan is part of China. This is a fact recognized by the world and an important principle enshrined in a series of international documents including UN resolutions. There is no basis in international law for the Taiwan region to establish or maintain so-called "diplomatic relations" with any country. Since such relationships have no legitimacy, surely they have no future! The Taiwan authorities should recognize this major trend. No one and no force can block the eventual and complete reunification of China.

CNN: President Trump has adopted an America First and isolationist approach, and commentators say this is China's opportunity. Is China ready to take on global leadership?

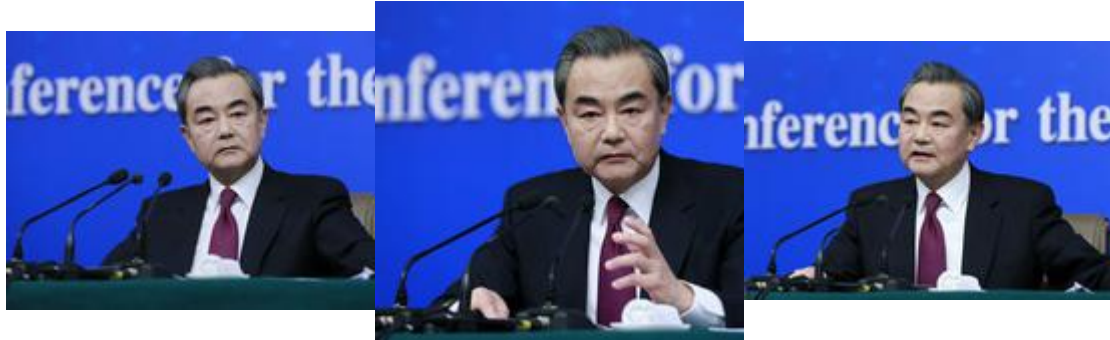
Wang Yi: Let me say this: First, China believes in the equality of all countries, large and small. We don't believe some countries should "lead" other countries. Second, the UN, as the world's most authoritative and credible inter-governmental organization, should play an effective role in coordinating international affairs according to the purposes and principles of its Charter. Third, rather than talking about "leadership", we should really be talking about "responsibility". Large countries have more resources and capability, so they should shoulder more responsibilities and make a greater contribution. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China will fulfill its obligations for international peace and security. As the second largest economy, China will make its due contribution to global growth. As the largest developing country, China will play an even bigger role in upholding the legitimate rights and interests of fellow developing countries.



Yonhap News Agency: The China-ROK relationship is complicated and sensitive at the moment. This year marks the 25th anniversary of China-ROK diplomatic relations. How does China plan to develop the relationship?

Wang Yi: This year marks the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and the ROK. China treasures what our two peoples have built together in the past 25 years. We hope the ROK will join China in preserving the mutually beneficial cooperation between the two sides.

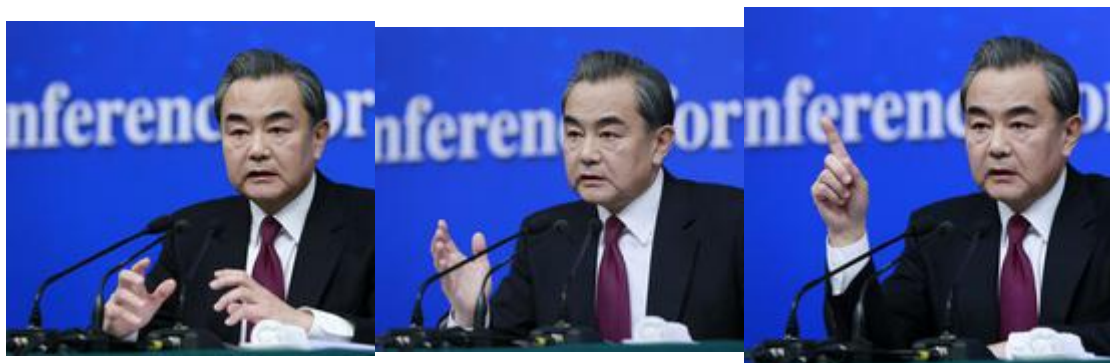
The US-ROK deployment of the controversial THAAD system in the ROK is the biggest issue affecting China-ROK relations at the moment. China has expressed its strong opposition to it all along. The monitoring and early warning radius of THAAD reaches far beyond the Korean Peninsula, and it's common knowledge that THAAD undermines China's strategic security. Clearly, deploying THAAD is the wrong choice. It's not how neighbors should behave to each other, and it may very well make the ROK less secure. We strongly advise some elements in the ROK not to pursue this course of action, otherwise they will only end up hurting themselves as well as others. China urges the ROK to cease and desist, halt the THAAD deployment and not to go further down the wrong path.



China Daily: In January, President Xi Jinping visited some international organizations in Switzerland. In contrast, President Trump's criticism of the UN and other multilateral institutions worries a lot of people. Against this background, does China still have faith in the UN and multilateralism?

Wang Yi: President Xi's visit to international organizations in Switzerland sent out a clear message of China's strong commitment to multilateralism and strong support for the UN-centered international system.

The current international system was built by our forefathers from the ashes of the Second World War. It is the result of our collective efforts and wisdom. It's like a well-designed building with multilateralism being its cornerstone and the UN and other international organizations being its key pillars. Over 70 years has passed, so there has been some wear and tear, to be sure. But the building still shields us from wind and rain and still plays an irreplaceable role in promoting world peace and development. What we should be doing is to renovate the building rather than constructing another structure. On the other hand, the international system cannot stay unchanged; it must be reformed so that it can better reflect the new reality, meet countries' needs and catch up with the changing times.



Tanzania Standard Newspaper: It's been over a year since the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Summit in Johannesburg. Can you brief us on the implementation of the outcomes for this summit?

Wang Yi: China and Africa are a close-knit community with a shared future. Our cooperation is mutual help between two brothers. No matter how the international situation or the world economy may evolve, there will be no weakening in China's support for Africa.

What distinguishes China-Africa cooperation is that China always keeps its word. Since the Johannesburg Summit more than a year ago, the outcomes have been implemented in a swift and all-round way. Nearly half of the 60-billion-dollar funding support that China promised to Africa has been disbursed or arranged. The Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway has been completed; the Mombasa-Nairobi railway in Kenya will soon be. Planning has started for the Pointe Noire special economic zone in the Republic of Congo. Integrated port development in Tanzania is making smooth headway. And steady progress is being made in building a number of industrial parks. Responding to Africa's needs, China-Africa cooperation is undergoing three shifts: from government-driven to market-driven, from trade in goods to cooperation on production capacity, and from engineering contracts to capital investment and operations. These three shifts will provide new momentum and opportunities for Africa's sustainable development.

Just as China was Africa's most sincere friend in its quest for national independence and liberation, so China will be Africa's most reliable partner in speeding up industrialization and agricultural modernization and boosting its capacity for home-grown development.



Phoenix TV: Compared to last year, the temperature in the South China Sea has lowered somewhat. Although tension has eased between regional countries, non-regional countries have not stopped meddling. The United States is increasing its military deployment in the South China Sea, leading some people to say that there is bound to be a war between China and the US in those waters. Are you worried about this prospect?

Wang Yi: Tides have risen and fallen over the past year, and the South China Sea has returned to calm. I would go further than saying the temperature has lowered "somewhat" and say that it has lowered "significantly". This is the result of the joint efforts of China and ASEAN countries, and it's welcome news for the region and the world. At present, the

DOC is being implemented in a full and effective manner. The directly concerned countries have returned to the right track of settling their disputes through dialogue and consultation. China and the ten ASEAN countries are advancing the COC consultation to work out a common set of regional rules. At the end of February, the China-ASEAN joint working group has made visible progress and produced the first draft of COC framework. China and the ASEAN countries are all happy about it. At this moment, if someone should try to make waves and stir trouble, then he will have no support but meet the common opposition of the entire region. China will never allow the hard-won stability to be disrupted again.

While some people in the world believe in Alfred Mahan's theory of controlling the seas, the Chinese people prefer the approach taken by Zheng He and value maritime cooperation. In the 21st century, we would like to see more maritime cooperation and greater trust between the parties. Even between China and the United States, if we change our mindset, then the vast oceans may well become a broad stage for cooperation.



Agencia EFE: The UK has launched its Brexit procedure, and elections are coming up in France and Germany. How does China see the future of Europe and its cooperation with China?

Wang Yi: The EU was the first regional cooperation mechanism established after the end of the Second World War; it's also the one that has developed the fastest. Contrary to conventional wisdom, we believe the challenges currently confronting the EU may turn out

to be an opportunity for the EU to become more mature. China will continue to support European integration and we hope to see a more united, stable and prosperous EU.

We set store by Europe's strategic position and important role. We would like to work with Europe to advance the partnerships for peace, growth, reform and civilization; to respect and address each other's legitimate concerns and promptly remove obstacles to cooperation; to practice multilateralism and move toward a multi-polar world; and to re-energize the world economy, improve global governance and ensure the healthy development of economic globalization.



China News Service: The promotional events held by the Foreign Ministry to present Chinese provinces to the world have been warmly welcomed. In the last few years, the Foreign Ministry has done a lot to serve domestic and local development. Could you talk about it?

Wang Yi: China is still a developing country, so Chinese diplomats are duty-bound to serve domestic development.

In the past few years, we have made great efforts to present the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, thereby helping the world gain a fuller understanding of China and have greater confidence in working with China. We have actively pursued cooperation on production capacity and signed relevant agreements with over 30 countries, thereby facilitating economic and industrial transformation and upgrading at home. We have secured the inclusion of the RMB in the IMF's SDR basket and established the BRICS New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment

Bank, thereby greatly expanding China's institutional rights in global economic governance. The Foreign Ministry has launched promotional events for Chinese provinces. Over the past year, we have held such events for six western and central provinces and autonomous regions. These events help the provinces to discuss cooperation with foreign partners without going abroad. They also help foreign diplomats in China to have a better knowledge of local opportunities without traveling outside Beijing. Every day, our missions around the world send back information and serve as bridges for business cooperation between China and other countries. Since the G20 Summit last year, Zhejiang Province and the city of Hangzhou have taken on a new look and made new progress in their economic and social development. People say that hosting the summit has given the city a major lift, and eventually it's the local residents who have benefited the most.

Development is of paramount importance, and serving development is our paramount task. The Foreign Ministry will continue to work with various localities and government departments to do a better job in this regard.



Philippine News Agency: Since President Rodrigo Duterte came into office, the China-Philippines relationship has made a big turnaround. What will China do to boost further its relations with the Philippines? What development we can expect on China-ASEAN relationship in the coming year?

Wang Yi: Since President Duterte came into office, he has appropriately handled the South China Sea issue and actively improved relations with China. This not only serves the interests of the Philippines, but also meets the expectation of the region. The Philippines has extended a hand of friendship, so of course, China has embraced it with open arms. The turnaround of China-Philippines relations lifts our friendship and benefits our two peoples and the wider region. None of this has happened by accident; it merely reflects what the relationship is supposed to be like.

At present, the two countries are tapping the full potential of our bilateral cooperation to make up for lost time. In the less than six months since President Duterte's visit to China, nearly 1,000 Chinese tourist groups have visited the Philippines and China has imported over 200,000 tons of tropical fruits from the Philippines. The two sides are having intensive discussions on a range of infrastructural projects, including railways, bridges and dams, and some of them may begin construction within this year. The new Commerce Minister of China is visiting the Philippines even as we speak. This shows China's desire to strengthen friendship and cooperation with the Philippines. The two sides have agreed to establish a bilateral consultation on the South China Sea issue and set up a cooperation mechanism between our coast guards. In short, the China-Philippines relationship has returned to the right path, one that serves the interests of both peoples. Together, the two sides should march forward with unity of purpose.

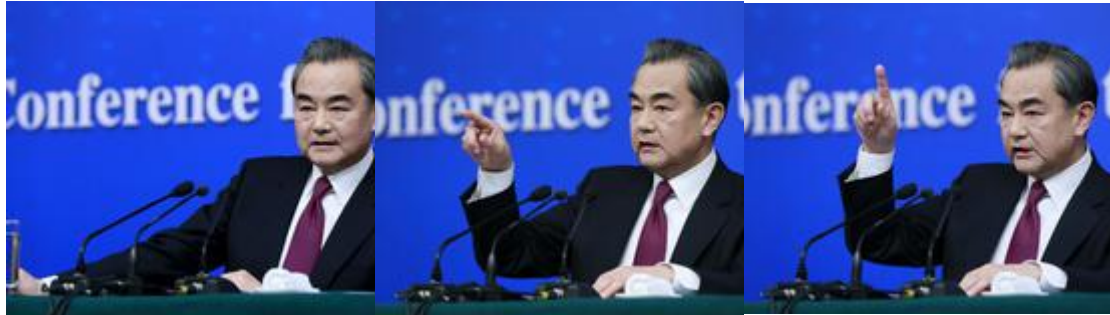
The turnaround in China-Philippines relations has scattered the dark clouds over China-ASEAN relations. Last year marks the 25th anniversary of the China-ASEAN dialogue relations, and this year marks the 50th anniversary of ASEAN's founding. The silver anniversary and the golden anniversary are especially auspicious for regional cooperation. China will support the Philippines in fulfilling its responsibilities as the ASEAN Chair, and we will help build the ASEAN Community.

We would like to work with ASEAN to pursue greater mutual benefit, intensify cooperation on connectivity and production capacity, make sure our peoples benefit from the upgraded China-ASEAN FTA as soon as possible, and wrap up the RCEP negotiation at an early date.

We would like to work with ASEAN to strengthen our bonds of friendship, make a success of the China-ASEAN tourism cooperation year, strive to meet the target of 30 million mutual visits by 2020, and make people-to-people exchange a new pillar of China-ASEAN relations.

We would also like to work with ASEAN to enhance Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC), speed up work on the 45 "early harvest" programs, and invite applications for the LMC

special fund. The China Secretariat for LMC will be set up in a few days' time. We hope LMC will become a flagship initiative in China's efforts to build a community of shared future with our neighbors and contribute more to the narrowing of disparity and the promotion of integration in our region.



Beijing TV: More and more Chinese people are going abroad. Whenever they run into difficulty, they would turn to the motherland for help. What has the Foreign Ministry and its overseas missions done to ensure their safety?

Wang Yi: Your question about consular protection reminds me of the recent shipwreck in Malaysia. One of the Chinese persons who has been rescued said to the journalists that when they were floating in the vast ocean and with food and water about to run out, she encouraged her fellow Chinese by saying, "if the embassy knows about us, it will come looking for us, and we will be saved. " Now at a moment of life and death, our people pin their hopes on the embassy, and it's what helps them persevere. Our people have great trust in Chinese diplomats: this is an enormous responsibility for us. We must never betray their trust and we spare no effort to meet our responsibility.

In 2016, the Foreign Ministry and its overseas missions handled over 100,000 consular cases. We successfully rescued mainland and Taiwan compatriots who had been held by Gulf of Aden pirates for almost five years, evacuated over 1,000 of our countrymen and women from the conflict in South Sudan, and transferred over 1,000 of our people trapped by earthquake, fire or blizzard in New Zealand, Israel, Japan and so on. Whenever there is difficulty or danger for Chinese people overseas, there would appear Chinese diplomats and the five-starred red flag of China.

Currently, mainland residents make over 120 million outbound visits every year. For six years, the number has been growing at an annual rate of 10 million and counting. Consular protection is becoming a more formidable task for us. But whatever the difficulty or challenge, the Party central leadership and the general public can count on us doing a better in consular protection.



TV Asahi: This year marks the 45th anniversary of normalized relations between China and Japan. The economic relationship is fine but our political relations have stalled. What's China's view?

Wang Yi: This year marks the 45th anniversary of normalized relations between China and Japan, but it also marks the 80th anniversary of the so-called "Marco Polo Bridge Incident". These two anniversary dates represent two totally different paths, the one leading to peace and friendship and the other to war and confrontation. Eighty years ago, Japan launched full-scale invasion of China, inflicting horrendous suffering on the people of China and other Asian countries and pushing itself into the dark abyss. Forty-five years ago, Japanese leaders drew the right lesson from history and mended relations with its neighbor, thereby realizing fast development at home. Several decades on, however, some people in Japan are still torn between the two paths and try to reverse the course of history. We hope all peace-loving people in Japan will make sure their country will head in the right direction in this important anniversary year.

As for China-Japan relations, China's position has been consistent and clear-cut. Of course, we want to improve relations with Japan for the benefit of our two peoples. But

first of all, Japan has to adopt the right frame of mind, be sensible and come to terms with the fact of China's development and revitalization.

China National Radio: Yang Xiuzhu, the fugitive at the top of the list of 100 most wanted persons of China's anti-corruption campaign code-named Sky Net, returned to China last November. The news caused quite a stir both at home and abroad. What has the Foreign Ministry and its overseas missions done to help bring back fugitives and recover their assets?

Wang Yi: Under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee, various government departments have worked together to bring back corruption fugitives and recover their assets. The Foreign Ministry has played an important part in this. Since the 18th CPC Congress, the Foreign Ministry and its overseas missions have done all we can and worked closely with the relevant authorities to bring back over 2,500 fugitives from more than 90 countries and regions on charges of corruption and economic crime, and 38 of them are on the list of 100 most wanted fugitives. We have concluded extradition treaties and mutual judicial assistance treaties with 70 countries, knitting a web that basically covers the major countries on all continents. When hosting APEC and G20 meetings, we have built international consensus on anti-corruption cooperation. The international community has praised China's determination and progress in this regard, which is a big plus for our international reputation.

The CPC Central Committee and the general public care greatly about bringing back fugitives and recovering their assets. The Foreign Ministry will continue to do its best to shatter the illusion of fugitives and make them understand that there is no safe haven abroad and they cannot escape justice wherever they may be.



Al Jazeera: The situation in the Middle East is becoming ever more complicated. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, what role will China play on the regional issues?

Wang Yi: Once again the situation in the Middle East has reached a crucial crossroads with both risks of growing instability and the promise of peace.

In China's view, to nudge the regional situation in the right direction, three things are of crucial importance. First, we need to maintain the important consensus on fighting terrorism. Second, we need to adhere to the right goal of seeking a political settlement of the regional issues. And third, we must put the UN in the driver's seat of the Middle East peace process.

The Iranian nuclear agreement is a fine example of settling disputes by political and diplomatic means. The relevant parties should all honor their commitment, fulfill their obligation and effectively implement that agreement.

The issue of Palestine is an open wound in the Middle East. Peace may be delayed, but justice cannot be denied. China firmly supports the two-state solution and will continue to do what we can to help restart the peace talks.



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The Paper: New media is changing the world profoundly. How is China's diplomacy responding to this new reality?

Wang Yi: The Foreign Ministry never shies away from new things. As soon as new media was gaining momentum, we began to make use of it. Diplo-Chat, our new media account, has attracted 12 million followers. Various Foreign Ministry departments and overseas missions have opened over 130 new media accounts, including the very popular China Consular Affairs account on WeChat. Through these new media platforms, we are able to deliver useful information concerning world affairs, consular protection, external cooperation and so on to the smart devices of our followers; almost immediately, we can get their comments, suggestions or complaints. So new media has built a direct, two-way bridge between the Foreign Ministry and the general public. It has make China's diplomacy more down-to-earth and better understood by our people.

Serving the people is the abiding goal of China's diplomacy. Going forward, we will make still greater use of new media to set up more "antennas" to pick up public opinion, operate more "through-trains" to provide direct services for the people and offer more "lifelines" of consular protection. I want to make an announcement here. In two weeks' time, the

Foreign Ministry will launch the WeChat version of 12308. In the future, apart from dialing the consular hot-line, people who run into difficulty in another country can seek real-time advice and help from the WeChat platform. I'm sure this will make things much easier for our people.

The press conference lasted two hours and was attended by more than 500 Chinese and foreign journalists.



Relevant link:

http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1444204.shtml