

VIEWS

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Cultural harmony leads to better future

Xi Jinping Thought on Culture reveals the outstanding characteristics of Chinese civilization and discusses the theories, principles and philosophy of cultural exchanges. According to Xi Jinping Thought on Culture, civilizational exchanges can transcend barriers and conflicts, and inter-civilizational interactions can boost the harmonious development of civilizations.

No civilization can exist independently, or by refusing to interact with other civilizations. The coexistence of and exchanges between civilizations are the norm, with all civilizations moving toward a harmonious future.

Marxism reveals the characteristics of human civilization. The internal structure of every nation is determined by its production capacity, and internal and external exchanges. Civilization is the result of people's joint activities in certain social setups, with the social division of labor and interactions promoting the development of civilizations.

Chinese philosophers have always emphasized the importance of "harmony". In Chinese culture, harmony does not mean that all things are uniform, nor does it mean they are merged into one. Instead, harmony means peaceful coexistence, recognizing and respecting differences, and forging a better future.

A harmonious social environment has always been the mainstream trend in China's history. China started developing its economy and culture in ancient times by communicating with

neighboring countries and spreading its civilization and culture in other parts of the world. Although China was the center of the ancient Silk Road, it never took advantage of the system to economically exploit other countries; rather, it treated foreign business people very well.

Today, civilizations are adopting a new format despite the turbulent and uncertain global landscape. And together with other countries, China has been promoting civilizational dialogue and exchanges across the globe, learning from each other and abandoning the old political order based on protectionism and unilateralism. The country has also been contributing its unique wisdom to the development of civilizations, in order to help develop a more healthy global governance system.

The integration of the basic tenets of Marxism, and China's specific realities and traditional culture forms the basis of Chinese Marxism, which has been guiding China's reforms and economic construction during the past decades.

First, the "two integrations" form the foundation for building a harmonious civilization. Since its founding, the Communist Party of China has been the leading practitioner of modern Chinese culture, as well as the inheritor and promoter of traditional culture. The Party employs Marxism to promote traditional culture, boost the national spirit, and meet the people's new spiritual needs. Chinese Marxism thrives on traditional culture, creating a favorable environment

for the harmonious development of Chinese civilization.

Second, the "two integrations" show the inclusiveness of Chinese civilization. The more than 5,000-year-old Chinese civilization has developed by incorporating the good elements of the Central Plains culture, grassland culture, southern culture, West Asian culture and Siberian culture. This incorporation has transcended geographical limitations and introduced diversified elements into Chinese civilization. More importantly, in the early 20th century, Marxism injected new vitality into Chinese civilization, turning it into a more open and inclusive society.

Third, the "two integrations" have added Chinese characteristics to Marxism. The Chinese civilization keeps reforming itself, reflecting its modern spirit after adopting Marxism as the guiding political principle, which in turn promotes Marxism and has helped make great achievements in the new era.

And fourth, the "two integrations" consolidate the historical and cultural foundations of Chinese modernization, promote cultural prosperity brought about by the harmonious development of the Chinese civilization. During the more than 100 years of its existence, the Party has been drawing wisdom from traditional Chinese culture and promoting Chinese modernization, which reflects the cultural connotations and unique advantages of the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

The achievements of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era

have provided better institutional guarantee, material foundation and spiritual power for Chinese modernization. Chinese modernization, incidentally, also offers a new option for other developing countries to realize modernity, and helping their people achieve both material and spiritual prosperity.

Furthermore, the Global Civilization Initiative proposed by China defines the primary premise, historical position and development path of global civilization, explains the basic vision of civilizational development in the new era, and provides strong support for creating a new global order and jointly building a community with a shared future for mankind.

The concept of a community with a shared future for mankind is rooted in traditional Chinese culture, which has developed through revolutions, and matured after the launch of reform and opening-up. Building a community with a shared future for mankind will promote the harmonious development of civilizations and help solve major global problems, apart from injecting new energy into global development and boosting international cooperation.

By realizing civilizational harmony, we can forge a new and better future for all.

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Jia Duqiang

Li's tour to boost regional cooperation

Premier Li Qiang's visits to New Zealand, Australia and Malaysia are significant for many reasons. For instance, his visit to New Zealand on Thursday coincides with the 10th anniversary of the establishment of a comprehensive strategic partnership between China and New Zealand.

Li's visit to Australia has gained added importance because it is the first by a Chinese premier since 2017. And his visit to Malaysia coincides with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Beijing and Kuala Lumpur, and marks the Year of China-Malaysia Friendship.

Li's visits to the three countries will not only strengthen bilateral relations but also boost regional cooperation.

Regular exchanges between Beijing and Wellington, including New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon's visit to China last year and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit to New Zealand in March this year show why the two complementary economies have boosted trade cooperation. China is New Zealand's top trading partner and has been its largest export market for the past 10 years, and while New Zealand's foreign direct investment in China increased by 104.7 percent year-on-year in 2023, China's FDI in New Zealand grew by 16.7 percent.

The two countries have strengthened their comprehensive strategic partnership by deepening high-quality trade cooperation. The two sides have made great achievements in the traditional fields of infrastructure, and the dairy and insurance sectors, while exploring opportunities in areas such as the digital economy, electric vehicles and renewable energy.

Li's visit to New Zealand in the 10th year of the establishment of the China-New Zealand comprehensive strategic partnership surely injects new impetus into bilateral trade and deepens bilateral cooperation.

For Australia, on the other hand, China is the largest trading partner and important market. And despite their highly complementary economies and close trade relations, the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitics dealt a heavy blow to bilateral ties and trade cooperation in the recent past. But fortunately, the two countries resumed constructive cooperation after Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese assumed office in 2022 and changed the country's policy toward China.

Thanks to the two sides' joint efforts, Sino-Australian ties are improving and bilateral trade is regaining its vitality after the removal of obstacles that hindered the development of bilateral relations. Li's visit to Australia, hopefully, will prompt the two countries to resume normal high-level exchanges and dialogue. And China will include Australia in the list of unilateral visa-free countries.

In fact, the two sides are planning to expand the China-Australia free trade agreement and unleash the full potential of cooperation under the framework of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement. While deepening cooperation in traditional areas including energy, agriculture, tourism and education, the two sides are looking for new economic growth points in fields such as the green economy, digital finance, smart manufacturing and climate change.

Since Australia is an ally of the United States as well as an important trading partner of China, it needs to learn from its experiences to ensure geopolitics doesn't influence its relations with China. During his visit to China last year, Albanese said it is natural for Australia and China to have differences, but they should not let those differences define their relationship. That signaled a new beginning for the two sides on multiple fronts.

China and Australia are following the correct direction by preferring dialogue over argument, managing differences over confrontations, and promoting trust through deepened cooperation.

As for China's relationship with Malaysia, it is friendly and mutually beneficial. To be sure, Sino-Malaysian ties are a model of friendly cooperation. Apart from deepening strategic mutual trust, the two sides have achieved fruitful results in projects under the Belt and Road Initiative framework. And last year, they announced their plan to jointly build a China-Malaysia community with a shared future.



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During his visit to Malaysia, Li will attend the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two sides, and discuss with the country's leaders how to deepen Sino-Malaysian cooperation.

First, during his visit to the three countries, Li will impress upon their leaders that China attaches great importance to its relationships with the three countries, and assure them that China will not only intensify its high-quality opening-up but also pursue win-win cooperation. Li will also hold in-depth exchanges with the leaders in the three countries on bilateral, regional and global issues.

Li's visits to the Asia-Pacific countries also highlight that China remains committed to promoting cooperation with countries across the world and is willing to work with any country that pursues win-win cooperation and common development.

Second, the improvement of Sino-Australian ties shows that even countries with different ideologies, security policies and political systems can engage in mutually beneficial trade so long as they respect each other and

appropriately handle their differences. As a matter of fact, China is willing to establish close and mutually beneficial relations with Western countries on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

Third, China's healthy and high-quality growth has created favorable conditions for it to deepen cooperation with countries in the region and beyond based on openness, inclusiveness, mutual respect, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence.

And fourth, countries in the Asia-Pacific region should work together to achieve common development despite the unstable global landscape, oppose hegemonism, unilateralism, protectionism, and the building of "small yards with high fences", and desist from inciting bloc confrontation, because they run counter to beneficial cooperation and common development.

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Hu Meidong

Cross-Taiwan Strait integration best way to maintain peace

Compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait want peace and stability, and thus seek an end to cross-Strait tensions that have intensified in recent years. But in his inaugural speech on May 20, the new Taiwan administrative head, Lai Ching-te, paid scant respect to the sentiments of compatriots across the Strait by refusing to acknowledge the 1992 Consensus that there is only one China, prompting the People's Liberation Army to hold large-scale military exercises to preempt any attempt by Lai and his ilk to seek "Taiwan independence".

Lai sees himself as a pursuer of Western democracy in Asia, and is opposed to the Chinese mainland's whole-process people's democracy. But he cannot weaken the bond between compatriots on the two sides of the Strait.

In fact, the strong bond between people on the two sides of the Strait was evident in a grand dragon boat race that was held amid the PLA drills, in Jimei district of Xiamen, Fujian province. And the contrast between the peaceful cultural event and the looming threat of conflict underlines the dual nature of the current cross-Strait dynamics.

Nevertheless, peaceful reunification remains the aspiration of Taiwan compatriots. From June 13 to 15, for instance, thousands of Taiwan representatives from different sectors participated in the 16th Strait Forum in Fujian, fostering friendship and deepening mutual understanding. This shows that despite the stormy political climate, more and more compatriots on both sides are seeking cross-Strait solidarity.

Therefore, by increasing cultural exchanges and cooperation, they can deepen mutual understanding and prevent misunderstandings.

Economics is a crucial link in cross-Strait relations. Since the launch of reform and opening-up, trade and economic ties between the mainland and Taiwan have grown from strength to strength, as is evident from the cross-Strait trade volume, which surpassed \$267.8 billion last year, reflecting the high complementarity of the two economies as well as the huge potential for further cooperation.

Economic integration will sharpen the competitive edge of both sides, and help create jobs and improve people's livelihoods. By jointly developing high-tech industries, green energy and modern agriculture, the two sides can share resources and complement each other technologically. Additionally, Taiwan island's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative can expand its international market.

Traditional culture forms an emotional link between the people on the two sides of the Strait. Speaking the same language and sharing the same cultural heritage, the two sides have common historical roots and traditions. Therefore, by increasing cultural exchanges and cooperation, they can deepen mutual understanding and prevent misunderstandings.

In recent years, cultural, educational, sports and tourism exchanges between the two sides have become increasingly frequent. Young people from both sides of the Strait are deepening their understanding and friendship through summer camps, cultural festivals and academic exchanges.

Also, social integration is essential for peaceful development across the Strait. So there is need to promote social integration, which will also enhance the sense of belonging and identity of compatriots on both sides, and help build a community of shared destiny. As such, cross-Strait cooperation in healthcare, eldercare and education should be strengthened. For instance, the two sides can deepen cooperation in healthcare by recognizing each other's medical insurance system, thereby forming a cross-border medical insurance link. They can also collaborate to address the aging population problems, and boost educational cooperation and talent exchanges to cultivate more outstanding talents, and promote common development.

In this regard, realizing peaceful national reunification not only aligns with the interests of compatriots on both sides but also is crucial for maintaining regional peace and stability. So based on the 1992 Consensus, the two sides should engage in dialogue and establish mechanisms to enhance mutual trust.

By strengthening political trust, the two sides can prevent misjudgments and conflict, and by establishing a high-level cross-Strait dialogue mechanism, they can increase communication. The two sides can enhance cooperation in international affairs, too, to address global challenges such as climate change, terrorism and infectious diseases, thus boosting their international influence.

But despite the promising prospects of cross-Strait integration, numerous challenges remain. For example, there is a lack of mutual political trust between the two sides of the Strait, with some elements on the island stirring up pro-independence sentiments. This makes it necessary for the two sides to adhere to the path of peaceful development, oppose any pro-independence activities, and enhance mutual trust through increased exchanges and cooperation.

The two sides also need to intensify their economic integration, by further opening up their markets for each other, lift the trade and investment barriers, and raise cross-Strait economic cooperation to a higher level.

But since cross-Strait cultural and social integration face obstacles, such as information asymmetry and cultural differences, the two sides of the Strait should increase information exchanges and cultural interaction to foster mutual understanding, and promote grassroots interactions and exchanges to lay a solid foundation for peaceful development.

Cross-Strait integration is the best way to achieve peace and prosperity. Through comprehensive integration in the fields of economics, culture, society and politics, the two sides of the Strait can achieve mutual benefit, improve public welfare and help maintain regional peace and stability. As long as both sides adhere to the path of peaceful development and strengthen exchanges and cooperation, they can usher in a new era of peaceful cross-Strait development and achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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