

A Promising Future

The 19th CPC National Congress ushers in a new era for China-South Africa and China-Africa cooperation By Lin Songtian



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On October 18-24, the Communist Party of China (CPC) successfully convened its 19th National Congress in Beijing. This meeting drew very high attention from both China and the world. It represents a historic milestone for China during the decisive stage in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and at a critical moment, as socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era.

A new blueprint for future development

The congress has made two major political judgments concerning the overall situation. The first judgment is that the principal contradiction facing the Chinese society has evolved into the one between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life, instead of the previous one between the ever-growing material and cultural needs of the people and the backwardness of social production. Today, the needs to be met for the people to live a better life are increasingly broad. Not only have their material and cultural needs grown; their demands for democracy, rule of law, fairness and justice, security, a better environment, balanced urban and rural development, and equitable income distribution are increasing.

The second judgment is that socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. The new era means that the Chinese nation, which since modern times began has endured so much for so long, has achieved a tremendous transformation: It has stood up, grown rich, and is becoming strong; it has come to embrace the brilliant prospect of rejuvenation, and it has now entered a new era of secur-

ing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, a new era of realizing common prosperity for all the Chinese, and a new era of fully building a modern socialist China. This new era means that, China will focus more on addressing unbalanced and inadequate development, on improving the quality and effect of development, so as to better meet the ever-growing economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological needs of our people, and to promote all-round human development and social progress. This new era means that socialism with Chinese characteristics has achieved huge success, blazing a new trail for other developing countries to achieve modernization and making great contributions to mankind.

Based on judgments of the fundamental changes in China's national conditions, the congress elaborated on the CPC's historic mission in the new era and drew up a new blueprint of securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and then embarking on a journey to fully build a modern socialist China. By 2020, we will secure decisive success in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, meaning China, as the world's most populous country, will completely eradicate poverty among its 1.3 billion population, leaving no one behind. It is estimated that by 2020, its per-capita GDP will reach \$10,000. For the period from 2021 to the middle of this century, the congress has drawn up a two-stage overall development plan. From 2021-35, we will basically realize socialist modernization, with estimated per-capita GDP at \$30,000, reaching the level of a moderately developed country. From 2035 to mid-century, we will develop China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful.

The congress set forth the basic policy for upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. It has elected a new generation of CPC central leadership with General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee Xi Jinping at its core, and established the historical position of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as the guiding thought to unite and lead the CPC and the Chinese people going forward. The Xi Jinping Thought has been written into the



CPC Constitution.

The 19th CPC National Congress has set out comprehensive planning and deployment for developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era and for CPC party building. This congress has charted the course of both the CPC and China, and bears far-reaching significance for the future of both China and the world.

A people-centered approach

As Xi pointed out, the original aspiration and mission of Chinese communists were to

Practitioners of the intangible heritage of wood block printing demonstrate the traditional Chinese art form to a visitor to the booth of China International Publishing Group at the Nairobi International Book Fair on September 27



seek happiness for the Chinese people and rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. This is what inspires Chinese communists to keep advancing. Since its foundation, the CPC has maintained its fundamental purpose of serving people wholeheartedly. Upholding the firm belief that the CPC is a party of the people, for the people and by the people, the CPC is always committed to a people-centered approach, always puts the interests of the people first, and always strives to ensure the achievements of social and economic progress should be and must be shared by the entire population so as to achieve common

prosperity for all.

As stressed, the CPC comes from the people. Its roots are based among the people. Its purpose is to serve the people. Without the people, the Party will lose its lifeline. With the deep conviction that the people are makers of history, the Party must serve the people wholeheartedly, exercise power for the people and continue to focus efforts on the aspiration of the people to live a better life.

For this ultimate purpose, the 19th CPC National Congress made clear a number of important principles. First, development is the absolute principle and the top priority of the

Party in governing and rejuvenating the country to realize the ambitious goal of securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and a modern socialist country with Chinese characteristics. Second, we uphold the new development approach that puts quality and effective, green and sustainable development in first place. Third, we are committed to open and innovation-driven development, to let the market play the decisive role in the allocation of resources, and to make constant efforts to liberate and develop productivity. Fourth, we are fully committed to fighting against poverty for common prosperity. Our solemn promise is to take the 1.3 billion Chinese people into a moderately prosperous society in all respects, leaving not a single person behind on the path toward common prosperity. We will work to ensure utmost fairness and justice, and ensure that every Chinese person benefits from the development of the country, which speaks volumes for the fundamental difference between socialism and capitalism.

A new opportunity for the world

The 19th CPC National Congress set out the guiding principles for China's major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics at the top level. The congress puts forward that China will pursue a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation, building a community with a shared future for mankind, which is an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity. This goal not only encapsulates the overall objective of China's diplomacy in the new era, but also declares to the world the general direction of our joint efforts with countries around the world.

Xi stressed that it is impossible for China to enjoy peace and development without the peace and development of the world. That is why China advocates a new security concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security. China is committed to jointly building a world of lasting peace and universal security. To achieve this goal, countries should abandon the traditional international ►►

politics of zero-sum games and the law of the jungle, and resolutely reject any country pursuing "absolute security." This approach is in stark contrast to the foreign policy of a few countries that only seek absolute security for themselves and for that purpose even incite "color revolutions" and try to topple the governments of other countries. China will not only focus on building a beautiful and better China, but will also contribute to a beautiful world. China is willing to work with the international community to promote the cause of the environment, address climate change, and protect the earth as our shared homeland. To build a clean and beautiful and better world is the solemn promise of the CPC as well as the stated mission of China's diplomacy.

Looking forward, under the guidance of the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, China will continue to hold high the banner of peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, and uphold its fundamental foreign policy goal of preserving world peace and promoting common development. China remains firm in its commitment to strengthening friendship and cooperation with other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. China will always be a staunch force for world peace, development and order.

New dynamics for China-Africa

China and Africa have always understood and supported each other on issues concerning our core interests and major concerns, and we have always stood together to protect our common interests. Since the start of the new century, major changes have taken place for both China and Africa, which share the common mission of economic development, facilitating a better life for the people and eradicating poverty. Africa is endowed with rich natural resources, a human dividend, and a potentially big marketplace, while China has the comparative advantages of capital, technology, markets, skilled workers and experience of successful development. China and Africa share mutual needs and complementarities and face a rare historic opportunity to synergize their development strategies.

In view of new developments in China-Africa relations, President Xi proposed that China should always follow the principles of sincerity, practical results, affinity and good faith, and uphold the values of friendship, justice and shared interests. The essence of the instruction is to closely combine China's development with the independent sustainable development of African countries, so as to achieve win-win cooperation for common development. In December 2015, President Xi and South African President Jacob Zuma co-chaired the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Johannesburg Summit. The two



A customer at a restaurant in South Africa uses Alipay to pay the bill on August 31. China's online payment platform Alipay is accessible in over 10,000 shops and stores in South Africa

presidents jointly opened with other African leaders a new era of China-Africa win-win cooperation for common development. During the summit, President Xi announced the China-Africa 10 Major Cooperation Plans, which are spearheaded by efforts to accelerate Africa's industrialization and agricultural modernization. With a commitment of \$60 billion of funding support, China aims to support Africa to breakthrough three development bottlenecks, namely inadequate infrastructure, lack of professional and skilled personnel, and shortage of financial resources, so as to achieve lasting peace and self-sustainable development. We believe that there will be no political independence without economic independence. Only by realizing industrialization and agricultural modernization can Africa create more jobs, tax revenue and foreign exchange and achieve self-sustainable development.

The next FOCAC meeting will be held in China next year. Under the guidance of the 19th National Congress of the CPC, and upholding the values of friendship, justice and shared interests and the new approach of common, intensive, green, peaceful, and open development, China will work together with Africa to jointly build the Belt and Road and promote comprehensive cooperation in the five pillar areas of politics, economy, culture, security and international affairs, and bring China-Africa relations into the new era of win-win cooperation for common development.

Currently, the China-South Africa comprehensive strategic partnership maintains robust momentum. China-South Africa relations are in their best historical moment and are enjoying new historical opportunities. Over the years, a multi-layered, wide-ranging and all-dimensional cooperation framework has taken shape. Driven

by the three engines of mutual political trust, economic and trade cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges, China-South Africa relations have delivered tangible results to both peoples and become a model for China's cooperation with African countries and all developing countries. Situated in a prime location and boasting rich resources, sound infrastructure, well-regulated markets, and a sound legal system, South Africa is the leading African country that is in the best position for deeper China-Africa mutually beneficial cooperation. China and South Africa not only have comparative advantages, more importantly, their governments have a strong political commitment to common development. A new miracle of development will be created by China and South Africa through complementing their respective strengths for win-win cooperation.

Next year will mark the 20th anniversary of China-South Africa diplomatic ties. China and South Africa will take this important opportunity, fully leverage our strengths of political mutual trust, economic complementarity, and the friendship between our two peoples, and work together to promote cooperation in the 10 priority areas of infrastructure, human resources, manufacturing and processing, agriculture, tourism, marine economy, finance, security, people-to-people exchanges and international cooperation. China is ready to support South Africa as an industrial bellwether in Africa, as a locomotive to drive Africa's industrialization, and as a production base for African industrialization and modernization, and to make China-South Africa relations more productive and more beneficial to our two peoples. ■

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