

Comprehensive partnership

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YANG JEICHI

was born in Shanghai in 1950 and entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1975. Following a number of postings he became Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1998 and was Ambassador to the United States between 2001-05. Between 2005-07 he was again, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2007.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. The diplomacy of New China has also traversed a journey of 60 years. Over the past 60 years, China's relations with the world have undergone historic changes. From isolation to wider contact, to deeper integration into the international community, China now sees her mutual understanding with other countries increasing, and her interest more closely converging with the rest of the world. Her exchange of visits with other people has grown more significantly than ever before. In the 30 years from 1949 to 1978, only 200,000 Chinese people travelled abroad, while the number for 2008 alone was 46 million. In 2008, 48 million foreigners travelled to China. Among the Fortune 500, 480 have investment in China, and Chinese companies are doing business in 160 countries and regions.

Over the past 60 years, China has firmly pursued an independent foreign policy of peace, actively championed the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, firmly upheld state sovereignty, national security and development interests, and resolutely safeguarded world peace and development. The achievements of New China in the diplomatic field are recognised by the world, our relations with major countries continue to grow and solidarity and cooperation with neighbouring and other developing countries are deepening. The number of countries having diplomatic ties with China has grown from 18 in the early years of New China to 171 now. Our ideal to have friends all over the world has come true. China has taken an active part in the multilateral cooperation on major regional, international and global issues. As an active player in international peacekeeping operations, China is the largest contributor of peacekeepers among the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Over the past 60 years, China has developed a unique theory and style of diplomacy through innovation based on past experience which has the following features:

- First, adhere to independence. China decides her position and policy on international affairs on the merits of each case and in light of the fundamental interest of her people and that of people throughout the world. China upholds justice and promotes the rights and interests of developing countries in the international community.
- Second, resolutely safeguard peace. China's development brings no harm, nor threat to anyone. China respects the right of all peoples to choose independently their own

path of development and is committed to the peaceful solution of international disputes and follows a defence policy that is defensive in nature. China will never seek hegemony or expansion.

- Third, actively promote cooperation. In a world confronted with mounting problems and challenges, no country, no matter how strong it is, can cope with them on its own. China pursues development by fully engaging in the process of globalisation. We are committed to cooperation and consider it the way to achieve peace and development and resolve disputes and frictions.

- Fourth, advocate mutually beneficial relations. China is joining hands with other countries to increase converging interests among all parties, integrate the interest of the Chinese people into the common interest of other peoples, and, while pursuing her own development, accommodate the legitimate concerns of other countries, particularly those of the developing countries.

- Fifth, promote a harmonious world. A world in harmony does not deny the existence of differences and competition. Instead, it advocates harmony with differences, respect for diversity and democracy in international relations. China takes an active part in international cooperation, working with other countries to address global challenges including the financial crisis, climate change and nuclear proliferation.

Sixty years have passed like a flash. China's diplomacy stands at a new historical starting point. We will continue to hold high the banner of peace, development and cooperation and work with the rest of the international community for a brighter future of our common home.

The China-UK relationship is an important element of New China's diplomacy. Looking back over the past 60 years, we can say that exchange and cooperation were the mainstays though we may have differed on certain issues. Our two countries successfully settled the Hong Kong issue and set an example of peaceful resolution of historical issues through negotiations between states.

The China-UK relationship today is more mature and comprehensive. As permanent members of the UN Security Council, China and the UK shoulder major responsibilities in safeguarding world peace and stability and promoting global development. Looking ahead, we have great confidence in the development of our bilateral relations. China is ready to work with the UK to write a new chapter in our comprehensive strategic partnership. **F**