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## Host Diplomacy In China: From 1991 to 2018

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## Introduction

Since 1990, great changes have been taken place both within and outside of China. Domestically, China's economy has grown at a high rate annually; though its growth rate slowed down in recent years, China's economy still enjoyed a relatively high rate of more than 6 percent. Internationally, China surpassed Japan in 2010 to become the second largest economy only after the United States, some projected it would become the largest economy in a few decades. As China's economy grows, its influence has been expanding overseas. Entering into the 21st century, China has increasingly sought to play an active role on international stage; its efforts have been witnessed by other countries on issues like climate change, global economic governance, and in recent years, security matters in Iran and North Korea. What attracted the world's attentions were its behaviors in the South and East China Sea. China's aggressive behaviors and harsh rhetoric sparked a heated debate on whether China's foreign policy is becoming increasingly assertive. Some argue that China now is "revealing its true colors" after long periods of development and hiding its capabilities. This debate did not end as the new President Xi Jinping have promoted a slogan of Chinese Dream, the Chinese version of American Dream, and called for countries to build a community of common destiny.

While it is informing and valuable to have an outside opinion on China's foreign policy, it is also important to hear Chinese voices on this matter. Indeed over the past three decades, China's foreign policy has underwent transitions. From Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping, China was led by four generations of collective leadership, each having its own characteristics in conducting foreign policy. It is widely admitted that Deng Xiaoping's dictum of *taoguangyanghui* has been served as China's long-term foreign strategy in the 1990s. Entering into the 21st century, under the leadership of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, the concept of "peaceful development" or "peaceful rise" was brought up by the new leadership. The official rhetoric adopted a translation of "peaceful development" shortly after "peaceful rise" was first raised to the public in an effort to reduce the negative connotations of "rise" in the western discourse. Meanwhile this generation of collective leadership was well aware of China's improved international status due to its economic success, and began to conduct foreign policy more actively on regional and international levels. They attached great importance on "soft power" as a more effective tool to improve China's influence and shape a positive image overseas. Under Hu's

leadership, China began to host high-profile international events more frequently than before, bringing more foreign leaders, experts and businessmen to Chinese cities. Compared with ten years ago, The Chinese leaders appear to be more confident and open-minded than a decade ago. On various occasions, the top leaders repeatedly demonstrated China's commitment to pursue a path of peaceful development, and showed their vision of a "harmonious world". The 2008 global financial crisis was viewed as a great opportunity for China to lead as a world power in financial and economic matters; China now stands at the hub of global economic governance. As the world economy recovered slowly, China's relatively high growth rate against the background of world's sluggish economy attracted attentions from overseas. Government officials, economic experts and businessmen closely observe and evaluate China's economic performance. Chinese leaders began to attach more importance on releasing messages on its domestic economic policies, which are closely related to regional trade and investments. Regional forums and international conferences provide a platform for dialogues and reaching consensus on issues of common concerns. Since President Xi Jinping assumes power, China has put more efforts on public diplomacy. He calls for a "foreign policy with Chinese characteristics" to come out to better fit China's role in the world and safeguard its interests. This signals a change in China's foreign policy as China has entered into a "new era". It seems that Xi is no longer satisfied with the long-term held *taoguangyanghui*; he declared that China's foreign policy should "strive for achievements". Under his leadership, China has been engaged active public diplomacy in all aspects, including bilateral and multilateral relations, from issues like global economic governance, climate change, to UN peace keeping mission. Among these efforts, host diplomacy has been given increasing importance in China's overall diplomacy. In 2014 Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke to the media when asked to give his opinion on foreign policy this year. Wang highly emphasized the significance of successful hosting of four major international affairs this year. These high-profile international events were widely reported by the media within and outside of China. Some scholars applaud these efforts, pointing out that host diplomacy will increase China's strategic capabilities in promoting its influence overseas and its international status. Scholars and experts on international relations have begun to talk about host diplomacy in China since early 2014. These comments and studies on host diplomacy focus on the definition of host diplomacy, advantages of host diplomacy in China, its challenges and

problems. While recognizing host events are not new in China, scholars point out that it is the first time that “host diplomacy” has been put forward by a Chinese leader as a diplomatic concept and viewed as an important component of China’s yearly diplomatic tasks. Officially, host diplomacy have been attached great importance in China’s overall diplomatic work under the fifth collective leadership. The study on host diplomacy in China is under the context that Chinese leaders call for a new foreign policy with Chinese characteristics since the 18th National Congress of the CPC. With the successful hosting of international summits such as APEC summit in 2014 and G20 summit in 2016, some have noted that China’s capabilities in shaping meetings’ agenda and providing public goods have increased; China has played an leading role in pushing the meeting’s consensus into practical working papers or announcements. Host diplomacy has so far brought fruitful results and contributed to China’s strategic capabilities. The current literature on China’s host diplomacy focuses its features and implications of high-profile multilateral events since President Xi Jinping assumed power, especially since 2014 when Foreign Minister Wang Yi publicly raised the concept of host diplomacy. However, this was not the first time for China to host such high-profile events; the first international conference held in China can be dated back to 1995 during which China held the Fourth World Women Conference. And the 21st century has saw an increased number of international or multilateral events hosted in China. This trend suggests a shift or transition in Chinese top leaders’ thinking on China’s foreign policy and China’s status as an emerging power in the world. Since the 2008 global financial crisis it has been widely recognized that China has been more active, or assertive in international affairs. Host diplomacy provides the best opportunity for Chinese leaders to display their thinking on China’s foreign strategy, to show China’s image as they intend to world audience, to engage into dialogues with foreigners with host advantage, thus allowing China observers to interpret or decode top Chinese leaders’ thinking on foreign policy. So far, there is no systemic study on China’s host diplomacy since the 1990s; as mentioned before, recent studies began to flourish in 2014. This paper seeks to fill the gap by analyzing major multilateral events held in China from 1991 to 2018 in an attempt to gain an understanding of a general trend in China’s foreign policy during this period. By reviewing comments and reports from China’s state media, *People’s Daily*, it seeks to search for the official discourse on host events in China, therefore shedding some light on changes, consistencies and features of China’s foreign policy. It

argues that China's official stance of pursuing a path of peaceful development is clear and consistent since the beginning of this century; China has been more proactive in articulating its interests and displaying its own visions in promoting regional cooperation. Especially under the leadership of Xi Jinping, China's host diplomacy has entered into a new era, which featuring on overseas expansion of strategic partnership and promoting bilateral or multilateral cooperation.

The first chapter reviews the ongoing debate in the West and China on whether China's foreign policy is fundamentally moving towards a more assertive direction. The second chapter examines the contents of diplomatic concepts under each generation of collective leadership, specifically including Deng Xiaoping's dictum of *taoguangyanghui*, Hu Jintao's "peaceful development", and more emphasize on Xi Jinping's big power diplomacy, his promulgation of Chinese Dream and community of common destiny, etc.. This part is conducive to understanding the messages Chinese leaders' trying to convey. The third chapter presents major host events from 1991 to 2018. This chapter begins with a definition of host diplomacy and its advantages or benefits the host country possesses in conducting multilateral events at home. It concludes with the features of China's host diplomacy, arguing that China's foreign policy has experienced a notable transition since the 1990s; since President Xi Jinping assumed power, China's foreign policy has entered into a more active period of time on global stage, the new leadership is more ambitious in "striving for achievements" in China's foreign policy, decisively walking away from Deng Xiaoping's dictum.

## Chapter I. The Grand debate on China's foreign policy

Since the 1990s, the world situation has experienced ups and downs in various aspects, from political arena, economic development, technological innovation to changing environment. Among these changes, China's rise as the biggest developing countries on the eastern continent of Asia is the most significant one. The sheer size of China's economy and its increasingly active engagement in international affairs have led many to study China's foreign strategy due to its serious implications. Some analysts observed that China's behaviors are becoming increasingly assertive or aggressive, foreseeing a future of violent rise as China desires to challenge the existing hegemon – the United States. Some scholars question whether the existing foreign policy can still effectively safeguard China's national interests, or whether to replace the long-term held policy of *taoguangyanghui* (韬光养晦) with a more proactive one. This policy debate enters into a heated stage as President Xi Jinping (习近平) assumed power, calling for “striving to achievements” in China's foreign affairs. Some proclaim that China's foreign policy has entered into a new period of time since 2012, while others argue that there is still consistency with previous policies, despite new features and characteristics emerge in this period.

### 1.1 China's peaceful rise

“*Taoguangyanghui, yousuozuowei*” (韬光养晦, 有所作为) is the summary of Hu's thinking on China's grand strategy. It was brought up by Deng Xiaoping (邓小平) in the summer of 1991 as part of the 24-character strategy, “冷静观察, 守住阵地, 沉着应付, 韬光养晦, 善于守拙, 决不当头”, translated as “observe calmly, secure our position, cope with affairs calmly, hide our capacities and bide your time, be good at maintaining a low profile and never claim leadership.” The domestic and international environment when this strategy was brought up was delicate and in a turmoil. The two-month student-led movements in Tiananmen Square in 1989 shocked the Communist Party of China (CPC), rising a sense of deep crisis and uncertainty in the country's political system, loosening the



CPC's grip on power.<sup>1</sup> The international political situation was not optimistic for the CPC, as the fall of the Berlin Wall stunned the Party leaders, followed by the collapse of communism in Europe. Deng's authority was facing challenges from internal and external forces combined. The policy of reform and opening up faced obstacles from the conservatives, aiming to roll back economic reforms and return China to orthodox communist doctrines. Beijing's oppression of student protests by the use of force and its efforts to reverse domestic political democratization process sparked fears at home and brought heavy criticism from the West. What occupied the CPC leaders' mind was how to stabilize domestic situation and secure CPC's leadership. In the advent of these series of events, the top leaders learned from the collapse of the Soviet Union and concluded that the Soviet's biggest mistake was to confront with the US in every front, which contributes to its final destruction. Therefore, on its way of development China would be cautious and avoid confrontation with other countries, especially with the US. It was in this context that the strategy of "*taoguangyanghui, yousuozuowei*" was brought up by Deng Xiaoping.

As soon as this strategy was raised to the public, it was under question from western scholars and media. It was interpreted that as China is relatively weak now compared with other developed countries, China is now hiding its hegemonic ambition and concentrates on building its power; by the time is ripe, that is when China has enough material power to promote its agenda, it will reveal its hegemonic intention and impose it to the regional order, rising as a hegemon. Therefore Deng's policy of *taoguangyanghui* is just a cover for China's real hegemonic ambition. When China grows stronger as a powerful country it will shape the regional and international order according to its ideology. Although the Chinese government has sought to assure the West and its neighbors on China's friendly intentions by putting forward a strategy of "peaceful development (和平发展)", many still have doubts on China's future protectory. They fear China will become a coercive power; ultimately China will seek to challenge and overturn the current regional and world order. China's rise will doom to be a destructive one. These views sought insights from major western theories, such as the power transition theory and offensive realism theory. Both predict that China's rise in the Asia-Pacific region will not

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<sup>1</sup> Haseeb Bin Aziz. "Is China a Revisionist Power: An Analysis," *Institute of Strategic Studies*. Available at [http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SS\\_Haseeb\\_bin\\_Aziz\\_N0-4\\_2016.pdf](http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SS_Haseeb_bin_Aziz_N0-4_2016.pdf).

be a peaceful one, and will necessarily cause the structural conflicts with the existing hegemon – the United States. Some scholars compare China's rise with that of the Imperial Germany in the late 19th and early 20th century, and predicts that China may follow Germany's path as a rising power to challenge the dominance of existing hegemon in a violent way. And there are accumulating evidences indicating China is becoming more assertive since 2009 showing Beijing is decisively walking away from its previous lying-low policy: claiming its undisputable sovereignty in the South China Sea, adopting a more confrontationist stance with Japan over the Diaoyu Islands, announcing the Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) over the East China Sea. It seems that China's recent behaviors in these series of events confirmed Western realists' wariness.

John Mearsheimer's offensive realism posits that as China continues its rise as a great power, military conflicts are probable if not inevitable, based on historic precedents. China's rising status in economy in Asia-Pacific region is driving the regional power structure towards a new balance. The power gap between China and the U.S. is shrinking; it is likely that the U.S. will no longer enjoy the predominance position as it used to. However, Mearsheimer also points out, this does not mean that the U.S. will withdraw from this region; on the contrary, as a response of China's growing influence in the region, the U.S. is also likely to behave in an aggressive way.<sup>2</sup> The United States will prevent China from achieving regional hegemony by rallying more allies, including China's neighbors; as a result, regional security competition will be intense and Beijing's relations with neighboring countries will deteriorate considerably, leading to a possible war. It is important to note that Mearsheimer emphasizes his focus is "not on how China will behave in the immediate future," instead, his prediction of a possible war between China and the United States applies in a longer term given the fact that China is not able to compete with the U.S. in many aspects, and it would be a mistake for Beijing "to pick a fight with the U.S. military nowadays."<sup>3</sup> In another work, Mearsheimer also emphasizes that

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<sup>2</sup> Mearsheimer, John. "Can China Rise Peacefully?" *The National Interest*. Available at <https://nationalinterest.org/commentary/can-china-rise-peacefully-10204>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

China's behavior alone will not be enough to lead to a possible security competition; the United States' reactions will also likely to contribute to escalating the situation.<sup>4</sup>

However, some scholars do not deny a possibility that China's rise might be a peaceful one. John Ikenberry is confident that the rise of China does not have to trigger a violent hegemonic transition; the US-Chinese power transition can be very different from those of the past. Today China faces a US-led international order established since the end of the second world war, which is open, integrated, and rule-based, with wide and deep political foundations. The system was designed to reintegrate the defeated Axis states and the creation of inclusive institutions allows participations and integration of both established powers and newly independent states, therefore providing enough accommodation for China's rise.<sup>5</sup> The US leadership of this order, he continues, allows it to shape the environment within which China will rise.<sup>6</sup> By providing more incentives for China to integrate, the chance that the system can survive will be higher even after the US relative decline. China's peaceful rise will be a triumph of the Western-centered system.

Wang Jisi, one of the leading scholars on international relations in China, argued that such an interpretation of China's strategy distorts Beijing's intention, which merely is to concentrate on economic development, without being distracted by any geopolitical struggle with the US.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, other Chinese domestic scholars share Wang's argument that China's intention is clear and a peaceful one. Nevertheless, Wang Jisi also warns that China's behavior would depend on how other countries respond to the emergence of China. "If the international community appears not to understand China's aspirations, its anxieties, and its difficulties in feeding itself and modernizing, Chinese people may ask themselves why China should be bound by the rules that were essentially established by the Western powers."<sup>8</sup> In another word, China's integration into the global order may be influenced by external

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<sup>4</sup> Mearsheimer, John. "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia." *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* Vol. 3, No. 4 (2010), pp. 381-396.

<sup>5</sup> G. John Ikenberry. "The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 87, No. 23 (2008), pp. 23-37.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Wang Jisi, "China's Search for a Grand Strategy: A Rising Great Power Finds its Way," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 90, No. 2, (March/April 2011), pp. 68-79.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

environment – reactions from other countries, despite its self-proclaimed benevolent intention. According to a Pakistan diplomat, China does not see itself as having so much risen as reclaimed its rightful place in the world – consistent with Henry Kissinger’s opinion; as long as Beijing feels content with what has achieved and accomplished, China will not seek to disturb current order and will settle for some form of “accommodation” with the US-led international order.<sup>9</sup>

A recent study on China’s rise towards a future hegemon suggests a third way, or Dutch-style hegemon as the most viable way for China to proceed on its ascendancy.<sup>10</sup> In the article titled “China’s hegemonic intentions and trajectory: Will it opt for benevolent, coercive, or Dutch-style hegemony?”, Danner and Martin identified three type of hegemons: benevolent hegemon, coercive hegemon, and the Third Way, or Dutch-style hegemon. After examining China’s behaviors in recent years, they conclude that the Dutch-style hegemony is the most viable way for China’s ascendancy, which is characterized by “focusing solely on trade and financial concerns, without the interference of violent conflicts or impositions of political and ideological norms and values.”<sup>11</sup> They argued that ideologically China cannot rise as a benevolent hegemon; militarily and politically, China lacks the capabilities to exert its power to govern the international political and monetary systems. Importantly, China’s behavior since 2001 is more congruent with the Third Way or the Dutch style. “China does not truly challenge the current international order in terms of political values, ideological norms, or regime types.”<sup>12</sup> China focus its sovereignty and not regime type. It promotes trades governments of all types, regardless of their political systems or ideologies, from the western liberal democracy to totalitarian states.

## 1.2 An increasingly “assertive” China

Asia-Pacific region has been undergoing profound changes. This region has witnessed the relative decline of US dominance, expanding of China’s power and political influence, and increasing

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<sup>9</sup> Aziz.

<sup>10</sup> Lukas K. Danner, Felix E. Martin. “China’s hegemonic intentions and trajectory: Will it opt for benevolent, coercive, or Dutch-style hegemony?” *Asia&the Pacific Policy Studies* Vol. 6, No. 2 (2019), pp. 186-207.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

influence of regional multilateral mechanisms. David Shambaugh noted that China's growing economic and military power, political influence, distinctive diplomatic voice and increasing involvement in regional multilateral institutions are the driving forces of Asia dynamic changes.<sup>13</sup> In the beginning of the 21st century, China's foreign policy has entered into a new period of time; its new proactive regional posture is reflected in economic, diplomatic and military aspects. China has actively engaged in regional multilateral institutions since the mid-1990s. Bilateral relations between China and other countries have been improved. Shambaugh articulated that China's efforts to engage in Asia could be found in four aspects: participation in regional organizations; establishment of strategic partnerships and deepening of bilateral relations; expansion of regional economic ties; and reduction of distrust and anxiety in the security sphere.<sup>14</sup> As a result, China's relation with neighboring countries improved significantly; its image has changed from a negative one to a friendly neighbor and China's reputations has never been better; the majority of Asian states view China as more benign than malign and are accommodating themselves to its rise.<sup>15</sup>

Beginning from the late 2009 and 2010, a large number of comments of an assertive China have been circulated on the media and blogospheres. This new emerging meme of an assertive China was due to China's reactions to a series of events. These include its uncompromising stance on territorial disputes with South East Asian countries like Philippines and Vietnam, unprecedented forceful reaction on Japan's arrest of Chinese fishermen in 2010, and its increasingly bold and confident foreign policy pronouncements. Western media, pundits and scholars described China's increasingly assertive behaviors now "reveal its true colors". Indeed, China has displayed increased willingness to use threats and military forces on issues relating to the control of the water, air space, surface features, and resources off China's coasts. Some scholars examined China's behaviors in the past few years and explored the sources of its assertiveness. Michael Swaine's study of "Perceptions of an Assertive China" examined features of this discussion in the West and in China.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* Vol. 29, No. 3 (Winter 2004/2005), pp. 64-99.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Michael D. Swaine, "Perceptions of an Assertive China," *China Leadership Monitor* No. 32. Available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/files/CLM32MS1.pdf>.

As Iain Johnston pointed out, the claiming of assertiveness should be based on a clear definition and indicators of assertiveness, and evidence that shows current diplomacy is displaced at higher level.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the ongoing debate of an assertive China lacks a clear definition of assertiveness among scholars. Iain Johnston argues that China's recent foreign policy is not as assertive as many scholars and pundits contend; China's seemingly assertiveness in recent years is nothing more special compared with its past behaviors and the new assertiveness should be viewed more as a reactive response rather than a proactive one. Those who argue that China's foreign policy is becoming more assertive since 2010 underestimate the degree of its assertiveness in certain aspects in the past. After examining its behaviors previous to 2010, he claimed that China's stance on its territorial claim is consistent and has not changed dramatically. What has changed is the international situation around China and therefore China's strong reactions should be viewed as an adaptation to the changing environment. He admitted that "it is true that China escalated its diplomatic rhetoric to compel Japan to release the captain," but the result of the unprecedented assertiveness from the Chinese government could also due partly to Japan's unusual practice of sending the boats out of area.<sup>18</sup> In other words, it is the Japanese hardening position on its territorial disputes that contributed to China's new assertiveness in the first place, not the other way around. The Japanese government is to be blame for the escalating tensions at the very beginning of this issue. He further argued that the rising awakening nationalism before the coming anniversary of the Japanese invasion of northeastern China in 1931 also led the Chinese government to take a hard position towards Japan. Dingding Chen and Xiaoyu Pu refuted Iain Johnston's opinion, arguing that Johnston's definition of assertiveness is too narrow. His definition "omits the possibility that assertiveness also has a positive connotation."<sup>19</sup> Chen and Pu argued that China's assertiveness should be defined in a broader sense – "a confident and direct way to defend one country's rights or claims."<sup>20</sup> In regards of Beijing's reactions on Japan's arrest of a

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<sup>17</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, "How New and Assertive Is China's New Assertiveness?", *International Security* Vol. 37, No. 4 (Spring 2013), pp. 7-48.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Dingding Chen, Xiaoyu Pu and Alastair Iain Johnston, "Debating China's Assertiveness", *International Security* Vol. 38, No. 3 (Winter 2013/14), pp. 176-183.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Chinese fisherman in 2010 and the Philippines conducts in the South China Sea, while admitting that Japan and the Philippines might be in the first place to escalate the situation, Aaron L. Friedberg also pointed out that China's responsibility in further driving the tension to a higher level by overreaction.<sup>21</sup> Even if China was provoked in these instances, he argued, China did not necessarily have to respond as aggressively as it did.<sup>22</sup> Some label Beijing's behavior as "reactive assertiveness", arguing that China uses another party's action to justify its own behavior.<sup>23</sup>

Some view China's blocking force against tougher sanctions on Iran and its stance at the climate talks are a display of its assertiveness.<sup>24</sup> The study in the West on China's assertiveness features an anti-Western tone in a wide policy area, which paradoxically reflect China's growing insecurity and fear of foreign influence.<sup>25</sup> In short, China's assertiveness has different meanings according to scholars, encompassing everything from attempts to play a more active role in a wide variety of international regimes, to deliberate efforts to alter basic international norms and challenge the fundamental national interest or policies of the United States. The forms of its assertiveness ranges from mere verbal statements, to concerted actions.<sup>26</sup>

The sources of China's assertiveness are generally attributed to China's success in its economy and growing military capabilities, heightening nationalism, its leaders' awareness of China's ascendancy, and their growing insecurity and sensitivities. China's quick recovery from the 2008 financial crisis and its relatively high speed of economic growth provide confidence for its leaders in accessing China's national strength and capabilities; the belief in a declining U.S. leadership has also become a source of new assertiveness. When China becomes more powerful, it tends to adopt a more

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<sup>21</sup> Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Sources of Chinese Conduct: Explaining Beijing's Assertiveness", *The Washington Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 4 (2014), pp. 133-150.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Stephanie Kleine-Ahlbrandt, "China Takes the Gloves Off," *CNN*, July 25, 2012. Available at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/north-east-asia/china/china-takes-gloves>.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Small, "Dealing With A More Assertive China," *Forbes*, February 18, 2010. Available at <https://www.forbes.com/2010/02/18/china-iran-google-foreign-policy-opinions-contributors-andrew-small.html#785ecb914396>.

<sup>25</sup> John Pomfret, "Newly powerful China defies Western nations with remarks, policies," *Washington Post*, March 15, 2010. Available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/14/AR2010031400368.html>.

<sup>26</sup> Michael D. Swaine, "China's Assertive Behavior – Part One: On 'Core Interests'". Available at [https://carnegieendowment.org/files/swaine\\_clm\\_34\\_1114101.pdf](https://carnegieendowment.org/files/swaine_clm_34_1114101.pdf).

costly and confrontational foreign policy.<sup>27</sup> Robert Ross attributed this abrupt assertiveness near 2010 in China's foreign policy to "the expression of ideas, particularly nationalist ideas that have affected China's diplomacy and have pressured the leadership to adopt a more assertive diplomatic posture."<sup>28</sup> Chinese leaders may have found themselves compelled to take a hard line and push further on issues like territorial disputes to demonstrate its determination to safeguard tangible national interests. However, this widely-spread public sentiment might also be a skillful manipulation by the leadership rather than merely driving by it.<sup>29</sup> Edward Luttwak pointed out that these assertive behaviors are symptoms of Chinese leaders' growing insecurities, the root cause of which is their inability to process information and govern this huge and troubled state.<sup>30</sup> He argues that the top leaders are especially sensitive to the coming threats since they are aware that the regime lacks legitimacy coming either from democratic elections or a widely accepted ideology. Some argue that China's new assertiveness can mainly be attributed to leadership preferences. As President Xi Jinping assumed power, he began to exert his transformative influence on China's foreign strategy. This leads some scholars to conclude that individual factors can play a major role in explaining China's external behaviors.<sup>31</sup>

### 1.3 From *taoguangyanghui* to *fenfayouwei*

As early as in 1999, some scholars started to question whether China should abandon its long-term held policy of *taoguangyanghui*. This debate was triggered by the U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999. Despite the US explained that the bombing was a mistake, the Chinese people viewed the US bombing as a hegemonic behavior and they were convinced that China's national security was under serious threat. Some Chinese scholars reconsidered the previous judgement

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<sup>27</sup> Nien-Chung Chang Liao, "The Sources of China's assertiveness: the system, domestic politics or leadership preferences?" *International Affairs* Vol.92, No. 4 (2016), pp. 817-833.

<sup>28</sup> Robert S. Ross, "The Domestic Sources of China's 'Assertive Diplomacy'," in *China Across the Divide: The Domestic and Global in Politics and Society*, ed. Rosemary Foot, p74. Oxford Scholarship Online, September 2013. Available at <https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199919864.001.0001/acprof-9780199919864-chapter-4>.

<sup>29</sup> Friedberg, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, *The Rise of China vs. The Logic of Strategy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012, pp. 12-21.

<sup>31</sup> Nien-Chung Chang Liao, 2016.



that the US was on the decline and would no longer be a dominant hegemon; the international environment was relative peace and secure. They concluded that the US was still the most powerful nation and could wield its power according to its willingness. They argued that Deng's core thesis of *taoguangyanghui* was outdated and could no longer effectively safeguard China's nation interests given the fact the its national security was under threat from the US; a more masculine foreign policy was needed. The analysis of this debate was collected in *China Reconsiders Its National Security: The Great Peace and Development Debate of 1999*.<sup>32</sup> Shortly after 2000 the US presidential election, Chinese leaders reached a consensus that Deng's general thesis was still accurate as an overall assessment of China's foreign policy. Chinese experts on international affairs concluded that to shape a more favorable external environment that is conducive to China's domestic development, China needed to be more proactive; the Sino-US relations would be the most bilateral relations in China's foreign strategy, thus China needs to stabilize and improve its relationship with the US.<sup>33</sup>

In line with the argument that China is becoming increasingly assertive since 2010, Chinese scholars and experts on international relations debated over whether Deng Xiaoping's strategy of *taoguangyanghui* was outdated and whether a new foreign policy needed to be called out. Compared with twenty years ago, today's China is more than stronger in economy; it has enjoyed a higher status on world staged. A rare debate on China's strategic goals has taken place near 2010, during which China surpassed Japan and became the world's second largest economy. Chinese scholars debated heavily on the issue of whether the creation of a powerful national or a better standard of living for its people should constitute the primary objective of China's diplomacy.<sup>34</sup> Yan Xuetong argued for the creation of a powerful nation, and warned that historically there have been wealthy countries who have not been strong and there have even been cases of national decline in the process of accumulating wealth. Yan advocates a wealthy Chinese nation with enhanced national capabilities.<sup>35</sup> Zhu Feng

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<sup>32</sup> David Finkelstein, *China Reconsiders Its National Security: The Great Peace and Development Debate of 1999* (Alexandria, Va.: CAN Corporation, 2000).

<sup>33</sup> David Shambaugh, "New Stability in U.S.-China Relations: Causes and Consequences," in Johnathan D. Pollack, ed., *Strategic Surprise? U.S.-China Relations in the Early Twenty-first Century*. Newport, R.I.: U.S. Naval War College, 2004, pp. 23-34.

<sup>34</sup> Zhu Liqun, *China's Foreign Policy Debates*, EU Institute for Security Studies, Chaillot papers September 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Yan Xuetong, "Guojia zuichonggao mubiao bushi zhifu [The Highest National Object Is Not to Accumulate Wealth]," *Global Times*, March 13, 2009. Available at <http://world.huanqiu.com/roll/2009-03/404583.html?agt=15422>.

suggested that China's self-portrayed identity should move from a "developing country (发展中国家)" to a "new emerging power (新兴大国)"; China cannot just immerse itself in self-protectionism by hiding its capabilities and biding its time.<sup>36</sup> China's adherence to this principle has failed to create a peace-loving international image. "On the contrary, whenever we place great emphasis on the principle of keeping a low profile the China threat theory resurges and comes at us from all directions."<sup>37</sup> Since China's status in the international community has ascended and its national interests expands overseas, it is necessary for China to "take an active stance on major issues, pay attention to tactics, seize the right opportunity and act properly to take control of situations."<sup>38</sup>

In 2014 Yan Xuetong published an article titled "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement". He stated that China's foreign strategy decisively moved from "keeping a low profile" (KLP) towards "striving for achievements" (SFA). Consistent with his previous hawkish statements, Yan advanced his arguments that the current SFA strategy has been proved to be a more efficient one than KLP strategy in shaping a favorable environment for China's national rejuvenation. According to Yan's opinion, the goal of SFA strategy addresses the importance of regional peace and stability; it also emphasized that foreign policy should serve the need of national rejuvenation not just economic development. Yan Xuetong examined the content of the speech delivered by President Xi Jinping at the conference of diplomatic work toward surrounding countries,<sup>39</sup> and noted that China's diplomatic works are mainly political, different from the economic goals of the KLP strategy.<sup>40</sup> After examining China's relations with other nations from 2012 to 2014 under SFA strategy, Yan claimed that China has experienced improved relations rather than deteriorating ones.

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<sup>36</sup> Zhu Feng, "Zai 'taoguang yanghui' yu 'yousuo zuowei' zhijian qiu pingheng [To Strike A Balance Between *Taoguangyanghui* and *Yousuozuowei*]", *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, No.9 (2008), pp. 27-28.

<sup>37</sup> Gao Fei, "Cong 'taoguang yanghui' dao 'heping jueqi' – ping zhongguo waijiao de celue tiaozheng [From *Taoguangyanghui* to Peaceful Rise: Strategic Adjustment on China's Foreign Policy]", *Taiping yang Xuebao*, No.1 (2006), p8.

<sup>38</sup> Yuan Peng, "Hexie Shijie yu Zhongguo Xinwaijiao [Building a Harmonious World and China's New Foreign Policy]", *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, No.4 (2007), pp. 3-4.

<sup>39</sup> "Xi Jinping zai zhoubian waijiao gongzuo zuotanhui shang fabiao zhongyao jianghua [Xi Jinping delivers important speech at the periphery diplomacy work forum]", *Xinhua*, October 25, 2013. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c\\_117878897.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c_117878897.htm).

<sup>40</sup> Yan Xuetong, "From keeping a low profile to striving for achievement", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* (2014), pp. 153-184.

Others argue that China's should stick to the policy of *taoguangyanghui* and continue to concentrate on domestic economic construction. Ding Gang refuted Yan Xuetong's argument, saying that the most important and the highest goal of a country, is to guarantee fairness and justice; the building of a powerful nation lies on a prerequisite condition, which is the prosperity of the people.<sup>41</sup> One of the problem facing China today is that too little attention has been paid to the issue of raising the prosperity of its people.<sup>42</sup> Some scholars argue that Deng's thesis implied China should be navigating along the middle course and concentrate on more practical things rather than seek leadership or hegemony.<sup>43</sup> Feng zhaokui argued that the present international distribution of power has not undergone substantive changes", compared with that of the 1990s, therefore "it is necessary for us [China] to adhere to Deng's diplomatic strategy."<sup>44</sup> "Based on historical experience, countries that seek to challenge the established power for leadership ended in failure. Therefore the principle of keeping a low profile and making some contributions is a wise counsel from Deng Xiaoping for China in the 21st century. It is definitely not an expedient policy for one or two decades, but long-term strategic thinking, a strategy to strive for the realization of a harmonious world, and the image that a confident and modest nation shows to the outside world."<sup>45</sup>

#### 1.4 A new foreign policy under Xi Jinping

Since taking power in 2012, Chinese President Xi Jinping has talked of "striving for achievements" in China's foreign diplomacy. There has been discernible changes in Chinese official foreign policy discourse. New rhetoric such as "Chinese dream (中国梦)" and "community of common destiny (命运共同体)" were brought up by Xi shortly after he assumed power. The new rhetoric has been frequently repeated by Chinese top leaders on various occasions within China and abroad. This

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<sup>41</sup> Ding Gang, "Guojia caifu yunyong guanjian shi gongping [Justice is the Key in National Wealth Distribution]," *Global Times*, March 13 2009. Available at [http://phtv.ifeng.com/program/ybttd/focus/200904/0409\\_6168\\_1099800.shtml](http://phtv.ifeng.com/program/ybttd/focus/200904/0409_6168_1099800.shtml).

<sup>42</sup> Liang Xiaomin, "Minfu caineng guoqiang [People's Prosperity Comes First Before a Powerful Nation]," *Zhongguo Xinwen Zhoukan*, No. 37, 2009, p87.

<sup>43</sup> Li hengjie, "lun deng Xiaoping 'taoguang yanghui' de waijiao zhanlue sixiang [On Deng Xiaoping's taoguangyanghui]" *Guoji Guanxi Xueyuan Xuebao*, No. 3, 2008, p2.

<sup>44</sup> Feng zhaokui, "zhengqu shixian hexie shijie zhi ce-ye tan 'taoguang yanghui, yousuo zuowei'", *shijie zhishi*, No. 20, 2005, p53.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

emerging new political discourse deserves attention because it reflects a substantial policy departure from the previous ones, and it could forebode changes in China's foreign policy practice. Some scholars note this new emerging political discourse in Chinese leadership, arguing that it should not be ignored since the new rhetoric offers important clues of Chinese leaders' growing ambitions and inclinations.<sup>46</sup> China has been increasingly confident in articulating its national interests and proactive in conducting foreign practice. Scholars both within and outside of China have suggested that under the leadership of President Xi Jinping China's foreign policy has entered into a new stage, bidding an official farewell to Deng Xiaoping's *taoguangyanghui*. Yan Xuetong claimed that China's foreign policy has moved from a strategy of "keeping a low profile" to "striving for achievements".<sup>47</sup> The transition of China's diplomacy has been under heated discussion in recent years. David Shambaugh believed that China's diplomacy is experiencing transition and under adjustment.<sup>48</sup> Zhao Kejin noted that the 18th National Congress of CPC laid out a blueprint for China's new diplomacy in the future; China's foreign policy has entered into a new era.<sup>49</sup> This opinion is widely shared by Chinese scholars, some even view this change in foreign policy as a revolutionary one. Qu Xing noted in his article that the new leadership highly emphasizes "top design (顶层设计)" in China's diplomacy, bearing in mind its long-term goals and strategic targets.<sup>50</sup>

The new leadership attempted to breathe new life into China's peripheral diplomacy. In 2013 the first-ever work forum on peripheral diplomacy was opened. It defined China's diplomatic priorities and further outlined the roadmap for increasing China's appeal and influence in the region. This forum reveals Beijing's intention to "reassure its neighbors of the benevolent nature of its rise with a panoply of merits such as 'common development' and 'win-win situation'".<sup>51</sup> The primary focus of China's peripheral diplomacy will probably be westward as Xi Jinping proposed the building of a Silk Road

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<sup>46</sup> Angela Poh, Mingjiang Li. "A China in Transition: The Rhetoric and Substance of Chinese Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping," *Asian Security* Vol. 13, No. 2 (2017), pp. 84-97.

<sup>47</sup> Yan Xuetong, 2014.

<sup>48</sup> David Shambaugh, *Charting China's Future: Domestic and International Challenges*, New York: Routledge Press, 2011.

<sup>49</sup> Zhao Kejin, "Zhongguo waijiao 3.0 ban: shibada hou d zhongguo waijiao xin zouxiang [Chinese Foreign Policy 3.0: A New Foreign Policy After the 18th National Congress]," *Shehui Kexue*, No. 7 (2013), pp. 13-4.

<sup>50</sup> Qu Xing, "2013 zhongguo waijiao xinzheng [A New Chinese Foreign Policy in 2013]," *Shijie Zhishi*, No. 1 (2014), pp. 32-3.

<sup>51</sup> Nien-chung Chang-Liao, "China's new foreign policy under Xi Jinping," *Asian Security* Vol. 12, No. 2 (2016), pp. 82-91.

Economic Belt across Central Asia to Europe and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Along this proposal, the creation of the Silk Road Fund and Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank indicates the new leadership is willing to deploy economic resources in the service of foreign policy.<sup>52</sup> What is also novel is that the new leadership calls for a more active role in multilateral diplomacy. In the past, China acted in a defensive or reactive manner, and seldom sought to act as an initiator or provider to other states. Now the new leadership is channeling its revitalized power into concrete projects through which it can exert influence on global and regional order.

While new ideas and initiatives have been introduced by the new leadership, there is also consistency in China's diplomacy. Zhang Jian argues that the recent changes in Chinese diplomacy do not reflect a fundamental departure from its previous one.<sup>53</sup> China still adheres to its declared "peaceful development", though the manner it seeks to do is rather different from the past decades. Zhang pointed out that Beijing is becoming more confident and proactive in utilizing China's growing power and influence to protect and advance its national interests and to shape a favorable external environment.<sup>54</sup>

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, the new central committee has significantly improved and strengthened diplomatic work. New innovative approaches have been adopted in China's overall diplomacy, significantly enhancing China's diplomatic capability. Host diplomacy as one of the approaches have attached significant importance in the diplomatic work under the new leadership.<sup>55</sup> Although host diplomacy is not entirely an innovative approach in China's diplomatic work, the 18th National Congress breathed a new life into host events. The nation has seen an increasing number of high-profile events held in major Chinese cities. In 2014 alone, China hosted four major multilateral conferences, attracting attentions at home and abroad. These series of high-profile events left remarkable impressions on China's diplomatic work, contributing to China's overall diplomatic

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Zhang Jian, "China's new foreign policy under Xi Jinping: towards 'Peaceful Rise 2.0'?" *Global Change, Peace & Security* Vol. 27, No. 1 (2015), pp. 5-19.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Hu Zongshan, Guo Bingyun, "Lun shibada yilai de zhongguo xin waijiao [China's New Foreign Policy since the 18th CPC National Congress]," *Shehui Zhuyi Yanjiu* No. 6 (2016), pp. 40-8.

capabilities.<sup>56</sup> And the Chinese leadership has realized the ever-increasing opportunities in China's "host diplomacy", efforts are needed to incorporate host diplomacy into its overall diplomatic strategic planning in order to better maintain and expand its national interests. In Chen Dongxiao's article titled "China's 'Host Diplomacy': Opportunities, Challenges and Undertakings", he analyzed the new features of China's host diplomacy since 2014, pointed out the opportunities and challenges facing China's host diplomacy and discussed the problems that China should address in order to do a better job in this regard and bring its "host diplomatic advantages" into full play.<sup>57</sup> Cai Penghong argues that the successful hosting of diplomatic events in China reflects China's increased national strength and improved international status.<sup>58</sup> As China emerges as a regional power in Asia-Pacific region, China's desire to pursue a great say in this region and on global stage becomes imminent. This pursue of a more right in regional and global affairs rests on China's ability to influence other countries within multilateral institutions and organizations. In the past decade, China's say in APEC has achieved limited improvement; by hosting APEC summit within China, the Chinese government can take advantage of host diplomacy in setting agenda, promoting Chinese ideas and playing a more active role in the summit.<sup>59</sup> Some commented that China's host diplomacy in recent years shows its commitments to reform and opening-up; these multilateral platform serves as great opportunities to share China's experience in development and China's ideas in governance; China's voice, China's wisdom and China's plan are being recognized by the international community and earning greater support from other countries.<sup>60</sup> Ling Shengli also argues for the benefits of hosting diplomacy, saying that China's strategic capabilities will be strengthened through this channel; hosting multilateral events at home is a necessary tool to transform China's improved national strength into substantial influences

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Chen Dongxiao, "China's 'Host Diplomacy': Opportunities, Challenges and Undertakings", *China Institute of International Studies*. November 14, 2014. Available at [http://www.ciiis.org.cn/english/2014-11/14/content\\_7369348.htm](http://www.ciiis.org.cn/english/2014-11/14/content_7369348.htm).

<sup>58</sup> Cai Penghong, "Zhuchang waijiao yu zhongguo de quanqiu huayu quan [Host Diplomacy and China's Global Power of Discourse]," *Xueshu Qianyan* No. 12 (2014). Available at [http://www.cssn.cn/zxx/gjzxx\\_zxx/201504/t20150430\\_1716062.shtml](http://www.cssn.cn/zxx/gjzxx_zxx/201504/t20150430_1716062.shtml).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Liu Ting, "Sida zhuchang waijiao: zhongguo shengyin zhengzai yingxiang shijie [Four Major Host Diplomacy: China's Voice Is Influencing the World]," *Zhongguo Huizhan* No. 7 (2018), p11.

on international stage.<sup>61</sup> He pointed out that host diplomacy exhibits China's confidence in shaping the regional and global order and its improving ability to shape according to China's own preference.<sup>62</sup> Some have suggested that a new image of CPC is in the formation due to the successful hosting of these events; the new image of CPC has been shaped as a more inclusive, responsible party in the international community, contributing to China's global influence.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ling Shengli, "Zhuchang waijiao zhuli zhongguo zhanlue nengli tisheng [Host Diplomacy Boosts China's Strategic Capabilities]," *Dangdai Shijie* No. 9 (2017), pp.24-27.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Zhang Shujun, "Zhuchang waijiao yu zhongguo gongchandang guoji xingxiang de suzao [Host Diplomacy and Shaping the International Image of Communist Party China]," *Dangzheng Ganbu Xuekan* No. 5 (2018), pp.40-5.

## **Chapter II. A review of China's foreign strategy: from Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping**

Since the foundation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, China's foreign policy experienced periods of changes and transitions since Mao Zedong's time. New diplomatic concepts and policies have been brought up by different generations of collective leaders. Under the governance of each generations of leadership, there are some new changes as well as continuities in China's foreign strategy. With profound changes taking place within and outside China, Chinese top leaders have to make decisions taking both domestic and international situations into consideration. Its diplomatic tone has also changed as time went by. What also has changed is China's image for its neighbors and international community. Over time, China is no longer perceived as a revisionist country as it once was during the 1950s and 70s, when China sought to export Maoist ideology and support armed insurgencies to Southeast Asian countries, and took hard stance on border disputes and even started conflicts with adjacent countries. Today's China is, to some extent, viewed as a status quo power, even though it still faces doubts and criticisms on certain policies; but what has changed significantly is that China is no longer an "isolated nation" as it once was; instead, China has increasingly participated regional and international cooperation through various channels. Perceptions on multilateral organizations within China changed gradually and evolved from suspicion, to uncertainty, to supportiveness. Before the mid-1990s, such multilateral organizations were perceived as potential tools of western powers, especially the United States, to control and manipulate international situations and serve for its own interests. However, after a period of observing the meetings of some multilateral organizations, China's opinion had changed as its analysts found out that these multilateral organizations were not under the control of the United States; more importantly they realized that the approach adopted by these organizations is compatible with China's proposals; besides, engaging in these organizations would serve China's national interests rather than diminish it. A cooperative China has been welcomed by the international community and its neighbors perceptions on China also underwent changes. By 2005, even though some neighbors still have doubts on China's long-term



ambitions, the majority of Asian states currently view China as more benign than malign and are accommodating themselves to its rise.<sup>64</sup>

Over the past thirty years, China's foreign policy and its practice has undergone tremendous, if not revolutionary, changes. Since 1990s, China's foreign policy has been adhered to Deng Xiaoping's dictum of *taoguangyanghui*, which states a more passive diplomacy and concentrates on domestic development. As China has re-emerged as global power in the beginning of the 21st century, some domestic scholars began to question whether China should abandon its long-term held policy which seems to be no longer commensurate its growing power. President Hu Jintao (胡锦涛) declared China would seek a path of "peaceful development" in an effort to ease concerns of a rising threatening China. Since Xi Jinping assumed power in 2012, the official foreign policy discourse appears to be a stark contrast from the previous tones. Xi calls for the realization of "Chinese Dream", building a "community of common destiny" and developing a "major power relations with Chinese characteristics". These are signs of policy departure rather than merely a political slogan. Arguably, China's foreign policy has entered into a new period of time, abandoning *taoguangyanghui* and now *fenfayouwei* (奋发有为, striving for achievements). Public diplomacy has played an important role in China's overall diplomacy. Chinese leaders have demonstrated their ambitions on various occasions, from international summits and conferences, such as the G20 summit, World Economic Forum and UN General Assembly, to bilateral state visits; meanwhile Chinese leaders began to host multilateral events more frequently as they realize that this will greatly contribute to transmitting their ideas and policies to international audience and bringing practical results. This chapter reviews the policy discourse from the official stance since Deng Xiaoping declared a to adopt a low profile in the early 1990s, and examines their meaning and contents that each generation of collective leadership brought up.

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<sup>64</sup> David Shambaugh, "China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order," *International Security* Vol. 29, No. 3 (Winter 2004/05), p67.

## 2.1 *Taoguangyanghui*: its background and content

*Taoguangyanghui* (translated as “to keep a low profile” or “bide one’s time and hide one’s ability”) has served as the centerpiece of China’s foreign policy for a long period of time. It is considered as a great reform of profound significance in the transition of China’s foreign policy. Under this strategy, China enjoyed a relatively long-period of peaceful environment while concentrated on domestic economic constructions. The increase in China’s overall national strength and its economic success due largely to its adherence to this policy. The low profile Chinese leaders kept in the international affairs allowed China to take few international responsibilities and get less involved in regional or international hotspot issues, but also put itself subject to various criticisms for being an “irresponsible stakeholder”. The strategic thinking of “*taoguangyanghui, yousuo zuowei*” was brought up by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in the early 1990s. This strategy was brought up under a specific context.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the world situation underwent abrupt changes. Dramatic social and political upheavals in Eastern Europe and disintegration of the Soviet Union shocked the world. In many aspects, these series of events brought substantial influence to the international situation. The bipolar structure the world had witnessed after the Second World War came to an end, and the new multi-polar world is in the making. Western countries celebrated on the triumph of liberal democratic values, some even proclaiming that here came “the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”<sup>65</sup> They thought that socialism was about to die and the socialist China would be the next subject to the domino effect. China was under critical circumstances both at home and abroad. The Chinese government faced unprecedented criticisms on its reactions to 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. The nation’s one-party political system and the legitimacy of China’s Communist Party were challenged. Western countries condemned the Chinese government for violating the basic human rights and they imposed sanctions on China. Thus the Chinese top leaders were under immense pressure and challenge at that time.

It was under this international and domestic environment that the then-Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping showed his insight. After making a profound analysis on the changes and tendencies of the

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<sup>65</sup> Francis Fukuyama, “The End of history?”, *National Interest*, No. 16 (Summer 1989), pp. 3-18.

international situation based on keen observance, Deng put forward the 24-character strategy, “冷静观察，守住阵地，沉着应付，韬光养晦，善于守拙，决不当头 (observe calmly, secure our position, handle affairs with calm confidence, hide our capacities and bide our time, be good at maintaining a low profile, never claim leadership, and get something done).” Since then, “hide our capacities, bide our time and get something done” has become the long-term strategy for China. Domestic scholars and high level officials argue for the necessity to adhere to this strategy by articulating that the central task of this nation is to engage in economic construction and persist in its policy of reform and opening up; it would not serve the nation’s general interests if it diverted too much energy on ideological competition and getting involved into some international affairs. They defended this policy of *taoguangyanghui* was right path for the nation considered its subjective and objective situations both inside and outside China. It is hoped that by keeping a low profile on international affairs, reducing confrontations with neighboring countries and putting less emphasis on ideology when building relations with other nations, China will be able to enjoy a relatively peaceful international environment for its domestic constructions. Deng emphasized that “we should immerse ourselves in practical work and do our work – our own affairs – well.” Although some achievements have been made since the reform and opening up policy was adopted in the year 1978, China is still an undeveloped country and there is still a long way to go before the Chinese nation could achieve its full national rejuvenation. Therefore the task lying ahead is a daunting one; only the whole nation unites behind the Party with full confidence and stick to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics with great determination will the great cause be realized.

The year 1978 marks a significant change in China’s development. The newly assumed national leader Deng Xiaoping took a decisive action to implement the policy of Reform and Opening up. This was based on his accurate assessment of international power shift and his judgement of the theme of the times. In the late 1970s great and profound changes happened in the international situation. The Soviet Union suffered severe setback in Afghanistan and its national strength was on the decline; the United States became stronger after healing its wounds left by the Vietnam War. World developing countries were demanding for more power and sought for greater influence in shaping a new international political and economic order. The majority countries faced the task of conducting

domestic economic development. Deng Xiaoping observed that the dynamics of international power relations was tilting toward a peaceful direction which would favor domestic development. A new world war is less likely to break out in the near future, even in the next one hundred years. He noted that “judging from the overall situation, war will not break out in this century and a fairly long period of the next century. We should not miss this opportunity, but make use of this twenty, thirty, even forty years to well develop ourselves.” He saw clearly the core problems facing the international community, adjusted the theme of the times from the previous “war and peace” to “peace and development”. He clearly stated that “the two really great issues confronting the world today, issues of global strategic significance, are: first, peace, and second, economic development.” The two factors cannot be separated from the other, as peace will help promote the economic development and in the other way around, countries that benefit from their economic development will engage less in risky or even violent endeavors therefore contribute to world peace. This clear change on the judgement of the times triggered revolutionary transition both in China’s domestic development and its foreign policies making. It provides the base for *taoguangyanghui* and the concept of “peaceful development” in Hu Jintao’s era.

## **2.2 Hu Jintao: a policy of “peaceful development”**

For many China observers, “peaceful development (和平发展)” is an official policy in a response to the growing suspect of whether China can rise peacefully. Yet it is an effort by the Chinese government to reassure concerns and anxieties from other states. The Chinese government tries to convey the message that a rising, growing China will not challenge the existing international order, but will rise within it. It sought to characterize China as a responsible player, emphasizing soft power and that China is committed to manage its own internal issues and improve the welfare of its citizens rather than interfere into world affairs. Initially coined as “peaceful rise (和平崛起)”, the word “rise (崛起)” was replaced by “development (发展)” in the official language in an attempt to divert people’s attention to focus on “rise” rather than “peaceful”. The usage of the term “rise” was seen as controversial since the word could lead to perceptions that China’s “rise” is a threat to the established international order. Therefore, since 2004, the term has been replaced with “peaceful

development”. Officially, peaceful rise was first publicly raised and clarified by former Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on 10 December 2003 when delivering a speech at Harvard University. On 26 December 2003, the Central Committee of CPC held a symposium to commemorate the 110th anniversary of Comrade Mao Zedong’s birth at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. President Hu Jintao delivered a speech and openly stated that China pursues a path of peaceful development.<sup>66</sup>

“Peaceful rise” theory was formulated by Zheng Bijian (郑必坚), a prominent policy advisor to top leaders, during his speech on the Boao Forum for Asia in November 2003. Zheng Bijian served in various government positions relating to politics and reforms. In 1992, he became executive vice president of the Central Party School, serving as deputy to Chinese President Hu Jintao. Later Zheng chaired the China Reform Forum, a Beijing-based think tank working on domestic and international issues, which he has used as a platform for research and strategic thinking about China’s position in the world. Zheng explained that China will not pursue territorial expansion or challenge the dominance of existing hegemon, but will rise within the current international order. In his article published on Foreign Affairs in the September-October 2005 issue, titled as “China’s ‘Peaceful Rise’ to Great Power Status”, he argued that unlike Germany’s challenge to Britain at the beginning of the 20th century, China’s path towards a more powerful position in the world will not upset the international order cause great power rivalries or even wars, but rather to rise within it as Beijing will seek a unique path to gain its great power status peacefully.<sup>67</sup> In 2005 the State Council Information Office published a white paper titled “China’s Road to Peaceful Development” (zhongguode heping fazhan daolu).<sup>68</sup> In 2011 another white paper was published, “China’s Peaceful Development”, to articulate and clarify its content, aims, and implications to the rest of the world. Peaceful development has become China’s new grand strategy under the fourth generation of central party collective leadership.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> “Zai jinian Maozedong danchen 110 zhounian zuotanhui de jianghua [Speech at the Symposium to Commemorate the 110th Anniversary of Mao Zedong’s Birthday],” *Xinhua News Agency*, December 26, 2003. Available at [http://www.gov.cn/test/2009-11/27/content\\_1474642.htm](http://www.gov.cn/test/2009-11/27/content_1474642.htm).

<sup>67</sup> Zheng Bijian, “China’s ‘peaceful rise’ to great-power status”, *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 84, No.5 (2005), pp.18-24.

<sup>68</sup> “Zhongguo de heping fazhan daolu [China’s Road to Peaceful Development],” *the State Council Information Office*, December 2005. Available at <https://www.scio.gov.cn/zfbps/ndhf/2005/Document/307900/307900.htm>.

<sup>69</sup> “Zhongguo de heping fazhan [Peaceful Development in China],” *the State Council Information Office*, September 2011. Available at <https://www.scio.gov.cn/zfbps/ndhf/2011/Document/1000032/1000032.htm>.

It is widely considered that “peaceful rise” was raised to rebut against the western “China threat theory” and reassure its neighbors. It tried to allay their fears and concerns about China’s rise by underscoring its peaceful intentions. Peaceful rise theory stresses that compared with the rise of some western powers in the history by means of invading and conquering, China will not seek to secure its national interests in violent means; China’s emergence thus far has been driven by capital, technology, and resources acquired through peaceful means. Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC in 1978, China has concentrated on domestic economic development. By the end the 20th century, China has made huge achievements in economic development. This was largely due to its embrace of globalization. The new technological revolution and wave of economic globalization allow China to benefit from this trend, and most importantly, in this process, China became more open and connected with the rest of the world. In the late 1990s, facing the Asian financial crisis and the subsequent struggles, the Chinese government did not let its currency to devalue, playing an essential role in combating the crisis. In 2001 China joined the World Trade Organization. China’s domestic economic construction, its path towards modernization is called the “development path to a peaceful rise”.<sup>70</sup> The policy is intended to create “an environment that maximizes the chances of China’s economic development”. “It’s an attempt to grow economically and increase China’s diplomatic presence while keeping relations with other nations peaceful.”<sup>71</sup>

### **2.3 Big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics**

Since the convention of the 18th National Congress of the CPC in November 2012, China has engaged in a rhetorical campaign centered on “Chinese dream (中国梦)” and “community of common destiny (命运共同体)”. In November 2012 shortly after he was appointed as the General Secretary of the CPC, Xi paid a visit to “The Road towards Renewal” Exhibition and proclaimed that “to realize the great renewal of the Chinese nation is the greatest dream for the Chinese nation in modern

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<sup>70</sup> Zheng Bijian, 2005.

<sup>71</sup> Esther Pan, “The Promise and Pitfalls of China’s ‘Peaceful Rise’,” *Council On Foreign Relations*, April 14, 2006. Available at <https://www.cfr.org/background/promise-and-pitfalls-chinas-peaceful-rise#chapter-title-0-2>.

history.”<sup>72</sup> In November 2014, Xi addressed the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs (zhongyang waishi gongzuo huiyi, 中央外事工作会议) and called for a “big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics (zhongguo tese daguo waijiao, 中国特色大国外交)” befitting its role as a major country. Xi’s rhetoric appears to be a stark contrast from Deng Xiaoping’s famous dictum for China to hide its capabilities and bide its time. Under the Xi’s leadership, China has been increasingly vocal in articulating its foreign policy and national interests. This new emerging political discourse cannot be dismissed as mere propaganda, rather, it witnesses the emergence of new theory of China’s foreign policy under the new leadership. It has significant implications for China’s practice on the international stage. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the substance of these political rhetoric.

The new generation of Chinese leaders highly values the importance of diplomatic work. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in November 2012, the Party Central Committee has actively carried out the overall situation of diplomacy, highlighting the important role of the surrounding periphery in China’s overall development and overall diplomatic situation. In October 2013, one year after assumption of power, conference on neighborhood diplomacy (zhoubian waijiao gongzuo huiyi, 周边外交工作会议) was convened in Beijing. During the conference, all members of the Standing Committee of the Communist Party of China attended the conference. The main tasks of this meeting are to sum up China’s diplomatic experience accumulated over the past years, study the nation’s current surrounding strategic situation, unify diplomatic thinking on high level government officials and guide the implementation of future diplomatic work. It was the highest level of meeting on foreign policy decisions since the People’s Republic of China was founded in 1949. This could be considered as a significant event in the nation’s diplomatic work under the leadership of CPC. Xi Jinping delivered a speech at the meeting. He stressed the importance of China’s peripheral diplomacy, which is necessary to realize the “two hundred years” struggle goal and realize the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. He called for greater efforts to be put into the work of promoting neighboring diplomacy and striving for a favorable surrounding environment for China’s development, which is the strategic goal of its neighboring diplomacy. According to Xi speech,

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<sup>72</sup> “Xi Jinping Pledges ‘Great Renewal of Chinese Nation’,” *Global Times*, November 29, 2012. Available at <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/747443.shtml>.

maintaining a friendly relations with neighboring countries will encourage security cooperation, reduce territorial disputes, foster stronger economic ties with those nations and provide China with an important strategic opportunity to conduct economic construction at home.<sup>73</sup>

Another important conference on foreign affairs was the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs convened in November 2014. It was the only such conference in the past ten years. President Xi addressed the meeting and called for a “big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics”. Xi stressed that “China must has a big power diplomacy with its own characteristics. We must enrich and develop the theory of foreign policy with distinctive Chinese characteristics, style and majesty.”<sup>74</sup> In fact, in June 2013, Foreign Minister Wang Yi brought up this rhetoric when delivering a keynote speech titled “Exploring a path of Big Power Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics” on the second World Peace Forum held by Tsinghua University. He pointed out that “China will actively explore a path of big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, and together we will build a world of common prosperity and lasting peace with the hard works of people from all over the world.”<sup>75</sup> This is the first time that the rhetoric of “big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics” was raised to the public from a government official.

As China’s foreign policy enters into a new period of time, a series of new concepts have been brought up and guide its practice. Since the opening of the 18th National Congress of CPC, the new generation of collective leadership with Xi at the core has injected new energy into the theory of China’s foreign policy and brought up several concepts relating to foreign affairs. These new concepts include “new type of major-power relations”, “a new vision for neighborhood diplomacy”, “the principle of pursuing the greater good and shared interests”, “a new security concept for Asia”, “community of common destiny”. One renowned Chinese domestic scholar on international relations

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<sup>73</sup> “Xi Jinping zai zhoubian waijiao gongzuo huitan shang fabiao zhongyao jianghua [Xi Jinping delivered an important speech at the symposium on diplomatic work in the surrounding area],” *Xinhua News Agency*, October 25, 2013. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c\\_117878897.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c_117878897.htm).

<sup>74</sup> “Zhongyang waishi gongzuo huiyi zaijing juxing, Xi jinping fabiao zhongyao jianghua [Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs Opens in Beijing, Xi Jinping delivers an Important Speech],” *The People’s Daily*, November 30, 2014. Available at <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2014/1130/c64094-26119225.html>.

<sup>75</sup> “Wangyi buzhang zai dierjie shijie heping luntan wucan hui shang de yanjiang [Foreign Minister Wangyi’s Speech at the Luncheon during the Second World Peace Forum],” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC*, June 27, 2013. Available at [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/wjzb\\_673089/zyjh\\_673099/t1053901.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/wjzb_673089/zyjh_673099/t1053901.shtml).



Wang Yizhou noticed that the number of new concept promoted by President Xi Jinping surpasses all the political and diplomatic concepts brought up in the previous ten years.<sup>76</sup> These new concept cover areas ranging from major-country relations, neighborhood diplomacy, global governance to specific fields such as political, security, economic issues, etc.. Together, each of these concept contributes to the emergence of a new theory of foreign policy with Chinese characteristics based on China's existing diplomatic and strategic layout.

### **2.3.1 The Chinese dream**

In November 2012, soon after the conclusion of the 18th National Congress of CPC, President Xi Jinping payed a visit to "The Road towards Renewal" exhibition at the National Museum of China. During this visit, he put forward the idea of the Chinese Dream for the first time. Xi said that the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is "a dream of the whole nation, as well as of every individual." The national Chinese Dream is the collective vision to achieve the "Two hundred goals": by 2020, around the CPC's 100th anniversary 2021, to China into a "moderately well-off society"; by 2050, around 100th anniversary of the foundation of the People's Republic of China 2049, to transform China into a fully developed country. At the closing ceremony of the First Session of the 12th National People's Congress in March 2013, Xi further elaborated on its meaning, stressing that the Chinese dream embodies achieving prosperity for the country, renewal of the nation and happiness for the citizens; it is a dream for peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit for all, not only the Chinese people, but also people of all countries in the world. For individuals, Chinese dream focuses on the well-being of each citizen; from a global perspective, a new global landscape will be established through international rules and experiences of both developed and emerging countries.<sup>77</sup>

### **2.3.2 Peaceful development in the new situation**

To adopt an independent policy of peace has been the goal of China's diplomacy since the foundation of PRC. In the 1950s Premier Zhou Enlai first promoted the Five Principles of Peaceful

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<sup>76</sup> Wang Yizhou, *Creative Involvement : The Transition of China's Diplomacy*. Peking University: Beijing, 2015, p78.

<sup>77</sup> "Zai di shierjie quanguo renmin daibiao dahui diyici huiyi shang de jianghua [Speech on the First Session of the Twelfth People's National Congress]," *Xinhua News Agency*, March 17, 2013. Available at [http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2013-03/17/content\\_2356344.htm](http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2013-03/17/content_2356344.htm).

Coexistence, which are mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and cooperation for mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. In the 1980s Deng Xiaoping defined "peace" and "development" are the two major theme of the time. In the beginning of the 21st century, Hu Jintao upheld "peaceful development" as China's foreign strategy. Two white papers on China's commitment to the path of peaceful development were published in 2005 and 2011. China's commitment to peaceful development, never pursuing after hegemon and overexpansion has been repeatedly articulated from the top leaders in many occasions.

On 28 January 2013, on the third collective study the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee themed on "Firmly adhering to the path of peaceful development", President Xi Jinping stressed that China will continue to adhere to the path of peaceful development. China will strive to better coordinate domestic and international situations, which lays the foundation for a path towards peaceful development.<sup>78</sup> This shows the consistency with previous policies. What is new about Xi's thinking on peaceful development is that he argues that the realization of the goals of "Two 100s" and Chinese dream of national rejuvenation requires a path of peaceful development. In order to realize the Chinese Dream, China must adopt a policy of peaceful development.<sup>79</sup>

### **2.3.3 Build a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation**

During his visit to Russia in March 2013, for the first time President Xi called for building a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation. In November 2014 on the Central Conference on Foreign Affairs, Xi addressed the conference that "we need to uphold win-win cooperation, promote the establishment of a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, adhere to the win-win strategy of opening-up, and embody the spirit of win-win

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<sup>78</sup> "Xi Jinping: genghao tongchou guonei guoji liangge daju, hangshi zou heping fazhan daolu de jichu [Xi Jinping: Better Coordinating Domestic and International Situations and Laying the Foundation for a Peaceful Development]," *The People's Daily*, January 30, 2013. Available at <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/0130/c64094-20368861.html>.

<sup>79</sup> Wang Yi, "Jianding buyi zou heping fazhan daolu, wei shixian minzu fuxing zhongguomeng yingzao lianghao guoji huanjing [Firmly Adhere to the Path of Peaceful Development, to Build a Friendly International Environment for Achieving National Rejuvenation and Realizing Chinese Dream]," *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu*, January 20, 2014. Available at [http://www.cjis.org.cn/gyzz/2014-01/20/content\\_6624904.htm](http://www.cjis.org.cn/gyzz/2014-01/20/content_6624904.htm).

cooperation in all aspects including politics, economy, security and culture.”<sup>80</sup> In his speech at the general debate of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly, Xi once again elaborated on concept of new type of international relations with win-win cooperation at the core. Xi’s theory has enriched the content of the strategy of peaceful development, meeting the trend of the times.

In his report to the 19th CPC National Congress, President Xi further elaborated on its content, and pointed out that mutual respect, justice, and win-win cooperation are the three core values of building a new type of international relations. To achieve the goal of win-win progress through cooperation rather than fierce competition is an innovative thinking. Competition has always been the main theme of international relations; the result of it is that winner takes all, while the loser suffers it must. A new type of international relations calls for win-win situation through deep and broad cooperation that can benefit each party, transcending the traditional zero-sum game mentality and power politics. This new type of international relations promotes building a new type of relations with major powers, neighboring countries and developing countries in all aspects.

### **2.3.3.1 Build a new type of major power relations**

With the rise of China, Sino-US relations, bilateral relations the two big economies in the world has become the focus of the international society, especially after 2010 when China surpassed Japan ascending into the second biggest economy. Whether Sino-US relations can escape the “Thucydides trap” embarked heated debates. The concept of “Thucydides trap” was advocated by Graham Allison, an American scholar on political science, arguing that when one great power threatens to displace another, war is almost always the result, though it is not necessarily the result.<sup>81</sup> The ancient Greek historian Thucydides had observed that the Peloponnesian war was made by “the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta.” The defining question about global order in the next decades, he boldly stated, will be: can China and the US escape Thucydides trap? After examined the historical

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<sup>80</sup> “Xi Jinping chuxi zhongyang waishi gongzuo huiyi bing fabiao zhongyao jianghua [Xi Jinping Attends the Centre Conference on Foreign Affairs and Delivers an Important Speech],” *Xinhua News Agency*, November 29, 2014. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-11/29/c\\_1113457723.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-11/29/c_1113457723.htm).

<sup>81</sup> Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap,” *Foreign Policy*, June 9, 2017. Available at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/09/the-thucydides-trap/>.

precedents of rivalry between rising powers and established powers, he concluded that China and the US are currently on a collision course for war.

China's aspiration to create or recreate a self-centered order in Asia does not necessarily imply that China wishes to compete with the U.S. President Xi Jinping has said, the Pacific Ocean is wide enough to accommodate both China and the U.S. In October 2013, when Xi visited the U.S. for the first time after he became the President, he called for a "new type of major-power relationship" at his summit with Obama at Sunnylands in California. He said, both sides need a new path that is different from the confrontation and conflict of the past. The new type of Sino-US relations features no conflict or confrontation, mutual respect for each other's core interests and major concerns, and mutually beneficial cooperation. Former US Secretary of the State Henry Kissinger said "Xi's proposal for a new model of major-country relationship between China and the United States is a wise political vision." Joseph Nye believes that the major countries can avoid the "Thucydides trap" by strengthening exchanges at all levels and treating each other rationally.<sup>82</sup>

#### **2.3.3.2 Build relations with neighboring countries based on amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness**

Since 2010, China has been involved in territorial disputes with several countries in the South China Sea and Japan over the sovereignty of islands and reefs. China's reactions were interpreted as unprecedentedly assertive, fuel by domestic nationalism and tough stance from high-level officials from the government and military. These series of disputes opened the debate about whether Chinese foreign policy has entered into a new period of assertiveness. China's relations with neighboring countries deteriorated dramatically. Since President Xi Jinping took over the reign in 2012, new foreign policy towards neighboring countries has been under consideration. In October 2013, the first conference on neighborhood diplomacy in the history of China was convened. Xi emphasized that the basic principle of China's neighboring diplomacy is to pursue good-neighborhood relations and partnership, ensure peace and prosperity and give prominence to the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and

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<sup>82</sup> "China and US can avoid 'Thucydides' Trap: Joseph Nye," *People's Daily Online*, September 17, 2015. Available at <http://cn.people.cn/n/2015/0917/c90000-8951588.html>.

inclusiveness. He said that China should treat neighboring countries with sincerity and strive for making more friends and partners, carry out cooperation with neighboring countries on the principle of mutual benefit and raise the convergence of our interests to a higher level.<sup>83</sup>

### 2.3.3.3 Build a community of common destiny

In March 2013, President Xi for the first time brought out the concept of “Community of Common Destiny” (CCD) after he assumed the power. He pointed out that as the world is becoming increasingly interdependent, all human beings now live in a global village where history and reality converge, and a community of common destiny is in the shaping.<sup>84</sup> In September 2015, during the general debate of the 70th UN General Assembly, Xi Jinping once again stressed, “We must inherit and carry forward the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, build a new type of international relations with cooperation and win-win as the core, and build the destiny of mankind. Community.”<sup>85</sup> Then in 2017 when attending the World Economic Forum in Davos Xi highlighted this concept for global governance.<sup>86</sup>

This concept, with a vision of realizing lasting peace, common security and prosperity, openness and clean environment, covers five aspects in including politics, security, economy, culture, and ecology. Politically, it calls for mutual respect and equality in the negotiating process; countries should resolutely abandon the Cold War mentality and power politics, rather than seeking alliances and confrontations. In terms of security, it calls for resolving disputes through dialogue and differences through consultation, coping with traditional and nontraditional challenges in a coordinated manner.

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<sup>83</sup> “Xi Jinping zai zhoubian waijiao gongzuo hui tan shang fabiao zhongyao jianghua [Xi Jinping delivered an important speech at the symposium on diplomatic work in the surrounding area],” *Xinhua News Agency*, October 25, 2013. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c\\_117878897.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c_117878897.htm).

<sup>84</sup> “Shunying shidai qianjin chaoliu, cujin shijie heping fazhan [Conform to the Trend of The Times and Promote the Peaceful Development of the World],” *People’s Daily Online*, March 23, 2013. Available at <http://cpc.people.com.cn/xuexi/n/2015/0721/c397563-27337993.html>.

<sup>85</sup> “Xi jingping zai di qishijie liandahui dahui yibanxing bianlun shi de jianghua [Speech by Xi Jinping at the General Debate of the Seventieth Session of the UN General Assembly],” *Xinhua News Agency*, September 29, 2015. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-09/29/c\\_1116703645.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-09/29/c_1116703645.htm).

<sup>86</sup> “Xi jingping zhuxi zai shijie jingji luntan 2017 nian nianhui kaimushi shang de zhuzhi yanjiang [President Xi Jinping’s Keynote Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 2017 Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum],” *Xinhua News Agency*, January 18, 2017. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-01/18/c\\_1120331545.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-01/18/c_1120331545.htm).

Economically, it promotes liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment, pushing economic globalization towards a more open, inclusive, balanced system which benefits for all. Culturally, it respects the diversity of civilizations, encourages dialogue and communication among different civilizations. Ecologically, it calls for collective actions to meet the challenge of climate change.<sup>87</sup>

#### **2.3.3.4 Build global strategic partnership**

Since the 1980s, China has been adhering to a foreign policy of non-alignment considering its domestic and international environment. In the 1990s, China began to build partnership with countries at different levels. When the Central Conference on foreign affairs was convened in November 2014, President Xi called for the building of a global partnership network based on the principle of non-alignment. In his speech at the general debate of the 70th UN General Assembly, Xi stressed the need to build a global partnership network featuring equal treatment, mutual consultation and mutual understanding both at the international level and regional level, and embark on a new path of state-to-state exchanges of dialogue without confrontation, partnership without alliance.<sup>88</sup>

A foreign strategy of global strategic partnership featuring equality, peace and inclusiveness is of Chinese characteristics. Alliance is made to counter the third party generally, which may easily leads to confrontation between different alliance groups. The relations among nations within an alliance group is not based on equality, likely to cause internal conflicts among allies. China's proposal of building partnership among nations aims to ease confrontations and encourage dialogues; it is based on mutual respect and tolerance for differences in social system, development path and culture traditions and does not target any third party. Building a global partnership network is an important part towards making a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, justice and win-win cooperation, and will great contribute to the realization of community of common destiny.

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<sup>87</sup> "Xi Jinping zai zhongguo gongchandang di shijiuci quanguo daibiao dahui shang de baogao [Xi Jinping's Report at the 19th National Congress of CPC]," *People's Daily*, October 28, 2017. Available at <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2017/1028/c64094-29613660.html>.

<sup>88</sup> "Xi Jinping zhuxi zai shijie jingji luntan 2017 nian nianhui kaimushi shang de zhuzhi yanjiang [President Xi Jinping's Keynote Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 2017 Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum]," *Xinhua News Agency*, January 18, 2017.

### **Chapter III. Host diplomacy in China from 1991 to 2018**

In the past three decades, China's foreign policy has undergone profound yet quiet changes, if not an abrupt one. The Chinese nation has grown into an economic giant, a vast market with a population of 1.3 billion people. Its economic success has become the source of confidence in wielding more power in international affairs. The top Chinese leaders are well aware of this fact; they started to use its economic strength as a tool to assert its interests since the beginning of the 21st century. More efforts are put to build soft power to improve its once aggressive and notorious national image. Chinese leaders appear more frequently in front of the cameras and their voices are heard by other parts of the world. China's foreign policy and its stance on major international issues are better clarified by its leaders on many occasions. China's top leaders are making use of each multilateral international platform as a chance to speak to the world their ideas and vision. More importantly, China now is becoming more proactive in dealing with international affairs, rather than merely reactive. New concepts on global governance and ambitious regional initiatives are presented to the world. These new ideas and initiatives are bringing foreign leaders and businessmen to its own land, providing them an opportunity to have a closer look at this country and get an inside opinion. Since 2014, the Chinese leaders have put emphasize on host diplomacy; and it has become a major part of China's foreign policy. World government officials and business leaders have gathered in Chinese cities to discuss issues of common interests and listen to China's ideas. The messages from top leaders, for example, speeches delivered by President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang on various occasions, are sound and clear. The concept of "peaceful development", "community of common destiny", and the "One Belt and One Road" initiative are repeated during their visit to other countries, and reported widely by the media. These concepts and initiatives, however, are not just hallow words or political slogans; they reflect Chinese top leaders' thinking on world order, their perspectives on global and regional issues, and also about how they think China's place in the world. As China's domestic situation has undergone significant changes in various aspects in the past three decades, coupled with changing international situation, Chinese leaders see its opportunity to lead as a big power. Its self-national identity has changed from what once was an "isolated" country, to the "biggest developing country", to now a "big power", or "great power" sometimes used by foreign media. Accordingly, a "big power" should have

a compatible foreign policy, as Chinese President Xi Jinping called for a “major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics”. One feature of this new foreign policy is that China begins to host more multilateral conferences at home in Chinese cities. Chinese leaders not only fly to other countries to attend high-level summits or conferences, they begin to host these events in China with their own preference. Although host diplomacy was brought up in recent years by China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi, China’s effort to actively pursue host diplomacy started from the beginning of this century. By hosting major events at home, the Chinese government has the advantage of setting agenda with its own preference, which are desirable to achieve the result it wants the most. It also provides an opportunity for Chinese to show its national image to the public. Since host diplomacy is the best available platform for the Chinese government to convey messages and ideas to its audience, to understand China’s foreign policy, it is necessary to examine China’s host events from the very beginning. Therefore, a review of China’s host events from the 1991 to 2018 can provide an insight to understand what top Chinese leaders’ think on its national foreign strategy and where the future of China’s foreign policy will lead to. China’s host diplomacy will be divided into three periods. The first period starts from 1991 to 2002, under the leadership of President Jiang Zemin, during which period China’s attitude towards regional and international institutions changed from a hostile one to active engagement. The second period is from 2003 to 2008. President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao called for a harmonious world through peaceful development and build China’s soft power to improve its national image. The year 2008 served as a watershed in China’s foreign policy, and for Chinese top leaders their view of China’s status on the international stage also experienced a transition. The successful hosting of Olympic Game in Beijing significantly boosted China’s national confidence; China was more than ever closer to its national rejuvenation. Besides, China’s economy during the financial crisis showed its resilience against wave of shocks, providing Chinese leaders with confidence in global economic governance. China has begun to behave more actively, sometimes more aggressively in safeguarding its national interests and participating global governance. Particularly after President Xi Jinping assumed power in 2012, Chinese leaders become more vocal to articulate its foreign strategy on the regional and global scale, and label many issues as its “core national interests”. The style of China’s diplomacy becomes more diverse, from bilateral state visit to



multilateral summit, from annual economic forum to regional cooperative meeting, etc.. Host diplomacy is considered of high importance in China's overall diplomacy by the new collective leadership.

### **3.1 Host diplomacy: its concept and advantages**

In a special report on China's diplomacy with Chinese characteristics released by China's state media the People's Daily at the end of 2013, Foreign Minister Wang Yi summarized achievements in diplomatic work throughout 2013 and laid out the outlook for diplomatic work in the coming year and pointed out five main directions. The concept of "host diplomacy" was for the first time put forward to the public but it did not draw much attention. Among the five main points Wang Yi mentioned, the fifth point is "to carefully manage host diplomacy and further enhance China's international influence." He promised the China would do it best to run the two meetings and strengthening security cooperation and promoting economic development. In his opinion, these two international forums best embody China's new diplomatic concept such as "Chinese dream", "peaceful development" and "correct justice and benefit".<sup>89</sup>

On March 8th, 2014 on the press conference of the Second Session of the 12th National People's Congress, Wang Yi answered questions from Chinese and foreign journalists on issues related to "China's foreign policy and external relations". When asked his expectations for the two important international forums China will host this year – CICA and the APEC leaders' informal meeting – focusing on safety and economy, Wang highlighted the importance of these meetings in China's 2014 diplomacy and labeled these two conferences as "host diplomacy".<sup>90</sup> Since then "host diplomacy" has been heavily reported by the media and frequently mentioned by high-level officials on other occasions. It became a new diplomatic concept under this generation of Chinese leaders and has been viewed as an important component of China's yearly diplomatic tasks. While highly commented China's

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<sup>89</sup> Zhang Niansheng, Yang Ou. "Zhongguo tese daguo waijiao de chenggong shijian (2013 niandu tebie baodao) [Successful Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics (2013 Special Report)]," People's Daily, December 19, 2013. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=dfb5ff5cef43429984ebe75e30ca91a0>.

<sup>90</sup> "Wangyi jiu zhongguo de waijiao zhengce he duiwai guanxi da jizhe wen [Wang Yi's Remarks on China's Foreign Policy and Foreign Relations]," Xinhua News Agency, March 8, 2014. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-03/08/c\\_119669879\\_3.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-03/08/c_119669879_3.htm).

diplomacy in the previous year, he suggested that this year China's would continue to be proactive in both serving the domestic comprehensive deepening of reforms and in playing the role of a responsible stakeholder. These two "host diplomacy" events are significant for China in its bid to secure a stable, friendly neighboring environment.

The concept of "host diplomacy" is a series of diplomatic activities held within the borders of a country, multilateral or bilateral meetings, hosted by or co-hosted by its government; the government plays an important role in organizing the activities; the hosting diplomatic activities serve the country's national interests.<sup>91</sup> This article focuses on host diplomacy at multilateral level, which also includes bilateral meetings between top leaders. While major bilateral diplomatic activities allow countries to engage in in-depth dialogues on specific issues and might significantly improve bilateral relations, multilateral diplomatic activities also allow the host country to lay out its grand strategy, address a broader audience on issues of common interests and exert greater influence to safeguard its national interests. By hosting at home, the government can take advantage of "timing, geographic and human factors" to plan topics or agendas to its advantage, push for the construction of international rules or orders favorable to its own interests and then realize its diplomatic targets.

Not every country's government has the ability to host major multilateral activities within its borders; even if it can, not every host events are successful in exerting its influence among other countries and turn its influence into favorable results to serve its national interests. Therefore, to host a successful diplomatic activity, the government must have the ability to shape the agenda according to its preference and take advantage of the host events to consolidate the results in its favor, thus amplifying the function of diplomatic activities. Judging by this standard, hosting multilateral activities put some requirements on a nation – the successful hosting of diplomatic activities requires a country to possess comprehensive national strength and resources to ensure the smooth conduct of such an activity.

One of the biggest challenges facing the Chinese government in diplomacy, according to a Chinese scholar, is how to transform its growing power into international influence, to shape the

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<sup>91</sup> Chen Dongxiao, "China's 'Host Diplomacy': Opportunities, Challenges and Undertakings," *China Institute of International Studies*, November 14, 2014. Available at [http://www.ciiis.org.cn/english/2014-11/14/content\\_7369348.htm](http://www.ciiis.org.cn/english/2014-11/14/content_7369348.htm).

international community according to its preference.<sup>92</sup> This requires the Chinese government to improve its strategic ability in influencing other countries to accept China's proposals and ideas. This means other countries will actively respond to China's initiatives and engage in international regimes building supported by China. Host diplomacy has become a valuable tool for Chinese government to improve its strategic ability in shaping favorable environment and exerting national influence.

### **3.2 China's host events from 1991 to 2002**

#### **Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in developing countries (June 18/19, 1991)**

On June 18th and 19th, 1991, Beijing hosted the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in developing countries. More than one hundred representatives from 41 developing countries, special representatives from international organizations as well as high-level observers from 8 developed countries attended the conference. During the meeting, each representative stated his government's position on global environmental protection. The conference adopted Beijing Communique, which reflected the willingness among developing countries to cooperate on issues of global environment and economic development. To the record, it was the first international multilateral conference held in China to be dated. It did not draw much attention from the media, neither from the public. One day before the opening of the conference, the then-minister of the State Bureau of Environment Protection Qu Geping commented that environmental pollution had increasingly become an obstacle for human development and "it had become a growing trend to solve environmental problems by associating it with development."<sup>93</sup> The successful hosting of such a conference reflected the fact that countries around the world were gradually aware of the necessity to cooperate on issues like global environmental protection and the need to act collectively. Li Xue-e, head of Chinese delegation in the conference, pointed out that this conference provided a platform for developing

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<sup>92</sup> Ling Shengli, "Zhuchang waijiao zhuli zhongguo zhanlue nengli tisheng [Host Diplomacy Contributes to China's Diplomatic Capabilities]," *Dangdai Shijie*, No. 9 (2017), pp. 24-27.

<sup>93</sup> Xie Lianhui, "Fazhanzhong guojia huanjing yu fazhan huiyi kaimu [Conference on Environment and Development of Developing Countries Opens]," *People's Daily*, June 15, 1991. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=6e23d2b6fa0442d8a10c6baa73947d77>.

countries to cooperate, negotiate and seek common ground on international affairs, which would be conducive to changing the disadvantageous situation in which the voices of developing countries were not fully reflected in the international action on environment and development, especially their practical difficulties and special circumstances were not fully taken into account. It was widely considered that this conference held in Beijing was of crucial importance in preparation for next year's United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil, which would be the largest and of the highest level in the field of environment and development. Report from the People's daily highly commented the willing to cooperate among different countries. Despite the diversity of historical, geographical, cultural and socio-economic diversities, developing countries – together representing three quarters of world population – could still find common ground on environmental issue, which was very encouraging.<sup>94</sup>

#### **The Fourth World Conference on Women (September 4 to 15, 1995)**

In January 1991, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, on behalf of the Chinese government, sent a letter to the Secretary General of the United Nations, inviting the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing this year. On March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1993, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women decided in Vienna that that Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 would be held in Beijing. This was widely applauded in China and immediately began the work of preparation for the conference. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, shortly after the decision made at the UN Commission, China's National Women's Federation held the 11<sup>th</sup> Enlarged Session of the Sixth Standing Committee in Beijing, ended up with adopting a resolution which stated that "hosting of the Fourth World Conference on Women is a great event for the Chinese government and people, and also a great event for the Chinese women's community. Women's federations at all levels should, under the leadership of the Party and the government, actively promote the cause of women's liberation in China and cooperate

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<sup>94</sup> Li Hong, Zhang Youxin, "Tuanjie hezuo yingjietiao [Cooperate and Meet the Challenges together]," People's Daily, June 19, 1991. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=8fa848cedaa0457680a0099d1a5778fe>.

with all relevant departments to make preparations carefully.”<sup>95</sup> The progress on preparation work was covered in the media, reporting from the foundation of the first Women’s College in China, to the release of World Women’s Expo magazine, which was by that time the only magazine in China to introduce the world’s women status to Chinese readers. Even in the “Report on the Work of the Government” in March 1993, Premier Li Peng mentioned the importance of successfully hosting this conference.

From September 4<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 1995, Beijing hosted the Conference. The theme of this conference was “Action for Equality, Development and Peace”. More than 17,000 representatives from 189 governments and 2,100 non-governmental organizations participated in this event. It was unprecedented in the history of the United Nations and the largest global international conference hosted by the Chinese government. The Chinese government sent 81 delegates headed by Chen Muhua, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress and chairman of the All-China Women’s Federation, attended the meeting. President Jiang Zemin delivered a speech on the welcoming ceremony, highlighting the importance of gender equality and achievements made in China. The resulting documents of the Conference are the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. The conference signaled a clear commitment to international norms and standards of gender equality; that measures to protect and promote the human rights of women and girl-children as an integral part of universal human rights must underlie all action.

### **Shanghai Five Process (April 26, 1996)**

On April 26, 1996, the heads of state of these five nations met in Shanghai and signed the agreement on Strengthening Trust in the Military Field in Border Areas. The “Shanghai Five Process” began with the development of trust and disarmament in the border areas between China and Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Addressing border security and Uighur separatism was primarily the concern of the Chinese government. These issues have long threatened China’s national security which could be dated back to the 1960s, when the relations between China and the Soviet

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<sup>95</sup> Fan Aiguo, “Quanguo fulian tongguo jueyi: zuohao choubei gongzuo yingjie shijie funv dahui [National Women’s Federation Passed Resolution: Prepare for the World Women’s Conference],” *People’s Daily*, March 20, 1992. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=fcc22b2c2b95460cb719a3b04fb6e2b2>.

Union deteriorated in late 1950s and finally broke up in the 60s. The Soviet amassed troops along the Xinjiang frontier, implicitly threatened to induce Uighurs and other Muslims to revolt, separating western Xinjiang from China. This posed serious threat to China's national security. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, these concerns did not disappear, and in fact, the Chinese government put more efforts in maintaining its national security. Therefore, to establish a dialogue including countries that share border with China in this region and countries that could exert great influence would benefit all and contribute to maintaining regional stability.

The origin of the "Shanghai Five" began after the normalization of relations between China and the Soviet Union in May 1989. In November of the same year, China began negotiations with the former Soviet Union on mutual reduction of military strength and deepening trust in the military field in the border area. This was an integral part of the overall easing of Sino-Soviet relations in the late 1980s. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, China shares the border with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. As Chinese leaders uphold "Peace and development" to be the mainstream of the world, negotiations with these countries gradually developed. After 27 rounds of negotiations in 7 years, all parties finally reached an agreement on the entire contents of the agreement. Leaders from the five countries gathered in Shanghai to sign the Agreement on Strengthening Trust in the Military Field in Border Areas. This is the first legal document on the border between the five countries signed by the head of state at the highest level.

It was highly commented that the "Shanghai Five" process has opened a new page in the history of the relations between the five countries. It has played an important role in enhancing the good-neighborly mutual trust and cooperation between the five countries and safeguarding regional security and stability. At the same time, it has also abandoned the Cold War mentality for the international community, which was the root cause of conflict according to the Chinese leaders. Exploring new types of state relations, new security concepts and new regional models has provided valuable experience and inspiration, and has a positive impact on the international community. Looking backward, the Shanghai Five process started quietly and did not draw much attention from the media as the previous international conference held in Beijing. Partly due to the process was focused mainly on military communication and national security, People's Daily only started to cover the process two

weeks before the meeting in Shanghai. The notice was of short paragraphs, reporting that the agreement between the five nations on strengthening trust in military fields in the boarder areas would be sign by their leaders.<sup>96</sup>

### **FOCAC – Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (October 10, 2000)**

At a press conference in October 1999, when asked about the Sino-African relations, the spokesperson for Ministry of Foreign Affairs Zhang Qiyue said that the Chinese government proposed to hold the “Forum on China-Africa Cooperation” on the ministerial level next year in Beijing. Zhang also spoke to the media that President Jiang Zemin had recently sent a letter to African countries on this proposal in a hope that China and African countries can work together to improve bilateral trade relations, increase investment, cooperate and push the international political and economic system towards a more fair and reasonable stage on the bases of equality and mutual respect.<sup>97</sup> The context was that the international situation had undergone great changes since the end of the Cold War, but peace and development remains the two major themes of the time. It meets the demands of the international community, especially the developing countries, to build a multi-polar world and establish a new international political and economic order. African is an importance force for promoting world peace and development, as most African countries are developing countries. As the biggest developing country in the world, China has attached great importance to Africa; strengthening solidarity and cooperation with Africa has always been an important part in China’s foreign policy.

The first Ministerial Conference was held in Beijing from 10 to 12 October 2000. President Jiang Zemin, Premier Zhu Rongji of the State Council and Vice President Hu Jintao participated in the conference. More than 80 ministers from China and 44 countries, representatives of 17 regional and international organizations, people from the business communities of China and Africa were invited

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<sup>96</sup> “Zhong’e deng wuguo jiang qianshu bianjing junshi xinren xieding [Five Countries Including China and Russia Will Sign Military Agreement],” *People’s Daily*, April 12, 1996. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=1655408e8058428a9225550c779273cf>.

<sup>97</sup> “Zhongfei hezuo luntan jiang tuidong zhongfei guanxi fazhan [Sino-African Cooperation Will Drive Bilateral Relations],” *People’s Daily*, October 19, 1999. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=8af2598529274adb8a276092cf106cea>.

to the conference. The conference charted the direction for the development of a new, stable and long-term partnership featuring equality and mutual benefit between China and African countries.

A special report on the Sino-African trade and investment was published. The trade volumes between China and African countries increased dramatically since the 1980s.<sup>98</sup> African countries are the main targets of China's foreign aid. China's investment in Africa expanded rapidly in the 1990s. Despite huge progress had been made during the past few decades, the overall scale of bilateral trade and investment remained in the initial stage. the Chinese government hoped that the hosting of FOCAC in Beijing would further strengthen the exchanges and communication between China and African countries in economic and trade cooperation and create favorable conditions for the development of bilateral relations. The result of the conference was fruitful and received applause from both sides. Premier Zhu Rongji delivered a speech on the closing ceremony, saying that this forum was "an unprecedented event in the history of China-Africa relations" and would serve as "an important milestone in the glorious history of China-Africa friendship and cooperation."<sup>99</sup>

Observers on China noticed that China had significantly increased its efforts to seek greater role in international affairs. Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan reaffirmed the principles of China's foreign policy – an independent foreign policy of peace. China will safe guard world peace and promote the common development of the international community. 2001 is the first year of the new century. China's diplomacy will be more active, hosting several important meetings at home which will further enhance China's relations with countries around the world, deepen mutual understanding and mutual trust, promote mutual exchanges and cooperation, and further promote peace, cooperation and development in the world and in the region.<sup>100</sup>

### **Boao Forum for Asia (February 16/17, 2001)**

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<sup>98</sup> "Zhongfei jingmao hezuo chengxiao xianzhu [Sino-African Cooperation on Trade Produces Fruitful Results]," *People's Daily*, October 8, 2000. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=a9b7bf15d4a24e9c8a53338f165cdf7>.

<sup>99</sup> "Zhongfei hezuo luntan zai jing bimu [Sino-Africa Cooperation Conference Close in Beijing]," *People's Daily*, October 13, 2000. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=7f50b44ed2a344a78504dc15aa76797e>.

<sup>100</sup> Li Ke, "Waijiao buzhang tangjiaxuan da jizhe wen [Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan Answered Questions from Reporters]," *People's Daily*, March 7, 2001. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=429bab0deac54401a2a10b0d480a7c69>.



Proposed in 1998 by Fidel V. Ramos, former President of the Philippines, Bob Hawke, former Prime Minister of Australia, and Morihiro Hosokawa, former Prime Minister of Japan, the Boao Forum for Asia was formally inaugurated on February 27, 2001. It was the first international organization based in China. Since its foundation, the forum has won great support from Asian countries and attracted extensive from the whole world. The Boao Forum is the first international organization based in China. Composed of business leaders and government officials, its annual meeting take place on Hainan Island. The purpose of BFA is to base itself in Asia and promote and deepen he economic exchange, coordination, and cooperation within Asia and between Asia and other parts of the world. It has become a high-end platform for dialog among leaders of national governments, industrial and business circles, and academic circles of countries in Asia and the wider world about important issues facing Asia and elsewhere.

### **The Third Asia-Europe Foreign Minister's Meeting (May 24, 2001)**

The Third Asia-Europe Foreign Minister's Meeting was held in Beijing on 24-25 May 2001. Foreign ministers from ten Asian and fifteen European nations, together with the Commissioner for External Relations of the European Commission, attended the meeting. This was a major event in the process of Asia-Europe cooperation at the beginning of the new century and an important event for China's diplomacy this year.<sup>101</sup> Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan published an article on People's Daily, "*The Booming and promising Asia-European Cooperation*". In his article, he recalled the historical background in which the Asia-Europe Meeting was launched.<sup>102</sup> The rise of Asia and European integration are the two significant events that have a profound impact on the world. The rapid economic development and political status of East Asian countries including China have attracted attention from the world; after two world wars, the process of European integration guaranteed stability and prosperity in Western Europe and laid the foundation for Europe to play a greater role in world

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<sup>101</sup> Wu Liming, "Waijiaobu fayan ren fabiao tanhua [Remarks from Spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC]," *People's Daily*, May 11, 2001. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=86c4757e1c624a4c8062b98833a65393>.

<sup>102</sup> "Tangjiaxuan waizhang tan yaou hezuo de yi yi qianjing he tedian [Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan's Remarks on the Significance Prospects and Characteristics of Asia-Europe Cooperation]," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC*, May 24, 2001. Available at [http://www.chinacommercialoffice.org/web/ziliao\\_674904/zt\\_674979/ywzt\\_675099/2355\\_676073/2377\\_676135/t11160.shtml](http://www.chinacommercialoffice.org/web/ziliao_674904/zt_674979/ywzt_675099/2355_676073/2377_676135/t11160.shtml).

affairs. Politically, Asia and Europe are important forces in driving the world into multipolarities; economically, Asia and Europe are important players of economic globalization. The cooperation between Asia and Europe would not only benefit themselves but also contribute to the world development.

The idea of opening the dialogue between Asia and Europe was first proposed by Singapore and France in 1994 in a hope to build a new partnership between the two regions. This initiative received positive response from European and Asian countries as both realized that the relationship between the two regions needed to be strengthened and the two regions needed a meeting point to reflect on the new global context of the 1990s and the outlook for the coming century. The purpose of the cross-regional meeting is to establish a new and comprehensive partnership between Asia and Europe to strengthen dialogue, understanding and cooperation.

The Chinese government attached great importance to this meeting. The Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Premier Zhu Rongji addressed the meeting at its opening and closing ceremonies respectively. It was reported that the ministers held comprehensive, in-depth and fruitful discussions based on the theme of enhancing Asia-Europe partnership in the new century; they affirmed that relations between Asia and Europe had become closer, more extensive and important than ever before. In the closing ceremony, Premier Zhu Rongji expressed his warm congratulation on the successful hosting of this meeting, saying that “it is a good start for Asia-Europe cooperation in the new century and is of great significance to the in-depth development of Asia-Europe cooperation.”<sup>103</sup> Asia and Europe share similar views on many major international issues thus there is much potential room for both sides to work together, which will not only be conducive to development of both regions but also to building a more balanced international relations structure and world political and economic order. The Chinese government showed its commitment to actively participate in the Asia-Europe cooperation process in the coming years.<sup>104</sup>

### **Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit (June 15, 2001)**

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<sup>103</sup> Wang Fang, “Disan jie yaou waizhang huiyi bimu [The Third Asia-Europe Conference of Foreign Ministers Close],” *People’s Daily*, May 26, 2001. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=194d8e142316449295c28c1196c02b71>.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

“June 15 2001 is a day worth commemorating forever. On this day, a new regional multilateral cooperation organization, the ‘Shanghai Cooperation Organization’ was founded on the horizon of Eurasia.”<sup>105</sup> For many Chinese researchers, the foundation of SCO in 2001 is not an ordinary event. The creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai, China by leaders from members of the Shanghai Five and Uzbekistan. With Uzbekistan joining the group, it becomes the only country that does not share border with China. SCO is the first permanent governmental international organization to be named after a Chinese city. Its main purpose is to combat terrorists, ethnic separatists and religious extremists, and build cooperation mechanisms between countries in the Eurasian hinterland.

During the past 5 years, the cooperation among the Shanghai Five achieved substantial results in the maintenance of regional security and stability; significant progress has been made in easing tensions in the border areas. One year after their gathering in Shanghai in 1996, the five heads of state held their second meeting in Moscow and signed the Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in Border Areas. Since then, each member state held the summit annually. With the establishment of trust and friendship in the border areas, the content of cooperation among the five countries has expanded, and the topic covers areas that are beyond the military cooperation, from international political and economic situation, cultural exchange, energy supply, transportation to many other fields. As a result, the existing Shanghai Five mechanism can no longer meet the demands of member states in cooperation and all parties have recognized the importance of establishing a formal multilateral regional organization. From a global perspective, the world is moving towards multi-polarization, various regional cooperation organizations have flourished as countries face both opportunities and challenges. The transformation of Shanghai Five mechanism to a regional organization meets the trend of development. From the regional perspective, the three forces – ethnic separatism, religious extremism, and international terrorism – have spread rapidly in Central Asia. Together they pose a serious threat to regional security and stability. In this context, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization came into being. “This organization will not only strengthen cooperation

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<sup>105</sup> Xia Yishan, “Tuanjie jie shuoguo xieshou chuang weilai,” *People’s Daily*, June 18, 2001. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=eba43587734e4c2bafda5c5ce31509f2>.

among internal member states, but also maintains good relations and cooperation with all regional cooperation organizations and international organizations already existing in the world to jointly promote world peace and development. It will play a positive role in maintaining regional peace and stability, and promote the democratization of international relations. This Shanghai meeting will be a new turning point in the history of relations among member states and a turning point for greater and broader cooperation in the 21st century. This meets the world trend and will be universally welcomed.”<sup>106</sup>

The cooperation among the states under Shanghai Five process follows the principles of mutual benefit, mutual trust, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations, and seeking common development. These principles are widely recognized as the “Shanghai Spirit”, which transcends outdated concepts such as clash of civilizations, Cold War and zero-sum mentality. It is argued that under the guidance of this spirit, “all member states, big or small, rich or poor, have equal say about internal affairs, and reach consensus and achieve shared growth through discussion and collaboration, rather than following a winner-takes-all approach.”<sup>107</sup>

### **APEC Summit (October 20/21, 2001)**

The 2001 APEC series meeting was held in China. So far, this is the largest and the highest level of international conference hosted by the Chinese government since the founding of the People’s Republic of China. In 2001, China held the rotating presidency of APEC. The ninth APEC Economic Leaders' meeting and the relevant ministerial meeting were held in Shanghai, China. In addition, a series of senior officials' meetings were held in Beijing, Shenzhen, Dalian and Shanghai. As the host, the Chinese government attached great importance to this meeting, and relevant departments had done a lot of work for its smooth convening. The theme of this year’s conference was "the new century, new challenges: participation, cooperation and promote common prosperity".

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<sup>106</sup> Yan Zheng, Sun Li, “Xinxing guojia guanxi de dianfan [A Model for New Type of Relations],” *People’s Daily*, June 1, 2001. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=b3c13a3840564fc39108c7e7da5d824e>.

<sup>107</sup> Ya Mei, “Commentary: The ‘Shanghai Spirit’ Shows its Strength,” *Xinhua News Agency*, May 30, 2018. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/30/c\\_137217942.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/30/c_137217942.htm).

APEC is the most important economic forum in the Asia-Pacific region. Established in 1989, its aim is to promote cooperation, economic growth, free trade and investment in Asia-Pacific Area. Since joining APEC in 1991, China has been fully involved in APEC activities, participating in APEC cooperation at all levels, from APEC Leaders' Informal Meeting, double ministerial meetings, to professional ministerial meeting. China's active participation in APEC's economic cooperation is an important measure of China's economic diplomacy in the 1990s. Participating in this process is an important way to realize China's participation in economic globalization.

The background of hosting APEC was complex and challenging, as most member states were still struggling with the fallout of the 1997 Asian financial crisis; in September the United States suffered a terrorist attack, and soon declared "War on Terror" and sent American forces to invade Afghanistan. Recent turmoil in the international situation provided an opportunity for all APEC leaders to exchange views on the new situation and to express their stance. The negotiation for China to join the World Trade Organization also came to an end, which means soon China would become a member of the WTO. This news was of great significance since most APEC member states hoped that this year's APEC meeting could promote the WTO to start a new round of multilateral trade negotiations as soon as possible. The WTO Doha ministerial meeting was held in November, just one month after APEC meeting. To successfully launch a new round of multilateral trade negotiations, the support and promotion from the APEC was crucial. China's effort was even more important since it had the advantage of setting agenda throughout the whole APEC events.

### **The First Annual Conference of Boao Forum for Asia (April 11-14, 2002)**

The first annual conference of Boao Forum for Asia was held from April 11 to 14 in Boao, Hainan Province of China. Boao received nearly 2,000 delegates from 48 countries, including government officials from Japan, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and China, scholars and entrepreneurs from Asia, Europe and North America attended the meeting. This forum provides a platform for dialogue among participants coming from political, business and academic areas in Asian region, and to increase opportunities for trade and investment within the Asian region as well as with other regions. It not only focus on the development among Asian countries, but also on cooperation between Asia

and the international community. The theme of this conference was “New Century, New Challenge, A New Asia: Economic Development and Cooperation”. This conference focused on topics including global economic influence on Asia, measures for Asia’s economic recovery and cooperation among Asian countries, China’s entry into the WTO and Asian economic development. Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji attended the meeting and gave the keynote speech entitled “Joining Hands to Create a Bright Future for Asia in the New Century.” He admitted that China’s reform and opening up policy had brought substantial benefits to its people; China now had entered into a new stage of development, and its economy would continue grow at an annual rate of 7 percent. He also pointed out that China’s own development would not only benefit itself, but also would share opportunities for development with other countries. There would be huge potentials for developments. Zhu reaffirmed Chinese government’s position on “going out strategy” by saying that “Chinese people love peace, and China’s development needs a peaceful environment. China’s development will not pose any threat to other countries, now or in the future. China has always been an important force in safeguarding world peace and promoting common development.”<sup>108</sup>

The opening of the first annual meeting came at a time when economy around the world and in Asia had undergone significant changes. The United States, EU and Japan – the three driving force for world economic development – were experiencing sufferings and setback; global investments were also on the decline; new round of trade negotiation met obstacles and did not make any progress. The world economy on the whole was witnessing more frictions and downturns rather than any sign of momentum for development. Last year China joined the World Trade Organization, bringing new hope for world economic development. It was under this situation that the Boao Forum for Asia was held and attracted attentions from other countries. On the eve of the annual meeting, Chinese government was generous to show its support for the forum by announcing that it would donate 8000,000 RMB<sup>109</sup>. The forum was regarded as the “pulse of Asia”, and it would show the future of Asian economic

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<sup>108</sup> Wu Qimei, He Guanghua, Wu Gang, Zhan Xinhui, “Boao yazhou luntan shoujie nianhui kaimu [The First Boao Forum Annual Meeting Open],” *People’s Daily*, April 13, 2002. Available at

<http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=299c420eac504d3fabd9ebc098f1d0a9>.

<sup>109</sup> Chang Ailing, “Waijiao bu fayan ren fabiao tanhua [Remarks from the Spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC],” *People’s Daily*, April 12, 2002. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=889a74c6f24547c2b236db39ce0fa704>.

development. And since Asia has become an integral part of globalization, focusing on Boao Forum would gain an insight into world economy.

### **3.3 China's host events from 2003 to 2008**

#### **The Third International Conference of Asian Political Parties (September 3-5, 2004)**

The Third International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) was held in Beijing from September 3 to 5 2004. The meeting was organized by the International Department of the Chinese Communist Party. Together, 350 delegates from 81 political parties in 35 Asian countries attended the meeting, including eight heads of state. It was the first time for the CPC to host an international political parties' conference. The theme of the third ICAPP is "Exchanges, Cooperation, Development" and the main topics include "regional security and multilateral cooperation", "economic growth and social progress", "political party building and national development". This is in line with the trend of the emerging regional cooperation in Asia.

The ICAPP was launched in Manila the Philippines in September 2000 at the aim of promoting exchanges and cooperation between different political parties in Asian countries, enhancing mutual understanding and trust among Asian countries, and fostering environment for solid peace, shared prosperity and diverse cultural exchanges in the region and beyond. The ICAPP attracts both the ruling parties and opposition parties from different Asian countries. The ruling parties participating in ICAPP are responsible for forming the governments and therefore are identified as the governments. The opposition political parties also champion alternative policies, platforms, and agendas, sometimes together with a shadow cabinet, thus influencing and engaging substantively in the activities of the governments. Thus, political parties constitute part of the government, and the ICAPP is characterized as a kind of the intergovernmental organization of independent states. The previous two conferences focused on negotiation, cooperation, and common development, and played a unique role in promoting mutual exchanges among Asian political parties, increasing consensus, understanding and trust. It also helps to improve bilateral relations between Asian countries and promote regional cooperation in Asia.

In an interview with Chinese state media People's Daily, China's director of the International Liaison Department of the CPC Central Committee and deputy director and secretary general of the

conference organizing committee Wang Jiarui commented that this meeting was a significant event for China<sup>110</sup>. He recalled the background against which the ICAPP was initiated and pointed out the new features of the political development of Asian political parties. Although political parties vary in ideologies and policy suggestions, multilateral dialogue and cooperation have been successful in reducing misunderstanding and bridging the gaps. This is consistent with the principles and policies promoted by the CPC. Wang said, “since the reform and opening up, our party has always followed the principle of independent inter-party exchanges, complete equality, mutual respect, and non-interference in internal affairs, and has carried out various forms of exchanges and cooperation with political parties around the world. It has established and maintained different forms of contacts with more than 400 political parties and organizations in more than 140 countries and regions around the world. The exchanges with political parties in Asian countries have always been the focus of our party's external work. This kind of exchanges and cooperation has made positive contributions to promoting the development of state relations between China and Asian countries, enhancing friendship between the people and promoting regional cooperation in Asia. This extensive exchange has been fully affirmed and warmly welcomed by political parties and people in various Asian countries. Therefore, hosting this session not only reflects our party's sincere desire to promote regional cooperation in Asia and seek common development, but also provides a good opportunity for our party to make more active efforts in this regard.”

### **FOCAC – Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (November 4-5, 2006)**

In the beginning of the new year, the Chinese government issued the first “China's African Policy Paper”. The tone of the Paper, as usual, starts with highlighting peace and development as the main theme of the current area, stating that “maintaining peace, promoting development and strengthening cooperation are the common aspirations of the people of all countries and an irresistible historical trend.” It also points out that the current international society still faces with uncertainties and regional conflicts are the threats of peace; only through common development and cooperation can these issues

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<sup>110</sup> Wen Xian, Zhang Jingyu, “Wangjiarui: zhongguo gongchandong zhuban yazhou zhengdang guoji huiyi yiyi zhongda [Wang Jiarui: The Communist Party of China Hosts the International Conference of Asian Political Parties],” *People's Daily*, August 12, 2004. Available at <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/shizheng/1026/2703078.html>.



be resolved. The Paper stresses the need for strengthening China-African relations and states Chinese government's policy, its goals and measures on Africa.<sup>111</sup>

On November 4 2006, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation was held in Beijing under the theme of "friendship, peace, cooperation and development". Over 5,000 representatives from over 48 African countries and 24 international and regional organizations attended the forum. So far, it was the largest ever high-level conference on Africa held outside the continent. After the conference, some African countries expressed gratitude for China's aids to their countries and wished to follow the Chinese model of development. Zambian President Mwanawasa refuted the so-called "China's cooperation with Africa is a new colonialism in Africa"; their cooperation is based on traditional friendship and mutual benefit. Mwanawasa implicitly criticized former colonies in Africa and described African countries as the victim of colonialism.<sup>112</sup> The People's Daily reposted reports from foreign media, pointing out that China's assistance to African countries does not attach any political conditions, and China does not interfere in the political affairs of these countries. Hosting this summit would significantly improve China's international status and China-Africa relations would enter into a new stage.<sup>113</sup>

### **The 7th ASEM Summit (October 24-25, 2008)**

The 7th Asia-Europe Summit was held under the theme of "Vision and Action: Towards a Win-Win Solution" on 24-25 October in 2008 in Beijing. The summit was attended by Heads of State and Government from 16 Asian and 27 European nations, the President of the European Commission and the Secretary-General of ASEAN Secretariat. It was the first time that leaders from 45 ASEM member states gathered together since its second round of enlargement in 2006.<sup>114</sup> Together they represent

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<sup>111</sup> "Zhongguo dui feizhou zhengce wenjian [China's African Policy Document]," *The State Council*, January 2006. Available at [http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2006/content\\_212161.htm](http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2006/content_212161.htm).

<sup>112</sup> Pei Guangjiang, "Zhongguo fazhan jingyan zhide xuexi [Chinese Model of Development worth Learning]," *People's Daily*, November 9, 2006. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=757f986af6904fc382380fb9f02b04ca>.

<sup>113</sup> "Guoji meiti he zhuanjia xuezhe jiji pingjia zhongfei hezuo luntan beijing fenghui [International Media Experts and Scholars Positively Evaluate the China-Africa Cooperation Conference In Beijing]," *People's Daily*, November 10, 2006. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=db71488d97f84423aa56589d12e94867>.

<sup>114</sup> "7th ASEM Summit (ASEM 7), Vision & Action: Towards a Win-Win Solution," *ASEM Info Board*, October 24-15, 2008. Available at <https://www.aseminfoboard.org/events/7th-asem-summit-asem7>.

around 50% of world GDP, approximately 58% of the world's population and 60% of world trade. The hosting of this summit came at a time when the international community was still combating global financial crisis, coupled with other pressing issues such as energy and food shortages, environmental degradation, natural disasters and poverty. During the summit, leaders held in-depth discussions on issues of common concern and interest. They called on governments to take effective measures in a firm, decisive, responsible and timely manner to properly cope with the challenges of the current financial crisis; the international community should continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation, comprehensively and effectively use economic and financial means to restore market confidence and stabilize global financial markets and to promote global economic growth. Reform in the international monetary and financial system should be taken to stabilize the international financial situation.<sup>115</sup> Humanitarian crisis and poverty led by natural disasters in Asia in the past year was also given attention; commitment to continued assistance to the affected countries was made. Leaders also highlighted the need for joint global efforts to address global challenges including natural disasters in a timely manner.

China's efforts in stabilizing global financial system and ensuring the smooth operation of the real economy were welcomed. Some argued that China should have more say in the international financial system as many noticed that China has become an importance economy in the world. China's voice should be listened carefully and understood by the international community.<sup>116</sup> This recognition was of special significance to China since its image of peace and development was widely accepted by other countries; China's long-term policy of reform and opening, its commitment to peaceful development and an independent foreign policy of peace were further understood by the world.<sup>117</sup>

### **3.4 China's host events from 2009 to 2018**

#### **The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of China-Arab Cooperation Forum (May 13-14, 2010)**

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<sup>115</sup> "Diqi jie yaou shounao huiyi guanyu guoji jinrong xingshi de shengming [Statement of the 7th ASEM Summit on the International Financial Situation]," October 24, 2008. Available at

[http://www3.fmprc.gov.cn/web/ziliao\\_674904/zl\\_674979/ywzt\\_675099/2008zt\\_675545/dqjyosnhy\\_675567/t528173.shtml](http://www3.fmprc.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/zl_674979/ywzt_675099/2008zt_675545/dqjyosnhy_675567/t528173.shtml).

<sup>116</sup> <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=316bf6c5736a4dca9af2644a6222ff55>.

<sup>117</sup> <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=abdd7dd68a414ae0b8800ef6f2819353>.

The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum was held on May 13-14 in Tianjin, China. Foreign Ministers or representatives of China and Arab states and Secretary General of League of Arab States attended the meeting. With the theme of "Deepening All-Round Cooperation for Common Development", the meeting carried out broad and in-depth discussion on China-Arab States relations, forum building, practical cooperation and international and regional issues of common interest. In the Tianjin Declaration signed and issued at the meeting, both sides announced the establishment of China-Arab strategic cooperative relationship featuring comprehensive cooperation and common development within the framework of the forum. To this end, they pledged to enhance exchange of visits at all levels, carry out strategic dialogue and consultations, continue to support each other on issues concerning their respective core and major interests, deepen cooperation in the fields of politics, economy, trade, energy, environment and humanities and keep closer communication and coordination in international and regional affairs.

Premier Wen Jiabao attended the meeting and delivered an speech on the opening day. He said, "The establishment of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum is a strategic choice for China and the Arab countries to focus on the long-term development of bilateral relations in the 21st century. It is a major measure for China and developing countries to strengthen collective dialogue and cooperation." Under the background of global financial crisis, all nations should cherish peace and work together to maintain a peaceful international environment for economic development; new efforts should be made to put for reforms in international financial system, and to build a more fair and just international economic and financial order. The international community must act together in respond of challenges from climate change and energy security.<sup>118</sup> Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said the meeting was a milestone in the history of China-Arab relations. The establishment of China-Arab strategic cooperative relationship will give great impetus to the development of China-Arab relations in the new era and help push China-Arab friendly cooperation in all areas forward. It is not only conducive to both sides, but also will set an example for pushing forward solidarity and cooperation among developing nations.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=d10eb4b110e846f193a6a44c07538824>

<sup>119</sup> "The 4th Ministerial Meeting of China-Arab Cooperation Forum Closes," *Embassy of the PRC in the State of Kuwait*, May 14, 2010. Available at <http://kw.chineseembassy.org/eng/xwdt/t695214.htm>.

## Shanghai World Exposition (May 1 to October 31, 2010)

The World Expo 2010 was held on both banks of the Huangpu River in Shanghai from 1 May to 31 October 2010, another grand international event held in China after 2008 Olympic Games. A total number of 246 countries and international organizations participated this event, the highest number in its record. The theme of the exposition was “Better City – Better Life”, the first time “city” as the theme in the history of World Expo; this was also the first time that World Expo was held in a developing country in 159 years. This event signifies Shanghai’s new status in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the “next great world city.”<sup>120</sup> According to a report released by the UN Habitat, nearly 60 percent of the world’s population will be urban dwellers, and by 2050 this number will be over 70%. The rapidly expanding urbanization process has brought a series of major challenges to human society.<sup>121</sup> The Shanghai World Expo provided an excellent arena for bringing together global wisdom to address the major challenges of urbanization. “The history will prove that Shanghai World Expo will play an important role in the promoting the development of the city’s civilization.”<sup>122</sup> The Expo was not only a show of new ideas and innovations from around the world, but also a window of Chinese cultures and values, and most importantly its progress that have been made on its way to modernization. After more than a century and fifty years, China now has successfully transformed its national image from a poor, outdated, semi-colonial, semi-feudal society to a confident, energetic one which is proud of its enriching ancient wisdom. Shanghai’s success is China’s success, and now it is presented in front of the whole world. China’s achievement in development is a result of its policy of reform and opening up, and President Hu Jintao showed his determination that China would continue to stick to this policy and contribute to world’s prosperity.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Adam Minter, “China Rules the World at Expo 2010,” *The Atlantic* April 29, 2010. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2010/04/china-rules-the-world-at-expo-2010/39566/>.

<sup>121</sup> “State of the World’s Cities 2008/2009 – Harmonious Cities.” *UN HABITAT*. Available at <https://unhabitat.org/books/state-of-the-worlds-cities-20082009-harmonious-cities-2/>.

<sup>122</sup> Fan Weiguo, Xie Weiqun, Wang Wei. “Kaiqi chengshi meihao xin jiyuan [Open a New Chapter of City Life],” *People’s Daily*, April 30, 2010. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=9ef33f5697564281bff85d595df02d5e>.

<sup>123</sup> Hu Jintao, “Huanju shibo shenghui gongchuang meihao weilai [Celebrate the World Expo and Create a Better Future],” *People’s Daily*, May 1, 2010. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=371d034e6df144cdabc3534ed787e5467>.

Chinese society in all aspects was mobilized to celebrate the opening of Shanghai World Exposition in May 2010. More than 2,000,000 volunteers contributed to the success of Shanghai World Exportation. The theme song of volunteers “The World” by the Chinese singer Tang Jing – the propaganda ambassador of the Shanghai World Expo – was released in Beijing one month before the opening of the event. Special coverage on Shanghai Expo could be seen on all major media. “Shanghai Expo” became one of the hot words of the year in Chinese media.

### **Boao Forum for Asia (April 6-8, 2013)**

The annual Boao Forum for Asia was held from April 6 to 8 in 2013 under the theme of “Asia Seeking Development for All: Restructuring, Responsibility and Cooperation”. This year’s conference saw the largest gathering of political figures. More than 1,400 representatives from 43 countries and regions participated in the event. After 12 years’ of development, Boao Forum has been transformed into a platform for Asian countries to exchange views, deepen cooperation and reach consensus. The Chinese President Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony of the forum for the first time since he came into power last year, and delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony. His keynote speech, titled “Working Together Toward a Better Future for Asia and the World”, drew attentions from the world immediately. Xi stressed that Asia is one of the most dynamic and most promising regions in the world and it still faces many difficulties and challenges. He called on all countries to foster a sense of community of common destiny to advance the development in Asia and the rest of the world. China will continue to promote friendship and partnership with its neighbors, and ensure that China’s development will bring even greater benefits to its neighbors. He injected confidence in economic growth by saying that the country will sustain “relatively high” economic growth but refrain from purely seeking speed in growth, focusing more on the quality and efficiency of economic development. He pledged that China will make contributions to peace and common development in Asia and the world.<sup>124</sup> Articles from the People’s Daily echoed Xi’s words, depicted an image of a vivid and dynamic Asia, the new driving force of world’s economic growth; Boao Forum for Asia has become a

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<sup>124</sup> “President Xi Jinping Attends the Opening Ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2013 and Delivers a Keynote Speech Working Together Toward a Better Future for Asia and the World,” *Xinhua News Agency*, April 7, 2013. Available at [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/topics\\_665678/boao\\_665692/t1029405.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/topics_665678/boao_665692/t1029405.shtml).

forum of global importance, “widely recognized as one of the favorable platforms for dialogue on Asian issues and new emerging economies.”<sup>125</sup>

### **Boao Forum for Asia (April 8-11, 2014)**

The Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2014 was held from April 8 to 11, with a theme of “Asia’s New Future: Identifying New Growth Drivers”. As the prospects of a global economic recovery remains obscure, emerging markets and most Asian economies are losing steam in their respective economic growth, and the institutional dividends of reform are disappearing. New impetuses for growth must be generated by means of deepening reform and adjusting economic structure in order to identify new drivers for growth. Discussions were centered on reforms, innovations, and sustainable development.

China’s economic performance and domestic reforms draw attentions from the international community. The transformation of China’s economic growth model from export-led to consumption-led one will bring opportunities for investments. China’s economy continued to grow at a slow pace last year, and earlier data released since the beginning of this year showed further signs of slowing economy. During the opening ceremony, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang delivered a speech, conveying a message that China has the capabilities and confidence to keep its economy functioning within the proper range. Li stressed that development is China’s primary task and is the key to “resolving problems.” He said that downward pressure for economic growth still exists due to various reasons; however, there are still conditions for maintaining sustained development. Premier Li also showed China’s eagerness to launch the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank as soon as possible, which was put forward by Chinese leaders including President Xi Jinping and Premier Li during their visits to southeastern Asian countries in October 2013. When talking about the South China Sea issue, Li promised that China will give full support to initiatives that strengthen maritime cooperation while also responding firmly to provocations that undermine peace and stability in the South China Sea, and he called for Asian countries to explore the establishment of a regional security cooperation framework

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<sup>125</sup> Zhang Niansheng, Zhao Cheng, “tuidong boao yazhou luntan gengshang cenglou,” *People’s Daily*, April 19, 2013. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=e019aab3e9334ea797fe130d007aebd5>.

in Asia.<sup>126</sup> Xi is confident that Asian people have the wisdom to manage their own affairs and achieve peace and stability in the region, which implicitly referred to the U.S. interference in this region. He repeated that China is a staunch force for upholding peace in the region and the world, and for promoting common development; China is firmly committed to the path of peaceful development and the win-win strategy of opening-up. He encourage countries to solve disputes through dialogue and cooperation, stand against the arbitrary use of force, and oppose the provocation of escalation of tensions for selfish interests.

### **The Fourth Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (May 20-21, 2014)**

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia is the largest and the most representative regional security forum with the largest number of participants. The first leaders' summit was held in 2002 at the backdrop of combating terrorism. The Fourth Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia was held in Shanghai on 21 May 2014. The theme of this conference is "Strengthening dialogue, trust and cooperation, and building a new Asia of peace, stability and cooperation". In his keynote speech entitled "Actively Establishing an Asian Security Concept and Creating a New Situation for Security Cooperation", President Xi Jinping called for the creation of a "new regional security cooperation architecture." Peace, development and win-win cooperation are still the main trend in Asia; although there are many challenges and unstable factors, Asian countries have made progress in security cooperation. Xi stressed that "security should be universal, equal and inclusive. One cannot build its own security at the expense of others." Countries should abandon the outdated thinking of Cold-War mentality; all countries in the region shall be treated equal when participate security affairs, in traditional and non-traditional fields. Asia is a land of diversity; the differences among Asian countries shall not become the sources of conflicts; rather, countries should respect the social systems and development paths

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<sup>126</sup> Li Keqiang, "Gongtong kaichuang yazhou xin weilai [Working Together to Create a New Future for Asia]," *People's Daily*, April 11, 2014. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=7e87a3934b1544d3bd461fb3aa97244a>.

chosen by their own, fully respect and accommodate the legitimate security concerns of all parties; and abide by basic norms governing international relations.<sup>127</sup>

### **The Sixth Ministerial Conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (June 5, 2014)**

On June 5 2014, the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF) was opened in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. This year's ministerial meeting coincides with the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the CASCF. The forum now is an important platform for dialogue and cooperation in the 21st century. The conference adopted three important documents, namely the "Beijing Declaration", the "2014-2016 Action Plan" and the "2014-2024 Development Plan". President Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony and delivered a speech entitled "Promoting the Spirit of Silk Road and Deepening China-Arab Cooperation". He called on the two sides to carry forward the Silk Road spirit – which promotes peace, friendship, openness, and inclusiveness. China is willing to pursue common development and benefit others. Xi urged win-win cooperation with Arab states on the building of the Silk Road economic belt and the 21st century maritime Silk Road. Xi's proposal was welcomed by Arab leaders and scholars; they have confidence that China's proposal will bring opportunities for development and are eager to engage in cross-cultural communications.<sup>128</sup>

### **The 8th Summer Davos Forum (September 10-12, 2014)**

The 8th Summer Davos Forum, also known as the Eighth Annual Meeting of the New Champions, was held in Tianjin from 10 to 12 September, 2014 with the theme of "Promoting Innovation and Creating Value". This year's summit focused on innovation and reform in economy as the Chinese economy faces downward pressure in recent years. The Chinese Premier Li Keqiang attended and addressed the opening ceremony, stressing that innovation as the new engine for economic and social

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<sup>127</sup> "Xi Jinping zai yazhou xianghu xiezuo yu xinren cuoshi huiyi disi ci fenghui shang de jianghua [Speech by Xi Jinping at the Fourth Summit of the Asia Conference on Mutual Cooperation and Confidence Measures]," *Xinhua News Agency*, May 21, 2014. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-05/21/c\\_1110796357.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-05/21/c_1110796357.htm).

<sup>128</sup> Sun Jian, Zhang Jie, etc.. "zhongguo meng yu alabo meng de meihao jiehe: guoji shehui jiji poingjia xijinping zhuxi zai zhongguo hezuo luntan diliujie buzhang ji huiyi kaimushi shang de zhongyao jianghua," *People's Daily*, June 7, 2014. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=74452950d33d4074a29c28ad78621dd4>.



development. He said that the Chinese government will not adopt strong economic stimulus policy in the situation of the growth slowing down, but it will push forward reforms in key areas of systematic importance, focus on incentivizing market entities, adopt measures to accelerate the pace of institutional innovation, and enhance scientific and technological innovation. China is committed to promoting sustainable and balanced growth of the world economy and working to cooperate with other countries to address key challenges and search for new opportunities for common development.<sup>129</sup> The forum attracted over 1,600 participants from 90 countries, including heads of states, high-level government officials, top business leaders and social entrepreneurs. Since the first Summer Davos meeting held in 2007, Chinese port cities Dalian and Tianjin have taken turns hosting the forum annually.

#### **APEC Summit (November 5-11, 2014)**

The APEC Summit 2014 was held in Beijing from 5 to 11 November 2014, which also marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of APEC. A series of meeting were held before and during the summit. The 22nd APEC Leaders' Meeting was held on 11th and took place in Yanqi Lake International Conference Center in Huairou, Beijing. The international community was full of high expectations on this meeting, as foreign scholars and experts pointed out that strengthening cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region will not only benefit the sustained and stable development of the world economy, but also will maintain peace and security in the world. A Russian scholar commented that APEC meeting is a dialogue between the Asia-Pacific economies and seeking common ground while reserving differences; China's economic development has become the engine of the global economic recovery.<sup>130</sup> The strategic value of Asia in the international affairs has never been so important in history, and China is at the very center of Asian community.<sup>131</sup> On the meeting, leaders agreed to move towards a new free trade zone strongly backed by Beijing. The Free Trade Area

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<sup>129</sup> "Li Keqiang Attends and Addresses Opening Ceremony of the Eighth Summer Davos Forum," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC*, September 11, 2014. Available at [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/topics\\_665678/lkqcxztjixdxjdswlt/t1190509.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/topics_665678/lkqcxztjixdxjdswlt/t1190509.shtml).

<sup>130</sup> Xie Yahong, Lining, Li Boya, etc., "Cujin quyu hezuo tuidong jingji zengzhang," *People's Daily*, November 4, 2014. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=840cc0b335394f8e8f7c039420b46dee>.

<sup>131</sup> "Jiawang yanxi hupan de shenghui," *People's Daily*, November 4, 2014. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=560942110c5e49bd85cd5b28c58cf860>.

of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) was believed to be a high-quality free trade arrangement covering all APEC economies; it was seen by many as a rival to a US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which is considered as part of Washington's pivot to Asia. Chinese President Xi Jinping described the endorsement of the pact as a "historic decision." As the current global economic recovery still faces many unstable and uncertain factors, Xi urged leaders to push for further regional economic integration process and create a pattern of opening up that is conducive to long-term development.

Bilateral meetings between Chinese and the U.S. and Japan also became the spotlight of the summit. On 10 November leaders from China and Japan met for the first time in two years during a period of intense hostility over a cluster of disputed islands and Abe's visit to Japan's controversial Yasukuni Shrine, which commemorates the country's war dead including convicted war criminals. An awkward moment of handshake between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was captured by media cameras, interpreted as deteriorated relations between the two Asian neighbors.

### **World Internet Conference (November 19-21, 2014)**

The First World Internet Conference was held on November 19 2014 in Wuzhen, Zhejiang Province, China. With the theme of "An interconnected World Shared and Governed by All- Building a Cyberspace Community of Shared Destiny", it was intended to help build a cyberspace community with a consensual shared destiny and an ethic of respecting differences. The meeting received roughly 1,000 Internet professionals, officials and expert from more than 100 countries and regions, and nearly 500 reporters from home and abroad. The conference covers topics such as new media, mobile Internet, cyber terrorism, cyber security and internet governance. Chinese President Xi Jinping said in a congratulatory message to the conference that China is ready to work with other countries to deepen international cooperation, respect sovereignty on the Internet and uphold cybersecurity. "The Internet has truly transformed the world into a global village, and the international community has become more and more a community of destiny."<sup>132</sup> This conference shows China's willingness to cooperate

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<sup>132</sup> "Gongtong goujian heping anquan kaifang hezuo de wangluo kongjian jianli duobian minzhu touming de guoji hulianwang zhilitixi," *People's Daily*, November 20, 2014. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=7c54877e069d4dceb1337f3833c7de9b>.

and its determination to build a cyberspace of peace, security, openness and cooperation, and an international Internet governance system of multilateralism, democracy and transparency. The Chinese Vice-Premier Ma Kai attended the opening ceremony and called for joint efforts to promote the interconnectivity of Internet infrastructure, prosperity of Internet economy, strengthen the sharing of Internet technologies and to ensure cyberspace safety. Ma added that Internet infrastructure will be one of the prioritized investment areas of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund.

### **The First Ministerial Meeting of China-CELAC Forum (January 8-9, 2015)**

The First Ministerial Meeting of China-CELAC Forum was held in Beijing on January 8th and 9th, 2015, marking the launch of the China-CELAC Forum. The two-day meeting ended with passing three major documents: the Beijing Declaration, a five-year cooperation plan and the regulations on the China-CELAC forum. The forum was proposed in July 2014 when Chinese President Xi Jinping attended the China-Latin America and the Caribbean Summit in Brasilia. A joint statement issued after the meeting announced the formal establishment of China-CELAC Forum. The forum aims at promoting the development of comprehensive cooperative partnership between China and Latin American and Caribbean states. Since the beginning of the new century, the relations between China and Latin American countries have developed rapidly. Mutual beneficial cooperation in various fields between two sides deepened over the past decade. The two sides see more common interests and view each other as important partners for cooperation and promoting common development. President Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony and delivered an important speech entitled “Jointly Writing a New Chapter of the China-CELAC Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership”. Xi stressed that the convening of the first ministerial meeting of the Forum marks the translation of the bilateral overall cooperation from conception into reality, promoting China-CELAC relations for new development at a higher level. He pointed out that the cooperative initiatives proposed in last July – special loans for China-CELAC infrastructure, preferential loans, and China-CELAC cooperation fund – are now actively implemented.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Xi Jinping, “gongtong puxie zhongla quanmian hezuo huoban guanxi xin pianzhang,” *People’s Daily*, January 9, 2015. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=23f7f385648e41adb5f74f1dc1e0eb24>.

### **Boao Forum for Asia (March 26-29, 2015)**

The 14th Boao Forum for Asia was held from March 26 to 29 in South China's Hainan province with the theme of "Asia's New Future: Towards a Community of Common Destiny". It was attended by more than 2,700 political, business and academic leaders as well as journalists from 49 countries and regions. This year's forum focused on issues such as the Belt and Road Initiatives, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and ASEAN Economic Community. In his opening remarks, President Xi Jinping called for a "community of common destiny for Asia" by recalling audiences' memories of certain historic occasions. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the second world war, the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese aggression and the founding of the United Nations. And this year also is the 60th anniversary of the Bandung Conference and witnesses the completion of the ASEAN Community. The world has experienced historical and profound changes; peace, development and win-win cooperation have become the prevailing trend of our times. Xi lays out an ambitious vision for future order and urges all nations to follow the trend of times and jointly build a regional order that is more favorable to Asia and the world – that is, promote a community of common interest for all mankind. Xi promoted the "Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road Initiatives" and said that all nations are welcomed to join the program and establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank – AIIB. He called for greater cooperation between Asian countries and sought to ease concerns about China's rise. As China grows into a big country now, it needs to shoulder greater responsibilities. He also added that "What China needs most is a harmonious and stable domestic environment and a peaceful and tranquil international environment", and warned that certain countries do not interference into the other countries' internal affairs or messing up regional situation for selfish reasons. Xi calls for a nations to abandon Cold War mentality and nurture new security concepts.

### **The Fourth Summit of China-CEEC Cooperation (November 24-25, 2015)**

On 24-25 November 2015, the Fourth Summit China-CEEC Cooperation ("16+1" Cooperation) was held in Suzhou, Jiangsu province, China with the theme of "New Beginning, New Domains, New Vision". The "16+1" cooperation was set up in 2012; it was the first time that such meeting to be held

in China. The forum is an initiative by China aimed at intensifying and expanding cooperation with 11 EU member states and 5 Balkan countries in various fields, ranging from investments, transport, finance, to science, education and culture. The Chinese government identified three areas – infrastructure, high technologies and green technologies – as potential priority. The Participants jointly formulated and issued the *Suzhou Guidelines for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries* and the *Medium-term Plan for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries*.

Premier Li Keqiang noted in the opening remarking of this year's summit, that "the 16+1 cooperation, just like a high-speed train, has set out on its journey and gained speed." This mechanism aims to benefit China, Eastern Europe and the European Union and make pragmatic cooperation, even though these countries run different political systems. Leaders highly praised the achievements made during the summit and approved Li's proposal of working together to build a new partnership of openness, inclusiveness and mutual benefit, and six aspects that are included under his proposal.

Reports from the People's Daily hailed the China-CEEC relations, recalling the development of relations that their bilateral relations was established since 60 years ago; and China and Central and eastern European countries understood and supported each other in the course of development; their relationships endured historical testaments. The essay also points out that China-CEEC cooperation will help to accelerate the European integration process in a balanced way, and will contribute to achieving peace and development, promoting reform and dialogue between civilizations.<sup>134</sup>

### **The 14th Shanghai Cooperation Organization Prime Minister' Meeting (December 15, 2015)**

The 14th Shanghai Cooperation Organization Prime Minister' meeting was held on December 14, 2015 in Zhengzhou, Henan province, China. This meeting is an important for China's host diplomacy this year, and also has great significance for SCO since its last meeting in July in Ufa.<sup>135</sup> As security and economic cooperation are often regarded as the two "wheels" of the SCO, this year's summit focused on anti-terrorism and economic cooperation. The two-day prime minister's meeting focuses

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<sup>134</sup> <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=e344448f31ba4e5eb927de3edfc2d0fa>

<sup>135</sup> <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=33b71ba066224a1da68d9c023c5e0f41> During Ufa summit, SCO saw the expansion of its member states – Indian and Pakistan. This means SCO has entered into a new period of development.

on implementation of the trade, exchange and security cooperation goals. Anti-terrorism was high on the agenda this year, particularly SCO members are close to areas where the Islamic State (IS) has been conducting terrorist attacks. Facing an economic downturn in the wake of global economic downturn, coupled with complex and changing regional and international situation, Premier Li Keqiang pointed out that SCO member states should cooperate and strive to maintain peace and stability for the benefit of all.<sup>136</sup> “China intends to replicate its industrial capacity cooperation with Kazakhstan with other SCO countries and forge internationally competitive industrial cooperation chains.” During the meeting, Li proposed six platforms for cooperation on the basis of the three traditional areas of security, economy and humanities, which will help maintain regional peace and development.<sup>137</sup> Leaders confirmed the support for China’s Silk Road Economic Belt plan and issued a statement on regional economic cooperation. It was expected that the implementation of the initiative will promote gradual sustainable economic growth and support peace and stability in the region.

### **Boao Forum for Asia (March 22-25, 2016)**

This year’s Boao Forum was held under the theme of “Asia’s New Future: New Dynamics, New Vision”. This year’s conference consists of 83 sessions, including 51 forums, 14 roundtables, 6 themed dinners and 12 entrepreneur dialogues, attracting over 2,100 representatives from political, industrial and commercial communities and think tank scholars from 62 countries of Asia, Europe, and other parts of the world. In the context of fundamental changes in the world economy, this year's forum is aimed at promoting discussion on how Asian economies will steer economic restructuring, and how else to develop new sources of growth for the world economy. Key topics cover from internet banking, agriculture, new media, tourism, climate change, innovation, production and the China-led Maritime Silk Road. Asia still faced slow economic growth at the beginning of the 2016 and the future of global markets were threatened by uncertain risks. In his keynote speech entitled “Jointly Draw Asia’s Dynamic New Vision”, Premier Li Keqiang put forward five-point views on coping with challenges with the efforts of all Asian countries, promoting regional economic cooperation and the “Belt and

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<sup>136</sup> <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=67b20f40427e4e3085313e3c88e3c1ac>

<sup>137</sup> <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=9e6195d006364c519fb8a6fbc4e4812e>

Road” initiative. He is confident that China’s economy still runs within a reasonable range; the fundamentals of China’s economy will remain sound; China will continue to keep reform and opening up, issue and use special funds through marketization-oriented approaches, and continue to further streamline administration and delegate power while regulating properly.<sup>138</sup>

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the foundation of Boao Forum for Asia. The past fifteen years witnessed the economic growth and prosperity of Asia, and the development of this forum. This annual forum, based in Asia, facing the world, contributes to the development of regional countries and the world. It also helps to promote cultural exchange and communications among different regions and civilizations.<sup>139</sup> The forum has become a high-end platform for dialogues among government leaders, industrial and business elites from Asia and beyond.

### **The 5th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (April 28, 2016)**

On 28th April, 2016, the Fifth Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia opened in Beijing. President Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony and delivered an important speech entitled “Jointly Create a Better Future of Peace and Prosperity for Asia Through Dialogue and Consensus”, stressing to adhere to and follow through the vision on common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security in Asia, build consensus, step up dialogue and coordination, contribute to the fostering of a security governance model with Asian features, and open up a brighter future of peace and prosperity for Asia.

### **The 11th G20 Summit (September 4-5, 2016)**

The 2016 G20 Hangzhou Summit was held on 4-5 September 2016 in the city of Hangzhou, Zhejiang province with the theme of “Building an innovative, invigorated, interconnected and inclusive world”. It was the first time that China hosted such an event, and the highest profile event of

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<sup>138</sup> “Li Keqiang chuxi boao yazhou luntan 2016 nian nianhui kaimushi bing fabiao zhuzhi yanjiang,” *People’s Daily*, March 25, 2016. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=ec76cdb9ee5c476b82d6d6c8022a54d5&rnd=miehpkcbogfipifa>.

<sup>139</sup> “Boao yazhou luntan ningju xin gongshi,” *People’s Daily*, March 21, 2016. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=3a653e57650c457da59449bc0696522e>.

this year. The world's 20 major economies represents 85 percent of global GDP, 80 percent of international trade and 65 percent of the world's population. As G20 has emerged as a new platform for global governance in recent years, Hangzhou was under the spotlight of world media. China has not only actively supported the G20 as a premier forum for global economic governance and international economic cooperation, but also contributed to the building of the G20 mechanism in a constructive manner.<sup>140</sup> During the summit, President Xi called for transformation of the G20 from a mechanism of crisis response to a long-term governance. With China's relentless efforts, the Hangzhou Summit for the first time push the development issue into a prominent position within the global policy framework. China set "breaking a new path for growth" as a key topic of this year's summit, the first in the history of G20 summit to focus on the mid to long term impetus of global growth.

President Xi Jinping chaired and delivered an address on the opening of G20 summit. In his speech titled "To Build an Innovative, Dynamic, Coordinated and Inclusive World Economy", Xi emphasized that the G20 carries high expectation of the international community and shoulders a heavy responsibility. He hoped the Hangzhou Summit will provide a solution that addresses both the symptoms and root causes of the global economic problems and propel the global economy onto a path of robust, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth. Xi made five proposals to meet current challenges of global economy, called for joint efforts to build G20 into a more inclusive platform of cooperation for all countries, especially developing countries.

During the summit, US President Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping held a meeting on various issues and lasted for hours. Obama urged China to stop flexing muscles over South China Sea as relations between China and its neighbors was relatively tense over the disputed waters. Obama stressed that the United States has commitments to its regional allies, while Xi said that China would continue to safeguard its sovereignty and maritime rights in the South China Sea, and urged the US to play a constructive role in maintaining regional peace and stability.

### **"One Belt and One Road" International Forum (May 14-15, 2017)**

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<sup>140</sup> Wang Xinping, "Qidai zhongguo dailai bieyang jingcai jujiao G20 hangzhou fenghui zhongguo zuoyong," *People's Daily*, September 1, 2016. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=7f33665b50ed4a7a868ce1878a5ff2ef>.



The first Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was held in Beijing from May 14 to 15, 2017. This forum is a high-profile forum sponsored by the Chinese government, mainly including the opening ceremony, the round table summit and the high-level meeting. This forum received 29 foreign heads of state and government, the UN Secretary-General and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The forum was of the highest profile of its kind since “Belt and Road Initiative” was brought up three years ago, and one of the most important diplomatic events hosted by China in 2017. In August 2013 during his visit to Kazakhstan and Indonesia, President Xi Jinping proposed the building of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road – the Belt and Road Initiative for short.

President Xi attended the opening ceremony and addressed the participants, delivering a speech titled “Work Together to Build the Silk Road Economic Belt and The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road”. Xi stressed that the initiative serves as a solution for China to participate in global opening-up and cooperation, improve global economic governance, promote common development and prosperity, and build a community with a shared future for humanity. Jointly pursuing the BRI was not only aimed at economic cooperation but also an important pathway to improve global development patterns and global governance and promote the healthy development of economic globalization. Xi noted that the OBOR is an initiative for economic development, rather than a geopolitical alliance or military league; it is an open and inclusive process rather than an exclusive bloc or “China club”. “It does not differentiate countries by ideology nor play the zero-sum game.” OBOR is not a competitor to other regional development instruments; this initiative should, on the contrary, be considered as a new tool to increase international cooperation in order to reduce poverty, develop trade and ensure world stability.<sup>141</sup>

Before the opening of this summit, a article on the People’s Daily titled “OBOR leads the new type of globalization” highly commented China’s initiative, saying that the new initiative will greatly promote the process of globalization, and China plays an indispensable role in this process. The author argues that OBOR is leading the fourth globalization of mankind – the previous three times were led

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<sup>141</sup> “Xij Jinping chuxi yidai yilu guoji hezuo gaofeng luntan kaimushi bing fabiao zhuzhi yanjiang,” *People’s Daily*, May 15, 2017.

Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=8fb375a2c86d4422ba559aac89eb0a5c>.

by Roman Empire, the Great Britain and the United States respectively, all based on inequality, resulting regional conflicts and economic disputes; what makes the fourth globalization distinct from the previous ones is that OBOR is based on openness and tolerance, that it meets the trend of the times, that all countries willing to participate will benefit from this process. Based on the principles of communicating, building and sharing, the initiative will change the unequal relationship between nations.<sup>142</sup>

### **High-level Dialogue between the CPC and world political parties (December 1-3, 2017)**

The second plenary session of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in Dialogue with World Political Parties High-Level Meeting was held in Beijing from 1 to 3 December 2017. The theme of conference is “Working Together Towards a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity and a Better World: Responsibilities of Political Parties”. It was the first for the China to hold a major international event after the 19th CPC National Congress, and also the first high-level meeting with political parties from around the world. Leaders from nearly 300 political parties and political organizations from more than 120 countries gathered in Beijing. Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony. Also serving as the general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, he called on political parties of the world to play a guiding role in building a community with a shared future for mankind and creating a better world. Political parties of different countries should enhance mutual trust, communication and coordination and develop a new model of party-party relations, in which political parties seek common grounds while shelving differences. He pointed out that the CPC strives for the well-being of the Chinese people, rejuvenation of the Chinese nation as well as peace and development of mankind. “Managing our own affairs well is China’s biggest contribution to building a community of shared future for humanity”. The development of China, a country with one fifth population of the world, benefits itself and the world. As the ruling party of a country with 1.3 billion people, the CPC assumes heavy responsibilities.

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<sup>142</sup> Zhao Baige, “Yida yilu yinling xinxing quanqiu hua xinlun jujiao yidai yilu,” *People’s Daily*, May 19, 2017. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=872c660cd0f04ca9acda20e10ee7ac71>.

The People's Daily commented that as political parties have crucial importance in a country's internal and foreign affairs, the CPC is not only a party that strives for the happiness of Chinese people, but also for the cause of human development. This dialogue has a clear global vision, open to all political parties and organizations around the world. This is not only in keeping with the needs of the accelerated process of globalization, but also reflects CPC's responsibility as a major party. The dialogue is marked with a characteristic of "non-political alliance". It does not have any intent to form a political alliance, but calls for shelving disputes, promoting self-management and establishing a platform for dialogue among different parties.<sup>143</sup>

### **Boao Forum for Asia (April 8-11, 2018)**

This year the annual conference of Boao Forum for Asia was held from April 8 to 11 with a theme of "An Open and Innovative Asia for a World of Greater Prosperity". This year's Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) is the first major diplomatic event since the 19th CPC National Congress was held last month, during which China's commitment to building a community with a shared future for humanity was written into the country's Constitution. The People's Daily commented that this annual conference is an window of opportunity to understand China's new diplomatic theory – big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. President Xi Jinping's visit to Boao will mark the beginning of the nation's four major host diplomacy this year, and play a new chapter in the new area of diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.<sup>144</sup>

This year also marks the 40 years of China's reform and opening-up policy. On the opening ceremony, President Xi Jinping hails the nation's development over the past four decades. In his keynote speech, President Xi further explained the concept of a community with a shared future for humanity, which is characterized by treating each other with respect and as equals, promoting dialogue and sharing responsibility, engaging in cooperation for win-win results, upholding inclusiveness and seeking harmony without uniformity, as well as treating nature with respect and treasuring the planet.

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<sup>143</sup> Wang Hongyan, Liang Yuemin, "Zhengdang duihua tisheng renlei zhengzhi wenming," *People's Daily*, December 1, 2017.

Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=ee986c0fbc254815b99fb101d5430eda>.

<sup>144</sup> "Zou xiang xinshidai zhongguo tese daguo waijiao xin yuezhang," *People's Daily*, April 10, 2018. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=9d94a1f3787e446fbba36a441a9687ac>.

Xi reiterated China's commitment to an open world economy, vowing more contribution from China to the development of Asia and the world. Xi said that the Belt and Road Initiative may be China's idea, but its opportunities and outcomes are going to benefit the world. He assured the audience that China has no geopolitical calculations, seeks no exclusionary blocs and imposes no business deals on others.<sup>145</sup>

### **SCO Summit (June 9-10, 2018)**

The 18th summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization held in the eastern Chinese city of Qingdao took for two day on June 9-10 2018. As the hosting city, Qingdao witnessed a gathering of world leaders from SCO members states and observer states as well as heads of international organizations. This year's summit is the largest and highest profile in its history. It was the first SCO summit since India and Pakistan were accepted as full members last year at the Astana summit in Kazakhstan in June 2017. The summit was also attended by four observer states and six dialogue partners. The participation of the new members was the highlight of this year's summit. Together, the eight member states account for over 60 percent of the Eurasia landmass, nearly half of the world's population, and more than 20 percent of global GDP<sup>146</sup>, making it a comprehensive regional organization with the largest population and land area.

President Xi Jinping presided over the meeting and delivered a speech titled "Promoting the 'Shanghai Spirit' and Building a Community of Destiny". It has been 17 years since its establishment in 2001, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has gone through an extraordinary development process and achieved great achievements. In the past 17 years, the SCO has not only focused on regional security, but also devoted itself to regional development by facilitating trade and investment, enhancing industrial cooperation, and promoting cultural exchanges. The People's Daily highlights three major points from Xi's speech: Shanghai Spirit, Community of Common Destiny, and vision for

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<sup>145</sup> "Xijiping chuxi boao yazhou luntan 2018 nian nianhui kaimushi bing fabiao zhuzhi yanjiang," *People's Daily*, April 11, 2018. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=418bbfe2c2cc4768b64f70164182d1eb>.

<sup>146</sup> Liang Yu, "China Focus: Why is SCO Qingdao summit attracting world attention?" *Xinhua News Agency*, June 5, 2018. Available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-06/05/c\\_137231725.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-06/05/c_137231725.htm).

global governance.<sup>147</sup> The “Shanghai Spirit” can be summed up with 20 Chinese characters: huxin, huli, pingdeng, xieshang, zunzhong duoyang wenming, mouqiu gongtong fazhan (mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations and pursuit of common development). The success of SCO is founded on its adherence to these principles. The “Shanghai Spirit” is highly compatible with the traditional Chinese concept of “harmony” and transcends the old, outdated values of clash of civilizations, Cold-War mentality, and zero-sum games. A comment on Xi’s speech from the People’s Daily says, the SCO is truly an indispensable force for maintaining world peace, development and global justice.<sup>148</sup>

### **Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (September 3-4, 2018)**

The 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation was held from September 3 to 4. This was the third FOCAC Summit held in its history, after the 2006 Beijing Summit and the 2015 Johannesburg Summit. It was attended by more than 50 African leaders from African countries and the African Union, Secretary General of United Nations António Guterres, as well as representatives from international organizations.

*Beijing Declaration – Toward an Even Stronger China-Africa Community with a Shared Future, and the FOCAC Beijing Action Plan (2019-2021)* – were adopted at the summit. The call for an open world economy and the multilateral trading system during the summit was against the background of escalating trade relations between China and the United States. US President Donald Trump has made decisions to withdraw from multilateral organizations and issues like climate change. President Xi Jinping said that China will remain committed to opening-up despite facing uncertainty and unpredictability in global growth; China will embrace an open world economy and reject protectionism and unilateralism. Peace and development is the theme of current times; China is willing to work with all nations to build a community of common destiny, to build “One Belt and One Road” as a new

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<sup>147</sup> “Shanghe zuzhi jincheng zhong yizuo xinde lichen bei,” People’s Daily, June 11, 2018. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=26cddaa929c446a8a69c9f16b6ee1c9b>.

<sup>148</sup> “Guoji guanxi lilun he Shijian de zhongda chuangxin,” People’s Daily, June 11, 2018. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=c253a76164064e9986030b8252a00e28>.

platform for international for cooperation; China will actively participate in global governance, supporting an increasing role of developing countries in global governing system.

The state media commented that China's policy towards African countries is consistent and clear: no interference in African countries' internal affairs and way of development, no affiliate political conditions in aids, no selfish political gains in investments. Sino-African cooperation has brought fruitful results, and is welcomed by African countries. China and Africa are on the way to build a community of shared destiny. The FOCAC sets an example for South-South cooperation.<sup>149</sup>

### **The First China International Import Exposition (November 5-10, 2018)**

The first China International Import Expo (CIIE) was held from 5 to 10 November 2018 at the National Convention & Exhibition Center in Shanghai. It was the world's first import-themed national-level expo. The CIIE attracted 172 countries and regions, three international organizations, more than 3,600 enterprises as exhibitors, and over 400,000 buyers from home and abroad. It was commented that this event will deepen economic globalization and promote an open world economy. The six-day event was a "significant move for China to open up its market to the world and will facilitate trade and opening-up among participating countries."<sup>150</sup> The opening of CIIE is a step towards building a community of common destiny. This event aims to attract world's under-developed countries into and share with them China's success and experience in development; to enhance the spillover effect of China's economic development and help developing countries to engage and benefit in the process of economic globalization.<sup>151</sup> President Xi Jinping delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony, titled "Work Together for an Open Global Economy That is Innovative and Inclusive." President Xi Jinping put forward higher standards and requirements for better hosting the expo, stressing that "the CIIE, an event to be held on an annual basis, will feature good performance, good results and continued success in the years to come."

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<sup>149</sup> Zhang Penghui, Wang Hailin, Han Xiaoming, "Zhanxian jianding buyi de duifei zhengce linian," People's Daily, September 7, 2018. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=545f6607785945429899e06360818916>.

<sup>150</sup> "First China Intl Import Expo to promote open world economy," Xinhua News Agency, November 3, 2017. Available at [http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2017-11/03/content\\_34067025.htm](http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2017-11/03/content_34067025.htm).

<sup>151</sup> "Tuidong xin biange goujian renlei mingyun gongtongti," November 1, 2018. Available at <http://people.vpn.cfau.edu.cn/sc/detail?articleId=e62fbb92abb7421e9970467a0d303bfc>.

### 3.5 Features of China's host diplomacy

First, from 1990 to 2018, the number of major multilateral diplomatic events hosted in China, sponsored or co-sponsored by the Chinese government, is increasing, and the profile of these events is getting higher. In the year 1995, the Chinese government hosted the first high-profile international conference – the Fourth World Conference on Women. Entering into the 21st century, in 2001 China hosted the APEC Summit in Shanghai – a modestly useful government-to-government forum of Asia-Pacific member economies that promotes free trade throughout the region. It was also the first highest level of conference ever hosted by the Chinese government by that time. From then on, host events at various levels in China gradually increased year by year. Since 2012 President Xi Jinping assumed power, China's foreign policy has entered into a new era. For the first time in history, the Chinese leaders call for “building a big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics”<sup>152</sup>. Host diplomacy becomes an important part of China's diplomacy. In the year 2014 alone, China hosted several major diplomatic events, including the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Meeting, the 4th Summit of the Conference on Mutual Cooperation and Confidence-building measures in Asia, and the APEC Summit. Before the opening of the 19th National Congress in October 2018, China hosted major diplomatic activities at home each year, and it was the highlight of China's diplomacy of that year. Since Chinese leaders put more emphasize on diplomatic works, host diplomacy will continue to play an important role in China's overall diplomacy in the future.

Second, core ideas and concepts of China's foreign policy are repeated frequently on these multilateral platforms. Almost on every occasion, the concept such as “peaceful development”, and in recent years, “Chinese dream” and “community of common destiny” are stressed by the Chinese leaders while attending those events. These political slogans are not just a response to the increasing rhetoric of a rising, threatening China, they represent China's official stance on issues like China's rise within the current international order, territorial disputes, global governance, etc.. Through keynote speeches on various occasion, the top Chinese leaders are telling Chinese stories, clarifying China's

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<sup>152</sup> “Report on the 18th CPC National Congress,” Xinhua News Agency, January 1, 2013. Available at <http://www.71.cn/2013/0131/695078.shtml>.

policies on global and regional issues, laying out China's vision on global governance and providing China's wisdom to common challenges. China becomes more proactive in international affairs than it used to be. The new generation of collective leadership has promised to build a more open Chinese country, connecting to other parts of the world; and indeed, host diplomacy serves as an open window of opportunity for communicating with the world, cooperating on global governance and releasing information on China's domestic reforms and policies. Most importantly, the concepts promoted by Chinese leaders are being accepted by other countries. In 2017 the concept of "building a community of human destiny" was for the first time written into a UN resolution.<sup>153</sup>

Third, China is not just hosting major conferences or summits for important events as a rotating presidency, but it begins to host events initiated by itself. One Belt and One Road International Cooperation Forum is the best example. The initiative was first proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013 during a visit to Kazakhstan. He proposed to build a "Silk Road Economic Belt Road". In the same year in October while delivering a speech in the Indonesian parliament, Xi further stated that "China is willing to strengthen maritime cooperation with ASEAN countries, use the China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Fund established by the Chinese government, develop a good marine partnership, and jointly build 21 The Century 'Maritime Silk Road'. After four years, the first One Belt and One Road International Cooperation Forum opened in Beijing. This is the first high-end multilateral international conference centered on the "Belt and Road". China's initiative is transmitted into reality.

Fourth, the overall outlook of China's diplomatic work emphasizes economic development and win-win cooperation between China and developing countries, stretching from Southeast Asia, Central Asia, to the Arab World, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, to Latin America. China has annual dialogue mechanism with each of these regions. Some of these relations are built under the Belt and Road initiative. Most countries in these regions are developing countries, rich in natural resources and in need of foreign investments. The focus of China's dialogues with these regions concentrates on economic cooperation, sharing China's experience on development and governance. Two decades ago

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<sup>153</sup> "The concept of 'building a community of human destiny was first written into the UN resolution'," *Permanent Mission of the PRC to the UN*, February 10, 2017. Available at <http://www.china-un.org/chn/zgylhg/shhrq/shfz/t1437664.htm>.



China did not have influence in most of these regions; it was not until the beginning of the 21st century that China began to build closer economic ties and active diplomatic relations with Latin America, Arab nations, and the Central-Eastern Europe. Apparently, as the biggest driving force behind is economic cooperation.

## Conclusion

From the 1990s to 2018, great changes have taken place in China and the world. Since 1978, the year when China began to adopt a policy of reform and opening-up, China has gradually shift its planned economic system to a market oriented economy. The opening up of its borders has led profound changes taking place both within and outside of China. Economically, its high growth rate of double digits in the 1990s was the “Chinese miracle”. In the year 2010, China’s GDP surpassed Japan, became the second largest economy in the world only after the United States. With the expanding national interests overseas, China’s diplomacy has also experienced transition and notable changes. From 1990 to 2018 nearly thirty years, the official policy discourse moved from *taoguangyanghui* to peaceful development, to what President Xi Jinping calls “striving for achievement”. China’s foreign strategy has been under discussion from several aspects. Scholars and experts on China debate on the question where China’s rise in the 21st century will be a peaceful one. Some western scholars predict China’s ascendancy on the international stage will cause structural conflict with the United States; these two countries will be doomed to fall into the Thucydides’ Trap; others argue that by learning experiences from the past and choosing an alternative or unique path, China can avoid the tragic end of causing violent conflicts with the existing hegemon. Near 2010, Chinese scholars began to discuss whether the country should abandon its long-term held foreign policy of *taoguangyanghui*. It was promoted by Deng Xiaoping, the architect of China’s reform and opening up. Deng developed this thinking on China’s diplomacy at a time when China was faced with domestic and international political pressure. It was designed to avoid China to engage in an ideological conflict with other countries while concentrate on developing its national capabilities quietly. The new domestic and international environment has led some scholars to argue for a more proactive foreign policy, claiming that Deng’s dictum is outdated and can no longer serve China’s national interests effectively. The conduct of China foreign policy in the South China Sea and East China Sea has been accused of its new aggressiveness. China’s unwavering stance in disputed territory and its determination to safeguard its core national interests helped to bring a new meme of an increasingly aggressive China.

In the late 2012, President Xi Jinping assumed power. He has blown new breeze in official policy discourse. Xi pronounced that Chinses socialism has entered into a new period of time and a new foreign policy with Chinese characteristics is needed. China should adopt big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics and strive for achievements. He calls for building a community of common destiny together with other countries. Under Xi's leadership, China's foreign policy is decisively moving away from its previous lying-low strategy. There are also some new features in the conduct of China's foreign policy. Host diplomacy becomes an important part in China's yearly diplomacy since 2014 when Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke of it as he answered questions from the media. Although it is not new for China's to host high-profile international events in major cities, it is the first time that host diplomacy has been considered at such a high level in China's diplomacy. Entering into the 21st century, an increased number of international or multilateral events have been hosted in China. This trend suggests a shift or transition in Chinese top leaders' thinking on China's foreign policy and China's status as an emerging power in the world. Chinese leaders are well aware of the rising status of China in the world, and try to figure out a proper way to fit itself into that position. The concept of peaceful development, Chinese dream and community of common destiny, are not just political slogans, but reflect Chinese leaders' thinking on the future of China's path and their vision of world order. The host events taking place in China also features with a global partnership – China has established forums with Africa, the Arab world, Latin America and Europe. This development is remarkable compared with forty years ago when China was still relatively isolated from the world. What is also notable is that China has begun to initiate new platforms in recent years. One Belt and One Road International Cooperation Summit is such an example. Although there are many criticisms on this new initiative, the summit has brought tangible results in other countries. In the foreseeable future, China will continue to actively conduct foreign policy on the regional and global level, stressing economic cooperation on the principle of mutual benefit, while also take various measures to actively safeguard its national interests.

## Appendix

Chart: Host events in China from 1991 to 2018

Time	Event	Theme	City
1991.6.18-19	Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in developing countries		Beijing
1992.8.17-19	UN Conference on Disarmament and Security Issues in the Asia-Pacific Region		Shanghai
1995.9.4-15	the 4th World Women Conference		Beijing
1996.4.26	Shanghai Five Summit		Shanghai
1999.12.21	the Second EU-China Summit		Beijing
2000.10.10-12	the First Ministerial Meeting of Forum for China-Africa Cooperation		Beijing
2001.2.7-8	ASEM Senior Officials Meeting		Beijing
2001.2.27	Inauguration Ceremony of BFA		Boao, Hainan
2001.3.5-7	the Third Meeting of the China-ASEAN Joint Cooperation Committee		Chengdu, Sichuan
2001.5.24-25	the Third ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting	Strengthening the Asia-Europe Partnership in the New Century	Beijing
2001.6.6-7	the 7th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting		Boao, Hainan
2001.6.15	the 1st SCO Summit		Shanghai
2001.10.20-21	APEC Summit 2001		Shanghai
2002.4.2-4	International Disarmament Conference	A Disarmament Agenda for the 21st Century	Beijing
2002.4.12-13	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2002	New Century, New Challenge, New Asia	Boao, Hainan
2003.10.30	the 6th EU-China Summit		Beijing
2003.11.2-3	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Meeting 2003	Asia Searching for Win-Win: Development Through Cooperation	Boao, Hainan
2004.4.24-25	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Meeting 2004	A Win-Win Asia, an Asia Open to the World	Boao, Hainan
2004.6.21	ASEAN China Foreign Ministers' Informal Meeting		Qingdao
2004.6.21-22	the 3rd Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Foreign Ministers' Meeting		Qingdao
2004.9.3-5	the 3rd International Conference of Asian Political Parties	Exchanges, Cooperation, Development	Beijing
2005.4.22-24	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2005	Asia searching for win-win: New Role of Asia	Boao, Hainan
2005.10.12	the 5th Asia Pacific Cities Summit		Chongqing
2006.5.31-6.1	the 2nd Ministerial Meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum		Beijing
2006.11.4-5	Forum for China-Africa Cooperation		Beijing
2007.10.29-30	ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting		Guilin, Guangxi
2007.11.28	the 12th EU-China Summit		Beijing

2008.4.10-13	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2008		
2008.8.8-24	2008 Olympic Games	One World, One Dream	Beijing
2008.9.6-17	2008 Summer Paralympic Games	One World, One Dream	Beijing
2008.10.24-25	the 7th ASEM Summit	Vision and Action: Towards a Win-Win Solution	Beijing
2009.4.17-19	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2009	Asia: Managing Beyond Crsis	Boao, Hainan
2009.11.30	the 12th EU-China Summit		Nanjing
2010.4.9-10	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2010	Green Recovery: Asia's Realistic Choice for Sustainable Growth	Boao, Hainan
2010.5.13-14	the 4th Ministerial Meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum		Tianjin
2010.5.1-10.31	Shanghai Expo		Shanghai
2011.4.14	the 3rd BRICS Leaders' Meeting		Sanya
2012.7.7-8	the 1st World Peace Forum	Win-Win for All: Peace, Security, Cooperation	Beijing
2012.7.19-20	the 5th Ministerial Conference of Forum on China-Africa Cooperation	Build on past achievements and open up new prospects for the new type of China-Africa strategic partnership	Beijing
2013.4.6-8	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2013	focus on "restructuring"	Boao, Hainan
2013.4.14	the 3rd BRICS Leaders' Meeting		Sanya
2013.6.27-28	the 2nd World Peace Forum	International Security in a Changing World: Peace, Development, and Innovation	Beijing
2013.11.20-21	the 16th China-EU Leaders' Meeting		Beijing
2014.4.8-11	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Meeting 2014	Asia's New Future: Identifying New Growth Drivers	Boao
2014.5.20-21	the 4th Summit of the Conference on Mutual Cooperation and Confidence-building measures in Asia	United and Harmonious Asian Countries move together towards future	Beijing
2014.5.27-29	The Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Forum on Silk Road Cooperation	Revitalizing the Shanghai Silk Road and Building a New Pattern of Asian Regional Economic Integration	Lanzhou, Gansu
2014.6.5	the 8th Ministerial Meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum		Beijing
2014.6.21-22	the 3rd World Peace Forum	In Pursuit of Common Security: Peace, Mutual Trust, and Responsibility	Beijing
2014.7.11	2014 Eco-Forum Global Annual Conference		Guiyang
2014.9.10-12	2014 Summer Davos		Tianjin
2014.10.31	the 4th Ministerial Conference of Istanbul Process on Afghanistan.		Beijing
2014.11.8	Dialogue on Strengthening Connectivity Partnership		Beijing
2014.11.5-11	APEC Summit		Beijing

2014.11.19-21	World Internet Conference	An Interconnected World Shared and Governed by All	Wuzhen
2015.1.8-9	the First Ministerial Meeting of China-CELAC Forum		Beijing
2015.3.26-29	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference	Asia's New Future: Towards a Community of Common Destiny	Boao, Hainan
2015.5.17-19	Forum on “One Belt and One Road” Cooperation & Asia Business Conference		Fuzhou, Fujian
2015.6.27-28	the 4th World Peace Forum	Overcome Difficulties: Understanding, Consultation and Reciprocity	Beijing
2015.9.9-10	2015 Summer Davos	The New Global Context	Dalian, Liaoning
2015.11.24-25	the Fourth Summit of China-CEEC Cooperation	New Beginning, New Domains, New Vision	Suzhou, Jiangsu
2015.12.14-15	The 14th Prime Ministers’ Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)		Zhengzhou, Henan
2015.12.16-18	the Second World Internet Conference	An Interconnected World Shared and Governed by All – Building a Cyberspace Community of Shared Destiny	Wuzhen
2016.3.22-25	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2016	Asia's New Future: New Dynamics, New Vision	Boao, Hainan
2016.3.23	the First Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Leaders' Meeting		Sanya, Hainan
2016.4.28	the 5th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA)	To Promote Security through Dialogue	Beijing
2016.4.29-10.16	Tangshan International Horticultural Exposition 2016	City & Nature, Phoenix Nirvana	Tangshan, Hebei
2016.6.26-28	2016 Summer Davos	the fourth industrial revolution and its transformational impact	Tianjin
2016.7.12-13	China-EU Summit		Beijing
2016.7.16-17	the fifth World Peace Forum	The order of Common Security: Cooperation, Inclusiveness and Open access	Beijing
2016.9.4-5	2016 G20 Hangzhou Summit	Building an innovative, invigorated, interconnected and inclusive world	Hangzhou, Zhejiang
2016.11.16-18	the Third World Internet Conference	"Innovation-driven Internet Development for the Benefit of All – Building a Community of Common Future in Cyberspace	Wuzhen, Zhejiang
2017.3.23-26	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2017	Globalization and Free Trade: The Asian Perspectives	Boao, Hainan
2017.5.14-15	the first Belt and Road Forum for International Forum	Strengthening International Cooperation and Co-	Beijing

		building the ‘Belt and Road’ for Win-Win Development	
2017.6.24-25	the 6th World Peace Forum	On Challenges to International Security: Joint Efforts, Responsibility and Reform	Beijing
2017.6.26-28	2017 Summer Davos	Achieving Inclusive Growth in the Fourth Industrial Revolution	Dalian, Liaoning
2017.9.3-5	the 9th BRICS Summit		Xiamen, Fujian
2017.11.28-29	Imperial Springs International Forum	Global Governance and China’s Perspective	Guangzhou, Guangdong
2017.12.1-3	High-level Dialogue between the CPC and world political parties	Working Together Towards a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity and a Better World: Responsibilities of Political Parties	Beijing
2017.12.3-5	the Fourth World Internet Conference	Developing Digital Economy for Openness and Shared Benefits — Building a Community of Common Future in Cyberspace	Wuzhen, Zhejiang
2018.4.8-11	Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2018	An Open and Innovative Asia for a World of Greater Prosperity	Boao, Hainan
2018.5.26-29	China International Big Data Industry Expo	Data for Everything, Intelligence for Integration	Guiyang, Guizhou
2018.6.9-10	SCO Summit		Qingdao, Shandong
2018.7.10	the 8th Ministerial Meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum		Beijing
2018.7.14-15	the 7th World Peace Forum	Constructing a Security Community: Equality, Equity and Justice	Beijing
2018.7.16	the 20th EU-China Summit		Beijing
2018.9.3-4	The 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation	China and Africa: Toward an Even Stronger Community with a Shared Future through Win-Win Cooperation	Beijing
2018.9.18-20	2018 Summer Davos	Shaping Innovative Societies in the Fourth Industrial Revolution	Tianjin
2018.11.5-10	China International Import Expo (CIIE)		Shanghai
2018.12.10-11	Imperial Springs International Forum	Advancing Reform and Opening-up, Promoting Win-Win Cooperation	Guangzhou, Guangdong

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## Summary

Since 1990, great changes have been taken place both within and outside of China.

Domestically, China's economy has grown at a high rate annually; though its growth rate slowed down in recent years, China's economy still enjoyed a relatively high rate of more than 6 percent. Internationally, China surpassed Japan in 2010 to become the second largest economy only after the United States, some projected it would become the largest economy in a few decades. As China's economy grows, its influence has been expanding overseas. Entering into the 21st century, China has increasingly sought to play an active role on international stage; its efforts have been witnessed by other countries on issues like climate change, global economic governance, and in recent years, security matters in Iran and North Korea. What attracted the world's attentions were its behaviors in the South and East China Sea. China's aggressive behaviors and harsh rhetoric sparked a heated debate on whether China's foreign policy is becoming increasingly assertive. Some argue that China now is "revealing its true colors" after long periods of development and hiding its capabilities. This debate did not end as the new President Xi Jinping have promoted a slogan of Chinese Dream, the Chinese version of American Dream, and called for countries to build a community of common destiny.

While it is informing and valuable to have an outside opinion on China's foreign policy, it is also important to hear Chinese voices on this matter. Indeed over the past three decades, China's foreign policy has underwent transitions. From Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping, China was led by four generations of collective leadership, each having its own characteristics in conducting foreign policy. It is widely admitted that Deng Xiaoping's dictum of *taoguangyanghui* has been served as China's long-term foreign strategy in the 1990s. Entering into the 21st century, under the leadership of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, the concept of "peaceful development" or "peaceful rise" was brought up by the new leadership. The official rhetoric adopted a translation of "peaceful development" shortly after "peaceful rise" was first raised to the public in an effort to reduce the negative connotations of "rise" in the western discourse. Meanwhile this generation of collective leadership was well aware of China's improved international status due to its economic success, and began to conduct foreign policy more actively on regional and international levels. They attached great importance on "soft

power” as a more effective tool to improve China’s influence and shape a positive image overseas. Under Hu’s leadership, China began to host high-profile international events more frequently than before, bringing more foreign leaders, experts and businessmen to Chinese cities. Compared with ten years ago, The Chinese leaders appear to be more confident and open-minded than a decade ago. On various occasions, the top leaders repeatedly demonstrated China’s commitment to pursue a path of peaceful development, and showed their vision of a “harmonious world”. The 2008 global financial crisis was viewed as a great opportunity for China to lead as a world power in financial and economic matters; China now stands at the hub of global economic governance. As the world economy recovered slowly, China’s relatively high growth rate against the background of world’s sluggish economy attracted attentions from overseas. Government officials, economic experts and businessmen closely observe and evaluate China’s economic performance. Chinese leaders began to attach more importance on releasing messages on its domestic economic policies, which are closely related to regional trade and investments. Regional forums and international conferences provide a platform for dialogues and reaching consensus on issues of common concerns. Since President Xi Jinping assumes power, China has put more efforts on public diplomacy. He calls for a “foreign policy with Chinese characteristics” to come out to better fit China’s role in the world and safeguard its interests. This signals a change in China’s foreign policy as China has entered into a “new era”. It seems that Xi is no longer satisfied with the long-term held *taoguangyanghui*; he declared that China’s foreign policy should “strive for achievements”. Under his leadership, China has been engaged active public diplomacy in all aspects, including bilateral and multilateral relations, from issues like global economic governance, climate change, to UN peace keeping mission. Among these efforts, host diplomacy has been given increasing importance in China’s overall diplomacy. In 2014 Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke to the media when asked to give his opinion on foreign policy this year. Wang highly emphasized the significance of successful hosting of four major international affairs this year. These high-profile international events were widely reported by the media within and outside of China. Some scholars applaud these efforts, pointing out that host diplomacy will increase China’s strategic capabilities in promoting its influence overseas and its international status. Scholars and experts on international relations have begun to talk about host diplomacy in China

since early 2014. These comments and studies on host diplomacy focus on the definition of host diplomacy, advantages of host diplomacy in China, its challenges and problems. While recognizing host events are not new in China, scholars point out that it is the first time that “host diplomacy” has been put forward by a Chinese leader as a diplomatic concept and viewed as an important component of China’s yearly diplomatic tasks. Officially, host diplomacy have been attached great importance in China’s overall diplomatic work under the fifth collective leadership. The study on host diplomacy in China is under the context that Chinese leaders call for a new foreign policy with Chinese characteristics since the 18th National Congress of the CPC. With the successful hosting of international summits such as APEC summit in 2014 and G20 summit in 2016, some have noted that China’s capabilities in shaping meetings’ agenda and providing public goods have increased; China has played an leading role in pushing the meeting’s consensus into practical working papers or announcements. Host diplomacy has so far brought fruitful results and contributed to China’s strategic capabilities. The current literature on China’s host diplomacy focuses its features and implications of high-profile multilateral events since President Xi Jinping assumed power, especially since 2014 when Foreign Minister Wang Yi publicly raised the concept of host diplomacy. However, this was not the first time for China to host such high-profile events; the first international conference held in China can be dated back to 1995 during which China held the Fourth World Women Conference. And the 21st century has saw an increased number of international or multilateral events hosted in China. This trend suggests a shift or transition in Chinese top leaders’ thinking on China’s foreign policy and China’s status as an emerging power in the world. Since the 2008 global financial crisis it has been widely recognized that China has been more active, or assertive in international affairs. Host diplomacy provides the best opportunity for Chinese leaders to display their thinking on China’s foreign strategy, to show China’s image as they intend to world audience, to engage into dialogues with foreigners with host advantage, thus allowing China observers to interpret or decode top Chinese leaders’ thinking on foreign policy. So far, there is no systemic study on China’s host diplomacy since the 1990s; as mentioned before, recent studies began to flourish in 2014. This paper seeks to fill the gap by analyzing major multilateral events held in China from 1991 to 2018 in an attempt to gain an understanding of a general trend in China’s foreign policy during this period. By

reviewing comments and reports from China's state media, *The People's Daily*, it seeks to search for the official discourse on host events in China, therefore shedding some light on changes, consistencies and features of China's foreign policy. It argues that China's official stance of pursuing a path of peaceful development is clear and consistent since the beginning of this century; China has been more proactive in articulating its interests and displaying its own visions in promoting regional cooperation. Especially under the leadership of Xi Jinping, China's host diplomacy has entered into a new era, which featuring on overseas expansion of strategic partnership and promoting bilateral or multilateral cooperation.

The first chapter reviews the ongoing debate in the West and China on China's foreign strategy, the general trend of this grand debate. It consists of four sections, with each focusing on a specific question. These include debates on whether China can rise peacefully in the 21st century as a new rising hegemon, without causing a damaging rift in the current international structure. Some Western scholars compare China's rise with that of the Imperial Germany in the late 20th century, describing a rising China discontent with the international power distribution and unfavorable international norms, determined to overturn the current international order with its preference once Chinese national power grows stronger. Some scholars argue that China can rise within the current international order due to the openness of the existing international order established since the end of the second world war, which is rule-based and integrated, with wide and deep political foundations. This will provide more incentives for China to integrate within it rather than to overturn, even after the relative decline of the United States. The second part of this chapter focuses on whether China's foreign policy has been moving towards a more assertive direction near 2010. This new meme of an assertive China has been discussed on the media and pundits, triggered by China's behavior in a series of events. These include its uncompromising stance on territorial disputes with South East Asian countries like Philippines and Vietnam, unprecedented forceful reaction on Japan's arrest of Chinese fishermen in 2010, and its increasingly bold and confident foreign policy pronouncements. These behaviors are interpreted by many as China's willingness to use of force to protect its interests, similar to that of the Imperial Germany; some comment that China's long-term held policy of keeping a low-profile finally "reveals its true colors." Some scholars examined China's behaviors



in the past few years and explored the sources of its assertiveness. One problem in the ongoing discussion of whether China's is becoming more assertive is that there is no clear definition and indicators of assertiveness among different scholars. Iain Johnston argues that China's recent foreign policy is not as assertive as many scholars and pundits contend; China's seemingly assertiveness in recent years is nothing more special compared with its past behaviors and the new assertiveness should be viewed more as a reactive response rather than a proactive one. Others refute this argument by saying that Johnston's definition of assertiveness is too narrow, omitting the possibility that assertiveness also has a positive connotation. In regards of Beijing's reactions on Japan's arrest of a Chinese fisherman in 2010 and the Philippines conducts in the South China Sea, while admitting that Japan and the Philippines might be in the first place to escalate the situation, Aaron L. Friedberg also pointed out that China's responsibility in further driving the tension to a higher level by overreaction. Even if China was provoked in these instances, he argued, China did not necessarily have to respond as aggressively as it did. Some view China's blocking force against tougher sanctions on Iran and its stance at the climate talks are a display of its assertiveness. Michael Swaine's study of "Perceptions of an Assertive China" examined features of this discussion in the West and in China. In short, China's assertiveness has different meanings according to scholars, encompassing everything from attempts to play a more active role in a wide variety of international regimes, to deliberate efforts to alter basic international norms and challenge the fundamental national interest or policies of the United States. The forms of its assertiveness ranges from mere verbal statements, to concerted actions. The third part discusses the debate among Chinese scholars on the topic whether China should abandon the policy of *taoguangyanghui* and adopt a proactive or assertive policy. In the 1999, shortly after the US bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, some Chinese scholars realized that the United States was not on the decline; on the contrary, it was still the most powerful nation and could wield its power according to its willingness. They argued that Deng's core thesis of *taoguangyanghui* was outdated and could no longer effectively safeguard China's nation interests given the fact the its national security was under threat from the US; a more masculine foreign policy was needed. Moving on to 2010, in line with the debate of China's assertiveness, Chinese scholars at this time debate over whether Deng Xiaoping's dictum of *taoguangyanghui* is outdated since the

situation has changed over the past decade. Compared with twenty years ago, today's China is more than stronger in economy; it has enjoyed a higher status on world stage. Chinese scholars debated heavily on the issue of whether the creation of a powerful nation or a better standard of living for its people should constitute the primary objective of China's diplomacy. Chinese scholar on international relations Yan Xuetong argued for the creation of a powerful nation, and warned that historically there have been wealthy countries who have not been strong and there have even been cases of national decline in the process of accumulating wealth. Yan advocates a wealthy Chinese nation with enhanced national capabilities. Others argue that China's should stick to the policy of *taoguangyanghui* and continue to concentrate on domestic economic construction. Ding Gang refuted Yan Xuetong's argument, saying that the most important and the highest goal of a country, is to guarantee fairness and justice; the building of a powerful nation lies on a prerequisite condition, which is the prosperity of its people. The fourth section in this chapter reviews the ongoing discussion of China's foreign policy under President Xi Jinping. Since taking power in 2012, Chinese President Xi Jinping has talked of "striving for achievements" in China's foreign diplomacy. There has been discernible changes in Chinese official foreign policy discourse. New rhetoric such as "Chinese dream (中国梦)" and "community of common destiny (命运共同体)" were brought up by Xi shortly after he assumed power. Scholars both within and outside of China have suggested that under the leadership of President Xi Jinping China's foreign policy has entered into a new stage, bidding an official farewell to Deng Xiaoping's *taoguangyanghui*. The new leadership highly emphasizes "top design (顶层设计)" in China's diplomacy, bearing in mind its long-term goals and strategic targets. Yan Xuetong claimed that China's foreign policy has moved from a strategy of "keeping a low profile" to "striving for achievements". Some also pointed out that there is consistency in China's diplomacy despite recent discernable changes; the new feature in Xi's diplomacy does not reflect a fundamental departure from his predecessors. China still adheres to its declared "peaceful development", though the manner it seeks to do is rather different from the past decades.

The second chapter examines the contents of diplomatic concepts under each generation of collective leadership, specifically including Deng Xiaoping's dictum of *taoguangyanghui*, Hu

Jintao's "peaceful development", and more paragraphs on Xi Jinping's big power diplomacy, his promulgation of Chinese Dream and community of common destiny, etc.. This part is conducive to understanding the messages Chinese leaders are trying to convey in their remarks and speeches. The strategic thinking of "*taoguangyanghui, yousuozuowei*" was brought up by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in the early 1990s. This strategy was brought up when the political situation in some Eastern European countries was in the transition and later the collapse of the Soviet Union. Domestically, Chinese leaders were facing political pressure after the Tiananmen Square event in June 1989. Chinese government was heavily criticized for its use of force against unarmed students for their protest on the Tiananmen Square. It was under this international and domestic environment that the then-Chinese leader Deng Xiao showed his insight. After making a profound analysis on the changes and tendencies of the international situation based on keen observance, Deng put forward the 24-character strategy, "冷静观察，守住阵地，沉着应付，韬光养晦，善于守拙，决不当头 (observe calmly, secure our position, handle affairs with calm confidence, hide our capacities and bide our time, be good at maintaining a low profile, never claim leadership, and get something done)." Since then, *taoguangyanghui* has become the strategy in the Jiang Zemin's presidency in the 1990s. Domestic scholars and high level officials argue for the necessity to adhere to this strategy by articulating that the central task of this nation is to engage in economic construction and persist in its policy of reform and opening up; it would not serve the nation's general interests if it diverted too much energy on ideological competition and getting involved into complex international affairs. In the beginning of the 21st century, Jiang's successor Hu Jintao brought the concept of "peaceful development (和平发展)". It was widely considered as an official response to the "China threat" theory. Initially it was coined as "peaceful rise (和平崛起)", but as many noticed that the word "rise" may have the implication that the current international order is under threat as China pursues as violent way to protect its interests. It was first explained to the public by Zheng Bijian, a notable expert on international relations who has close connection to top leaders, once serving as the deputy to President Hu Jintao in the Central Party School. He first publicly spoke on peaceful rise during his speech on the Boao Forum in Asia in November 2003. Shortly after Premier Wen Jiabao further clarified this concept in December when delivering a speech at Harvard University. In 2005 Zheng

Bijian published an article on *Foreign Affairs* titled as “China’s ‘Peaceful Rise’ to Great Power Status”. He argues that unlike the imperial Germany in the early 20th century, China’s path towards a more powerful position in the world will not upset the international order cause great power rivalries or even wars, but will rise within it as Beijing seeks a unique path to gain its great power status peacefully. In 2005 and 2011 the State Council Information Office published two white papers on China’s commitment to peaceful development. The policy is intended to create an environment that maximizes the chances of China’s economic development. While President Xi Jinping also committed to the path of peaceful development, he also brought new ideas into China’s diplomacy. Xi calls for China to pursue big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, striving for achievements and befitting its role as a major country. Since the convention of the 18th National Congress of the CPC in November 2012, China has engaged in a rhetorical campaign centered on “Chinese dream (中国梦)” and “community of common destiny (命运共同体)”. Xi said that the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is “a dream of the whole nation, as well as of every individual.” The national Chinese Dream is the collective vision to achieve the “Two hundred goals”: by 2020, around the CPC’s 100th anniversary 2021, to China into a “moderately well-off society”; by 2050, around 100th anniversary of the foundation of the People’s Republic of China 2049, to transform China into a fully developed country. Xi also called for building a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, covering relations with major powers, neighboring countries and developing countries in all aspects.

The third chapter presents major host events from 1991 to 2018. This chapter begins with a definition of host diplomacy and its advantages or benefits the host country possesses in conducting multilateral events at home. Host diplomacy as a diplomatic concept was brought up by Foreign Minister Wang Yi in March 2014 when he answered questions from the media about his expectations China’s diplomacy in this year. Wang labeled two event – CICA and the APEC leaders’ informal meeting – focusing on safety and economy, as host diplomacy. The concept of host diplomacy is defined as: a series of diplomatic activities held within the borders of a country, multilateral or bilateral meetings, hosted by or co-hosted by its government; the government plays an important role in organizing the activities; the hosting diplomatic activities serve the country’s national interests. By

hosting at home, the government can take advantage of “timing, geographic and human factors” to plan topics or agendas to its advantage, push for the construction of international rules or orders favorable to its own interests and then realize its diplomatic targets. The successful hosting of diplomatic activities requires a country to possess comprehensive national strength and resources to ensure the smooth conduct of such an activity. China’s strategic ability in transforming its growing power into international influence has been significantly improved. The host events from 1991 to 2018 are divided into three stages. The first stage starts from 1991 to 2002, under the leadership of President Jiang Zemin, during which period China’s attitude towards regional and international institutions changed from a hostile one to active engagement. The second stage is from 2003 to 2008. President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao called for a harmonious world through peaceful development and build China’s soft power to improve its national image. The year 2008 served as a watershed in China’s foreign policy, and for Chinese top leaders their view of China’s status on the international stage also experienced a transition. The successful hosting of Olympic Game in Beijing significantly boosted China’s national confidence. China has begun to behave more actively, sometimes more aggressively in safeguarding its national interests and participating global governance. Particularly after President Xi Jinping assumed power in 2012, Chinese leaders become more vocal to articulate its foreign strategy on the regional and global scale, and label many issues as its “core national interests”. The style of China’s diplomacy becomes more diverse, from bilateral state visit to multilateral summit, from annual economic forum to regional cooperative meeting, etc.. Host diplomacy is considered of high importance in China’s overall diplomacy by the new collective leadership. From 1990 to 2018, the number of major multilateral diplomatic events hosted in China, sponsored or co-sponsored by the Chinese government, is increasing, and the profile of these events is getting higher. In the year 2014 alone, China hosted several major diplomatic events, including Boao Forum for Asia Annual Meeting, the 4th Summit of the Conference on Mutual Cooperation and Confidence-building measures in Asia, and the APEC Summit. Before the opening of the 19th National Congress in October 2018, China hosted major diplomatic activities at home each year, and it was the highlight of China’s diplomacy of that year. These multilateral events provide the best available platform for Chinese leaders to convey their ideas such as peaceful development,

community of common destiny to the audience. China's voice has been heard and China's ideas have been elaborated to other countries. The top Chinese leaders are telling Chinese stories, clarifying China's policies on global and regional issues, laying out China's vision on global governance and providing China's wisdom to common challenges. Among the host events in China, it is worth noting that in recent years China has begun to initiate new meetings rather than just hosting as a rotating presidency. One Belt and One Road International Cooperation Forum is the best example. The first One Belt and One Road International Cooperation Forum opened in Beijing in 2017. This is the first high-end multilateral international conference centered on the "Belt and Road". China's initiative is transmitted into reality. Another feature of host diplomacy in China is the global partnership established between China and other parts of the world. The overall outlook of China's diplomatic work emphasizes economic development and win-win cooperation between China and developing countries, stretching from Southeast Asia, Central Asia, to the Arab World, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, to Latin America. Over the past two decades, China has successfully established annual dialogue mechanisms with each of these regions. It is predicted that in the near future China's diplomacy will continue to be conducted in a more active way, based on the principle of equality and mutual benefits. Host diplomacy will contribute to strategic capabilities building in China's diplomacy, transforming China's growing power into real influence on the global stage.