



China's Foreign Policy

His Excellency Song Yanbin,
Ambassador to the People's Republic of China
in Costa Rica

- As one of the founding members of the UN, China has been committed to and closely linked to the work of the United Nations since its inception: it was the first to sign the UN Charter; it serves as a permanent member of the Security Council; and it participates actively in international peacekeeping missions, deploying over 30,000 Blue Helmets who have taken part in 29 peacekeeping missions around the world.
- China chooses peace and development as its main trends at all times, in addition to promoting multi-polarization and globalization, as well as the optimization of the world governance apparatus, all with the aim of allowing all nations to share opportunities for development, benefits and responsibilities.
- China is committed to peaceful development, both with regards to its international cooperation policies and its diplomatic stance. It aims to build a community of human beings with a shared destiny through partnerships in which countries are treated as equals; its strategic priority is to persist in peaceful development; it takes mutually-beneficial cooperation as the fundamental principle; it prioritizes the establishment of associations; and it adopts the concepts of justice and human interest as guiding principles.





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Mr. Song Yanbin: His Excellency Song Yanbin is currently the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Costa Rica and has been since 2012. Previous to that, he served as Counsellor and Deputy Director General of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Affairs within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has also represented his country in Portugal and Mozambique.

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Honourable Dr. Francisco Rojas Aravena, Rector of the University for Peace, Honourable Ambassadors and members of the Costa Rican Diplomatic Corps, dear faculty members and students of the University for Peace, friends one and all.

Good morning. I am pleased and honoured to have been invited by Rector Rojas to deliver this inaugural speech and share with all of you important information on China's peaceful, independent, and autonomous foreign policy.

As an academic institution dependent on the United Nations, the University for Peace – whose track record spans over 30 years – has promoted, among all human beings, the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence and stimulated cooperation among peoples to help lessen obstacles and threats to world peace and progress, in keeping with the noble aspirations proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations. You have my deepest respect for your dedication to this mission.

The topic of China's foreign policy is quite extensive and, due to time constraints, I have summarized it into 3 main points that will allow for a basic understanding of this matter.

1. China participates actively in UN causes

As one of the founding members of the UN, China has been committed to and closely linked to this supreme international organization since its inception. In 1945, the Chinese delegation was the first to sign the UN Charter. In 1971, the UN General Assembly approved Resolution 2758, which effectively restored the People's Republic of China's legitimate rights before the United Nations. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China is a firm defender of multilateralism and the strengthening of the UN. As a cornerstone of world peace, China participates actively in international peacekeeping missions and has deployed over 30,000 Blue Helmets who have taken part in 29 peacekeeping missions. Currently, more than 3,100 Chinese troops and police officers are guarding the peace in 10 areas around the world, making China a leader in this matter among the Security Council's permanent members.

Last year, at the UN Peacekeeping Summit, His Excellency President Xi Jinping announced the creation of the China-UN Peace and Development Fund in the amount of one billion dollars over ten years, intended to support the work of the United Nations. At the same time, China created a permanent police squad consisting of 8,000 uniformed men and women available to participate in UN peacekeeping missions, in addition to committing to training 2,000 Blue Helmets from other countries over the next five years and conducting 10 demining programs. In 2008, the Chinese Marine Corps began ordinary escort operations in the waters near Somalia and the Gulf of Aden, and has successfully completed 800 missions in an effort to protect 6,000 vessels belonging to both China and other nations.

On 19 September of this year, at UN Headquarters, Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier to the State Council of China, chaired the symposium "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", where he pointed out that eradicating poverty and hunger should be taken as the top priority and more efforts should be made to promote robust, sustainable, balanced and inclusive economic growth as the support, as well as the importance of forming a virtuous circle in three major fields including economy, society and environment and setting out a path of sustainable development with economic prosperity, social progress and a beautiful environment.

Li Keqiang stressed that strengthening global development partnership and working together to promote sustainable development are not only moral obligation of the international community, but will also greatly promote the overall development of the world. We should stick to the main channel position of North-South Cooperation, and developed countries should implement aid promises and support developing countries to explore development roads conforming to their own national conditions. Developing countries should further promote South-South Cooperation and make efforts to achieve collective self-improvement.

2. China is permanently on the path towards peaceful development

Chinese President Xi Jinping has clearly stated that China is permanently on the path towards peaceful development, which is neither a policy of convenience nor diplomatic rhetoric, but a conclusion drawn based on an objective judgment of the past, present and future. The Chinese people's proactive peace gene, its aspiration towards greater development, and the current movement towards world peace, development and cooperation have decided that China will not repeat its old colonialist ways and the hegemonic road historically taken by some of the world's major powers.

The Chinese nation has always been a lover of peace. Throughout its 5,000-year-old existence, Chinese civilization has always emphasized its belief in peace, harmony and axioms such as Nothing is more precious than peace, Be kind to others, Treat others as you would like to be treated, and A country may be large, but it will perish if it is belligerent.

The Chinese people have opened themselves to trade with the outside world rather than invade or expand, immersed in patriotism and their own defence instead of colonialism and the usurpation of foreign territory. It is well known that the famous Great Wall of China only served to defend and not to attack. More than 600 years ago, a Chinese man named Zheng He made 7 journeys to dozens of countries in the Pacific and Indian oceans. Despite leading one of the most powerful fleets of his time, he did not take any land from those countries. He sowed seeds of peace and friendship,

leaving beautiful stories of friendly contacts and intercultural dialogue between different peoples.

The Chinese do not have the invasive and hegemonic gene. On the other hand, to understand why China continues on the road towards peaceful development, one must have knowledge about the process and state of development of the Asian country and its development objectives.

I have some figures here to give you a sensorial knowledge of China's development. In the almost four decades since 1978 – the year in which the Chinese began to apply its policy of reform and aperture to the outside – the Chinese economy has grown an average of 9.8% annually. In 1978, China's GDP was USD 2.1 billion, a figure that surpassed USD 10 trillion in 2014. This allowed China to go from fifteenth to second place in the world economy with 15% of the world's production, up from 1.8% in 1978. Meanwhile, its per capita income has risen from 220 U.S. dollars in 1978 to about 8,000 U.S. dollars by 2015, multiplying 36 fold. Its international reserves rose to more than USD 3 billion from USD 168 million. China's economy is now more and more linked to the rest of the world. By 2015, there were larger imports and exports of Chinese goods in the world, Chinese investments overseas totalled USD 118 billion, more than 120 million Chinese citizens travelled outside of China and the Chinese economy contributed 25% to the widening global economy.

The aforementioned successes are motives for pride for the Chinese people, but we are very aware of the difficulties and challenges found along the way. For example, the income per capita in China is ranked 80th in the world and is below the world average of USD 10,000. The imbalance in terms of development remains notorious. And the disparity between different regions and the gap between the cities and the urban areas are still very large. More than 70 million Chinese are still affected by poverty.

Looking ahead, China is moving towards its centuries-old ambitious goals. The first goal for the year 2021, during which the Chinese Communist Party will celebrate its centenary, the GDP and the income per capita are expected to double in relation to 2010, thus consolidating the construction

of a society modestly accommodated in multiple aspects. A second goal towards the middle half of this century, is for the country to become a modern, prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally-advanced and harmonious socialist nation, thus achieving the great revitalization of the Chinese nation. Without a doubt, an international environment of peace and stability is of vital importance.

China chooses peace and development as its main trends at all times, in addition to promoting multi-polarization and globalization, as well as the optimization of the world governance apparatus, all with the aim of allowing all nations to share opportunities for development, benefits and responsibilities.

The strategic choice of following the path of peaceful development has meant that China continues to apply an independent and peace-driven foreign policy, with the objective of safeguarding world peace and promoting joint development. The basic norms are based on the 5 principles of peaceful coexistence and the fundamental concept of self-determination, with the main objective of defending national sovereignty, security and development interests and to promote world peace and development.

3. Characteristics of Contemporary Chinese Diplomacy

Since the celebration of the Chinese Communist Party's Eighteenth National Congress – held in November 2012 – Chinese diplomacy has been enterprising and innovative in nature. Currently, we are concentrating our efforts on promoting large-scale (giant) diplomacy with Chinese peculiarities, translated not only into systematic theoretical innovations, but into practices with their own peculiarities, including the follow 5 main connotations:

3a. First, it aims to build a community of human beings with a shared destiny through partnerships in which countries are treated as equals; conduct

mutual consultations and show understanding among themselves; establish a security framework characterized by equity and justice that is shared by all nations and to which these nations contribute; find an open, innovative, and inclusive development perspective that is driven by mutually-beneficial cooperation; promote a harmonious exchange among civilizations which does not exclude differences and tolerates different views; and build an ecosystem that prioritizes nature and ecological development.

3b. Second, its strategic priority is to persist in peaceful development. China not only adheres to its own peaceful development, but also encourages other countries to follow suit in order to promote peaceful development worldwide.

3c. Third, it takes mutually-beneficial cooperation as the fundamental principle. This in an effort to abandon ancient “zero-sum game” and “winner takes all” mentalities, in order to open a new perspective in which all actors emerge as winners.

3d. Fourth, it prioritizes the establishment of associations. China advocates for the creation of associations over the forging of alliances, and dialogue over confrontation. We have established partnerships in different ways with more than 80 nations and regions around the world on the basis of equality, peaceful coexistence and inclusion.

3e. Fifth, it adopts the concepts of justice and human interest as guiding principles. We defend and promote justice in international affairs and pay close attention to both interests and justice by prioritizing the latter in our relations with others.

Currently, giant/large-scale diplomacy with Chinese characteristics is being fully implemented and has many bright spots. Our interaction with the major powers has entered a new phase. The comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Russia is performing well. The construction of a new model for relations between great powers such as China and the U.S. has taken some firm steps. China and the European Union have devoted efforts to forge a partnership that helps promote peace, economic

growth, reforms for both parties and bilateral exchanges in different areas. Thanks to the concepts of “friendship, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusion”, good neighbourliness and friendly cooperation between China and adjacent countries have consistently yielded new perspectives. Unity and cooperation between China and other developing countries have been continuously strengthened: the BRICS mechanism is now more mature and closely-knit. With the launch of the China Forum-CELAC, we managed to establish a comprehensive network for dialogue and cooperation that encompasses all developing regions. Meanwhile, China has actively participated in matters of global governance and the solutions to the most pressing issues on both an international and regional scale. And, through a series of important initiatives that include the construction of the Economic Belt along the Silk Road, the Silk Maritime Route, as well as the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, China has been offering increasingly more quality global products.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends all,

After informing you about the fundamental contents of China’s Foreign Policy, I would like to take this opportunity to touch upon two important topics that have received a lot of attention from the international community: the G20 Summit in Hangzhou and the South China Sea.

On 4-5 September, China hosted the Eleventh G20 Summit in the city of Hangzhou, a testament to the high degree of confidence deposited in China by the international community and the sincere desire of this Asian country to make contributions to the global community. Under the theme “Building an innovative, strengthened, interconnected and inclusive global economy”, leaders of the G20 Member States met with authorities from 8 guest countries and 7 international organizations and approved the Press Release from the Eleventh G20 Summit, in addition to 28 other specific documents. The Summit can be summarized in the following points:

First of all, it evidenced a spirit of facing challenges together as partners. The Pres Release stressed the need for a closer association and joint actions to stimulate trust in global economic growth, demonstrating a shared decision to overcome pitfalls together.

Second, it set clear orientations for the global economy. Pointing to the weak growth in the global economy, the Summit responded by committing to following a path of innovation and reform. Members developed a joint project on Innovative Growth, including policies and indicators in the three areas of innovation, new industrial revolution and digital economy. They also approved the agenda for Accentuated Structural Reform, with an emphasis on exploring the potential for growth in the medium and long term through structural reforms.

Third, it allowed for work on a series of practical action plans. The Summit gave particular importance to operationalizing and putting into practice the achieved consensuses. In the area of development, the Summit adopted the Plan of Action for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, taking new steps to promote development and cooperation in the world. In the area of trade and investment, the Summit resulted in the production of two historic documents: one, the G20 Strategy for Global Commerce Growth, aimed at reversing the negative trend of world trade. Another important document is the Guiding Principles for the Design of Global Investment Policies. Several other action plans were developed in the areas of employment, finance and energy, etc.

Fourth, it demonstrated a willingness to pursue shared development. While summarizing the results of the Summit, President Xi Jinping characterised it as three “first times”: for the first time, the issue of development was placed at the forefront of global macro-policies; for the first time, the Plan of Action for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was developed; for the first time, collective measures were taken to support the industrialization of African countries and the least developed countries. This issued an important signal that the G20 is not only concerned about its own members but about the world as a whole, especially developed countries and their people.

The other subject I would like to touch upon is that of the South China Sea. China is the first country to discover, develop, utilize, appoint and exercise the administrative jurisdiction over the Nansha Islands. Therefore, it has indisputable sovereignty over these islands and their adjacent waters, a fact that was ratified by international documents such as the Cairo Declaration and the Potsdam Proclamation, documents that remained undisputed for a long time. After the discovery of hydrocarbon deposits in the South China Sea in the 1970s, certain neighbouring countries began to illegally occupy and mine Chinese islands and reefs. After the application of the U.S.' "Pivot to Asia" Strategy, the matter quickly gained notoriety. Territorial disputes have been caused by the illegal occupation of Chinese islands and reefs by adjacent countries. This is a matter between China and those countries directly involved. However, the participation and agitation by forces outside the region have resulted in the unduly politicization of the matter of the South China Sea. Nevertheless, the situation remains peaceful and stable overall, and the freedom of navigation has never become a problem. China and the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have reached agreements on the twin-track approach, according to which disputes will be resolved in a peaceful manner through consultations and negotiations between China and the nations directly involved in the dispute, while peace and stability in the region will be held jointly by China and the countries that make up this regional body.

As for the so-called arbitration on the South China Sea submitted unilaterally by the previous Government of the Philippines, China has made clear, from the beginning, its position to not accept or participate in it, as well as to not recognize or execute its criteria due to the legal flaws of the arbitration process. At the meeting held in July between the Foreign Affairs Ministers of China and the countries that make up the of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a joint statement was adopted to implement, comprehensively and effectively, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, whereby they agreed to resolve disputes through bilateral consultations, a matter that was later confirmed at the Summit meeting of both parties in September. After assuming power, new Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte showed signals of relaunching bilateral relations with China and received well-deserved positive replies. It is safe to say that

the page has been turned with regards to this arbitration. We are confident in our decision to work together with the countries of the region to make the South China Sea one of peace, friendship and cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends all,

The Costa Rican statist, former President Oscar Arias, stated that peace is a never-ending process. It is an attitude, a way of life, a way of solving problems and resolving conflicts. China is willing to continue working with the international community, including Costa Rica, to defend the Charter of the United Nations and to jointly promote world peace and development.

Thank you very much.