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**CHINA'S NEW STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

*China's Plan For Prosperity and Stability in Asia and Beyond*

by

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## **China's Plan For Prosperity and Stability in Asia and Beyond**

*Remarks by Amb. Zha Peixin at the 29<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Roundtable  
Plenary Session 2, "China's New Strategic Initiatives"*

Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's my great pleasure to attend the 29<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Roundtable. First I'd like to express my appreciation to the warm hospitality and considerate arrangements of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia.

This year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Victory of the World Anti-Fascist War. The past seven decades has been a time of great changes. The two greatest changes in the global political landscape since we entered new century are the rise of developing countries as a group and the rise of Asian countries as a group. As a big country in Asia and the biggest developing country in the world, China's quick development is reflection and impartible part of these great changes.

China can't develop in isolation from the rest of the world, and the world also needs China for its prosperity. China's fast development is attributable to the reform and opening-up program in the past 30 years and more, to the peaceful and stable regional environment and to the mutual cooperation with the rest of Asia and the World. With its own develop, China will play a bigger role in promoting world peace, stability, mutual benefits and cooperation. With its population accounting for 22 percent of the world total, China should make even more contribution to progress of humanity.

In line with this thinking, the Chinese leaders have raised a series of important initiatives on various occasions in recent years, such as establishing a new model of major-country relationship featuring no conflict or confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation, having the correct view of justice and benefit, establishing common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security for Asia, building a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation and global partnership network, developing the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century

Maritime Silk Road (dubbed as the "Belt and Road"), and creating Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). These initiatives are China's contribution to prosperity and stability of Asia and the World. They are proof of the fact that China is a responsible major country.

This year the APR has set up a panel specifically for China's strategic initiatives. It reflects the great importance attached by all parties. It is also highly necessary and meaningful. I believe that with the frank and in-depth discussions, all parties will have a deeper understanding of China's development strategy and direction in the future. Here, I'd like to share with you some of my views on it.

**First, although targeting different countries, region and areas, these initiatives have the same goal, that is, to uphold world peace, promote common development, enhance international cooperation and advance progress of humanity, with the ultimate goal of building a community of common destiny for all mankind.**

Since the end of the Second World War, especially after the end of the Cold War, we have witnessed fast development of multipolarization and economic globalization in the world, and a strong trend of peace, development and win-win cooperation. All countries are more interdependent than ever before. The world has become an inseparable global village. No country can achieve development in isolation from the rest of the world. And no country, no matter how powerful it is, can manage to deal with the global challenges alone. Whether you like it or not, be willing or unwilling, mankind is increasingly becoming a community of common destiny in which all are interconnected. This is what our world is like today and also the general trend of global development.

There are more than 200 countries and over 2500 nations in the world today. Every country and nation has its own historical tradition and cultural heritage. It's an irrevocable reality for all civilizations, all social systems and all development roads to co-exist in the long-term. In today's world, neither can the law of the jungle bring peace and stability, nor can zero-sum gaming and winner-takes-all bring development and prosperity. To achieve the goal of long-term peace, stability, development and prosperity, we must seek a new way, this is, the way of building a community of common destiny, mutual respect, seeking common ground and reserving differences, equality and mutual benefit, and win-win cooperation.

At the annual conference of Bo'ao Forum of Asia last March, Chinese President Xin Jinping proposed the building of a community of common destiny for all

mankind through efforts towards a community of common destiny for Asia. To this end, he suggested that countries respect one another and treat each other as equals, seek win-win cooperation and common development, pursue common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and ensure inclusiveness and mutual learning among civilizations.

This important discourse by President Xi drew a blue print for the community of common destiny. And important initiatives including the Belt and Road, Asian Security Concept, and AIIB, will provide concrete support for the the community of common destiny.

**Second, these wide-ranging initiatives are all characterized by win-win cooperation, openness and inclusiveness.**

The major problem confronting our world today is still development. Development, as we see it, is the master key to the solution of almost all issues. Our world today is peaceful on the whole. But it is not without challenges and threats. These problems include complex and intertwining traditional security threats, and the ever more diversifying non-traditional security challenges. What is more, the two are increasingly interplaying with one another. The crux of the series of major Chinese initiatives lies with the major issues of development and security. The essence is to achieve common development through win-win cooperation, and ensure world peace and stability by realizing common security through cooperation.

Our initiatives, whether for development or security, are non-exclusive. They are open to all regions and countries. We welcome all peace-loving nations and peoples to take an active part in the discussion and development of the initiatives as well as share the fruits. This shows fully Asia's tradition of openness and inclusiveness.

This is what China thinks, and also what it does. China advocates the building of a new type of international relationship with win-win cooperation at the core, a global partnership network, and a path of cooperation in lieu of confrontation and partnership in lieu of alliance. These have transcended ideology and shed new light on state-to-state relations.

Despite the many challenges and difficulties in its relations with the United States, China has been committed to working with the latter to shape a new type of major country relationship that is non-confrontational and based on mutual respect and win-win cooperation. China grows its comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination with Russia on the basis of equality and mutual benefits, a relationship

that is non-aligned and not targeting third parties. China and India have effectively managed and properly settled boundary issues, and made progress in bilateral ties. During Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's successful visit to China last month, the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to the building of an even closer partnership for development.

The "Belt and Road" initiative is mainly about trade, economic cooperation and cultural exchanges, designed to connect the development strategies of countries along the "Belt and Road", promote regional economic integration and realize complementarities and common development.

Though proposed by China, the "Belt and Road" initiative is by no means a solo by China itself, but a chorus by all countries along the routes. In promoting this initiative China follows the principle of wide consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. In promoting "Belt and Road" development, China follows the principles of equality and mutual benefits. It does not engage in seclusion or confrontation, does not seek any sphere of influence, does not interfere in other country's internal affairs, does not impose anything on others, nor does it compete with other major countries or existing mechanisms.

As a major pillar of the "Belt and Road", the AIIB will provide financing support for regional infrastructure connectivity. It will complement and grow in coordination with the Asia Development Bank, World Bank and other multilateral financial institutions.

At present, there are 57 AIIB Prospective Founding Members, 20 of which are extra-regional. This is evidence enough that the AIIB is open and inclusive. Just as President Xi Jinping puts it, the development of the "Belt and Road" and the AIIB is open to active participation by all countries along the routes and other Asian nations. Friends from other parts of the world are also warmly welcome to this great endeavor.

Asia's security cooperation has long lagged behind its economic integration, which is detrimental to the region's long-term development. China advocates common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security for Asia, the essence of which is to abandon the you-lose-so-I-win type of Cold War mentality, and work together to explore a new path for Asia that ensures security for all, by all, and of all. This is consistent with long-standing ASEAN ideas of cooperative security and common security, and is conducive to coordinated development of economy and security in Asia.

It is noteworthy, however, that the responsibility of security and development in Asia should naturally be shouldered by Asian nations and peoples. There is nothing wrong in saying that Asia is Asians' Asia because this is our homeland that we depend on for survival. It is as natural and justified as saying that ASEAN is ASEAN members' ASEAN. This does not mean that any other country is excluded, nor will any country be squeezed out of Asia.

The Asia today converges the interests of many countries in other parts of the world, and has growing links with the rest of the world. We always welcome other countries to play constructive roles for Asia's prosperity and stability, and we have no intention at all to push any country out of Asia. We respect the lawful interests and legitimate concerns in Asia of relevant countries. We also hope that relevant countries could respect interests and concerns of regional countries, conform to the general wish of regional countries for peace and development, and follow cooperation modalities that have been proven to be effective in the region.

**Third, though these initiative were proposed by China, they are, at the same time, shared undertakings for all parties concerned, which requires joint efforts for their promotion and implementation.**

Since these initiatives were proposed by China, the Chinese side will naturally make tremendous efforts for them. We Chinese believe that one must be truthful in speech and firm in action. These initiatives are not empty slogans. We have made real efforts for their implementation and will continue to do so. We aim high, and we stand firm. What is special about the Chinese Government is that for whatever goal it sets, it follows up with unswerving actions that will not stop until the destination is reached.

One of the advantages of the Chinese system is that the policies are highly stable and consistent. Although we elect in a new government every five years, our goals remain unchanged. For instance, Mr. Deng Xiaoping set the goal of achieving modernization in three steps in the early days of reform and opening-up. And we are still moving forward toward this goal. To build a moderately well-off society in an all-round way is actually an interim target in the third strategic step. The proposed China Dream is also aiming at realizing modernization as well as the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

We are keenly aware that it takes a long process to realize these initiatives. Rome is not built in one day. But we Chinese are also famous in the world for our patience. We will certainly persevere, and work hard unremittingly. Some of you might have known an ancient Chinese fable called "The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the

Mountains”. We Chinese have the spirit of that foolish old man who would not stop until the mountains are removed. Although it might take generations or even tens of generations to realize one goal, we will just work on it and our sons and grandsons will do the same.

Though we are mentally prepared for a long-term process, we also have a sense of urgency. We will seize the hour, seize the day so that there will be early harvest to help build up confidence. Real benefits will naturally generate more support without hesitation.

We are sober enough to foresee difficulties, challenges and risks in implementing these initiatives because it won’t be smooth sailing. But we believe that, although the road will have some twists and turns, what lies at the end of the road is well worth it. It is absolutely possible that these initiatives could be realized.

First, China has been growing out of difficulties, challenges and risks, whether it was about the country’s revolution or development. When we grow from establishing the Communist Party of China to establishing the People’s Republic of China, from a poor and weak China to a prosperous and strong China, we have trekked an arduous journey and made numerous sacrifices.

Second, the circumstances we face are much better than what we had in the past. We are stronger in national strength, richer in experience, and higher in our international standing, greater in roles and influence. We are well equipped to overcome difficulties and challenges.

Third, the implementation of these initiatives already has a firm foundation. China has established diplomatic relations with over 170 countries in the world. It is now the largest trading partner for over 120 countries. And it has established mechanisms of dialogue and cooperation with various regions, such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, Forum of China and the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States. China’s relations with most other countries in the world make solid progress almost every day with strengthening political mutual trust, ever closer trade and economic cooperation and more dynamic people-to-people and cultural exchanges.

Fourth, and most importantly, these initiatives serve not only China’s interests, but also those of other countries in the world. They conform to the trend of the times and reflect the wish and calling of the people. The tide of the times is so strong that only those who follow the trend will prevail and those against it fail. You become

invincible when you have broad support of the people.

In short, we have every reason to be confident in turning these initiatives into realities.

Of course, efforts by China alone are far from enough. As the saying goes, the fire burns high when everybody adds wood to it. Just like the boat race between Oxford and Cambridge every year, only the team whose members all row in the same direction can win.

Similarly, it takes the joint efforts of all governments and peoples in the world to realize these initiatives. Since the initiatives were proposed, there has been generally positive response at home and abroad so far.

Inside China, our government's initiatives have been widely endorsed and supported in by the general public. Take the "Belt and Road" initiative as an example. Many provinces are making plans, and the business and academic communities are also very keen. Internationally speaking, the initiatives are fairly well received. More than 60 countries along the "Belt and Road" have expressed understanding and support or interest in participation. Many of you may have known that the Silk Road Fund with US\$40 billion Chinese capital was launched successfully last year. There are already 57 prospective founding members for the AIIB, which is undergoing Articles of Agreement (AOA) negotiations and expected to start running by the end of this year.

Misgivings are certainly there. And it is only natural to have doubts, because many don't know much about our initiatives. We are more than patient to provide explanations to help with understanding. There are also others who are deeply biased against China and don't believe at all that what China proposes will be implemented or realized. We certainly hope that these people could give up their prejudice. But if they don't, we allow them to wait and see. When Mr. Deng Xiaoping proposed that China quadruple its 1980 GDP by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many people, both Chinese and foreign, were dubious. In the end, we have not only realized the goal, but accomplished it five years ahead of schedule.

There is a saying in China that practice is the sole criterion for testing truth. Whether China's initiatives are practicable or not can only be proven by practice. Most of foreign people wish China well, but there are inevitably some who wish us ill or that Asia will never grow. They are anxious about China's development and Asia's rise, so much so that they would have no qualms about smearing or discrediting

China's initiatives, and sow discord or poison the relations among Asian nations. We are mentally prepared for this too. We will make clarifications in time to clear away rumours and slanders. Believing that most countries would not be cheated by the provocation and estrangement, we will enhance unity and cooperation as a response. We will stay vigilant against intentional provocation and respond firmly when necessary.

In fact, China's initiatives have not only garnered increasing understanding and support, but also been implemented step by step. As you can see from the media, Chinese leaders have been visiting other countries or receiving foreign heads of state or government quite frequently lately, during which these initiatives are being vigorously promoted for implementation, and the results are fairly satisfying.

When President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan last April, the comprehensive development of the China-Pakistan economic corridor was launched. During the President's recent visit to Central Asia, China and Russia agreed to start connecting Silk Road Economic Belt and Eurasian Economic Union cooperation, China and Kazakhstan agreed to expedite synergizing the Belt and "Nurly Zhol" (the Bright Road) economic development strategy, China and Belarus agreed to build their bilateral industrial park project into a flagship program in the Silk Road Economic Belt.

In addition, China formulated the *Vision and Actions on Jointly Building the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road*, taking into consideration views and comments of countries along the routes. It has also signed MOUs on joint development of the "Belt and Road" with some other countries. This shows that the "Belt and Road" has developed from a concept into real and tangible measures with broad prospects.

**Fourth, ASEAN is a priority in China's neighbor diplomacy and an indispensable partner for China to implement these initiatives.**

ASEAN is to build itself into a community by the end of this year, which is the first sub-regional community in Asia, a milestone in the annals of the region. China has supported ASEAN integration, the leading role of the grouping in East Asian regional cooperation, and the development of ASEAN. China will continue to vigorously implement the "2+7" cooperation framework and build an even closer China-ASEAN community of common destiny so as to contribute even more to the building of the Asian community of common destiny.

We stand ready to work with ASEAN to promote the Asian Security Concept, and make full use of ASEAN-led multilateral mechanisms in the region to deepen cooperation in non-traditional security areas such as disaster relief, counter terrorism, combatting transnational crimes and cyber security to provide more public security products to the region. The successful ARF DiREx 2015 last week co-organized by China and Malaysia marks an important action to carry out the Asian Security Concept.

Southeast Asia represents a key direction in the building of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road. This year is the year of China-ASEAN maritime cooperation, during which China will conduct pragmatic cooperation with ASEAN countries in marine economy, maritime connectivity, scientific research, environmental protection, maritime security and maritime culture. The programs include establishing the China-ASEAN Marine Cooperation Center, setting up the China-ASEAN Maritime Emergency Rescue Hotline, and opening of China-ASEAN College of Marine Sciences. We are confident that China-ASEAN maritime cooperation across the board will become exemplary for the development of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road, and also a new highlight in the development of China-ASEAN relations.

Concerning maritime disputes left over by history, we are willing to adopt a dual-track approach to properly settle the issues with ASEAN countries, that is, the disputes be peacefully resolved through dialogue and consultation between countries directly concerned, and that peace and stability in the South China Sea be upheld by China and ASEAN countries together. China will continue working with ASEAN countries in comprehensive and effective implementation of the DOC, and strive to reach a COC at an early date on the basis of consensus through consultation so that proper dispute settlement and pragmatic maritime cooperation could reinforce each other.

China's initiatives bring huge opportunities for ASEAN members, other Asian countries and also for countries all over the world. The earlier participation in the initiatives, the sooner one gets the benefits. We sincerely hope that more countries will soon take part in the implementation of the initiatives, so that we will work together for an even brighter future.

Thank you.