

Enhancing practical cooperation

By H.E. WANG YI

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



WANG YI

holds a Master's degree in Economics. He has worked as Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs (1998-2001), Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs (2001-04), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to Japan (2004-07) and Minister of Taiwan Affairs in the Office of the State Council (2008-13). He assumed his current position as Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2013.

This year is a significant one in the global endeavour to enhance world peace and development, and both China and the UK play an important role in driving this process.

First, this year marks the 70th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War, an occasion solemnly commemorated by China, the UK and many other countries around the world in various forms. An important lesson history teaches us is that the arbitrary use of force and seeking domination through raw power is no recipe for peace, and that the logic of winner-takes-all and zero-sum game can only block the development of human society. As our world moves faster towards multi-polarity, economic globalisation, cultural diversity and an information society, countries are becoming increasingly interdependent, and their interests are intertwined as never before. We share a growing stake in each others' wellbeing. Only peaceful development and win-win cooperation is the right path we should pursue.

Second, this year also marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Last month, world leaders gathered in New York to draw a

blueprint for creating a better future for mankind. Chinese President Xi Jinping articulated China's vision of a new type of international relations. He called for the pursuit of a five-pronged strategy to build a community of shared future – namely, forging partnerships in which countries treat each other as equals, engage in mutual consultation and show mutual understanding; jointly creating a security architecture of equity and justice that benefits all; promoting open, innovative, inclusive and win-win development; increasing cultural exchanges to promote harmony, inclusiveness and respect for differences; and building an ecosystem that puts nature and green development first. This comprehensive proposition lays out a new vision for the development of international relations.

Third, in building a new type of international relations, China and the UK have every reason to become good partners in cooperation. Both countries have important influence in the world and are permanent members of the UN Security Council. We share similar views on many international and regional issues, and our respective interests are converging. The upcoming State Visit by President Xi Jinping



UK Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, in discussion with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi


will be the second visit by a Chinese President to the UK in 10 years, and it will be a historic visit marking a new decade of China-UK comprehensive strategic partnership. Undoubtedly, this visit will further boost this partnership and enable China and the UK to take fresh steps in building a new type of state-to-state relations featuring win-win cooperation.

China and the UK should be good partners based on equality and mutual trust. The history and reality of our relations have repeatedly demonstrated that, despite differences in social systems, stages of development, history and culture, we can ensure continuous, steady and sound growth of China-UK relations when we respect each other and treat each other as equals, increase political mutual trust and always view this relationship from a long-term and strategic perspective.

China and the UK should be good partners for win-win cooperation. The UK is China's second largest trading partner, second largest investment destination and second largest source of paid-in investment in the EU, and China is the UK's second largest trading partner outside the EU and a major investment destination in Asia. China has advanced the initiative of building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and is working on the 13th five-year plan for economic and social development. On its part, the UK will create a Northern Powerhouse and has put forward a roadmap for developing the manufacturing sector between now and 2050. Our two sides should form greater synergy between our respective strategies, enhance practical cooperation in innovation-driven growth, manufacturing capacity, and finance, so as to deliver more benefits to our peoples.

China and the UK should be good security partners. China and the UK maintain close communication on counter-terrorism, peacekeeping operations and cyber security. We jointly responded to Ebola outbreak in West Africa, and played a positive role in resolving regional hotspot issues such as the Iranian nuclear issue and South Sudan issue. China stands ready to strengthen communication and coordination with the UK on international and regional issues and work with the UK to promote world peace and stability.

China and the UK should be good partners of mutual learning. Our two countries are both major civilisations with splendid cultures. Every year, over one million Chinese and Britons travel between our two countries; 160,000 students are studying in each other's countries, and we have forged sister relations between 51 pairs of cities in the two countries. This year is the first China-UK Year of Culture Exchange. Many colourful events have been held in both countries, which are warmly received by the public. China will deepen people-to-people and cultural exchanges with the UK and expand exchanges and cooperation in tourism, and between local areas, the youth and women to strengthen people-to-people friendship.

An old Chinese poem reads, "Riding winds and cleaving waves, I hoist sail at the right moment to embrace the white clouds and vast ocean." As a new era dawns on us, China the UK should seize the opportunity and forge ahead. Let's take President Xi Jinping's visit as a new departure point to open a golden era of the China-UK relationship. 

China stands ready to strengthen communication and coordination with the UK on international and regional issues and work together to promote peace and stability



China's Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, meets with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon