

(Translation)

Joining Hands for a Shared Future

Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping
President of the People's Republic of China
At the Virtual Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of
Diplomatic Relations Between China and Central Asian Countries

25 January 2022

Dear Colleagues,
Friends,

The Chinese people often say, “One should be able to establish himself at the age of 30.” The exchanges and cooperation between China and Central Asian countries, now in their 30th year, have been established on the basis of sincerity, mutual trust, equality and mutual benefit.

— **Over the past 30 years, we have followed the trend of the times, honored commitment and promoted amity.** On the basis of mutual understanding and accommodation, we have completely resolved boundary issues left from history, turning the over 3,300 kilometers of shared borders into a bond of friendship, mutual trust and cooperation. We have established strategic partnerships, deepening political trust and mutually beneficial cooperation, blazing a new trail of good-neighborly friendship and win-win cooperation, and setting a good example of fostering a new type of international relations.

— **Over the past 30 years, we have joined hands in a common pursuit of development.** Two-way trade and investment have grown over a hundred times. Several big projects of strategic importance have been successfully completed, including the China-Central Asia natural gas pipeline, the China-Kazakhstan crude oil pipeline, the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan highway, and the China-Tajikistan expressway. The China-Europe Railway Express which runs through Central Asia has seen rapid growth. Guided by the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, Belt and Road cooperation between China and Central Asian countries is burgeoning and bearing fruits in Central Asia.

— **Over the past 30 years, we have shared weal and woe and pursued common security.** Following the new thinking of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, we have combined efforts to fight the three forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism, transnational organized crime and drug trafficking and to resolutely reject external interference or attempts to instigate color revolutions. Together, we have firmly upheld our common security interests and peace and stability in our region.

— **Over the past 30 years, we have enhanced mutual understanding and affinity through mutual exchanges.** The 58 pairs of sister cities and the hundreds of thousands of mutual visits every year help carry forward a friendship of over 2,000 years between the people of our countries. “I am a foreigner, but I am not an outsider.” These words of Ismail Daurov, a young Kazakh helping with the local COVID-19 response in Shaanxi province, have touched the hearts of many in China. It is heartwarming episodes like this one that have formed a stirring symphony of Chinese and Central Asian people supporting each other through thick and thin.

— **Over the past 30 years, we have stood by each other and staunchly upheld justice.** As defenders of multilateralism, we have rendered mutual support on issues concerning each other’s core interests, and spoken up for each other at critical moments. We have thus safeguarded our legitimate rights and strategic interests, promoted greater democracy in international relations, and steered the international order toward greater justice and equity.

The key to the successful cooperation between China and the five Central Asian countries over the past three decades lies in our abiding commitment to mutual respect, good-neighborly friendship, solidarity in trying times, and mutual benefit. These four principles are a valuable experience and shared asset we have gained from cooperation; they are a political guarantee for the steady and sustained growth of China’s relations with Central Asian countries; and they are a source of inspiration for us to further advance friendly exchanges.

Colleagues,
Friends,

Time rolls on just like the flow of water. No matter how the international landscape may evolve or how developed China may grow, China will always remain a good neighbor, a good partner, a good friend,

and a good brother that Central Asian countries can trust and count on. China will continue to firmly support Central Asian countries in following development paths tailored to their national realities, firmly support them in safeguarding sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, firmly support them in pursuing national revitalization and greater strength through unity, and firmly support them in playing a bigger role on the world stage.

China stands ready to work with Central Asian countries to build on the good momentum and strive shoulder-by-shoulder to build an even closer China-Central Asia community with a shared future. To that end, I wish to make the following five proposals:

First, we need to magnify the exemplary role of good-neighborly friendship, which is the foundation of China's relations with Central Asian countries. China will continue to act on the principle of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness, and work with Central Asian countries to step up high-level exchanges and strategic communication and make the "China plus Central Asia" foreign ministers' meeting and other dialogue and cooperation mechanisms a continued success. This way, we will further enhance solidarity and mutual trust, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, and achieve common development and prosperity.

We firmly oppose attempts by external forces to foment color revolutions in Central Asia, firmly oppose interference in other countries' internal affairs under the pretext of human rights, and firmly oppose any force that tries to disrupt the tranquil life of the people of our six countries. Not long ago, Kazakhstan experienced some dramatic developments, which led to heavy casualties and property damage. As a friend and neighbor, China has firmly supported Kazakhstan in its effort to maintain stability and stop violence, and will continue to support and help Kazakhstan to the best of our ability. China believes that under the strong leadership of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the courageous, industrious and good people of Kazakhstan will eventually embrace a better future in their national development.

Second, we need to build a cooperation belt for high-quality development. China is ready to open its vast market to Central Asian countries. We will import more quality goods and agricultural products from countries in the region, continue to hold the China-Central Asia economic and trade cooperation forum, and strive to increase the trade between our two sides to US\$70 billion by 2030. China proposes establishing a dialogue mechanism on e-commerce cooperation among

our countries, and holding a forum on industrial and investment cooperation when appropriate.

Against the backdrop of the pandemic, we will resume passenger flights in a gradual manner, establish “fast tracks” to facilitate the movement of people, and improve “green lanes” to ensure unimpeded flow of goods. We will speed up the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project, and further develop transport corridors connecting China and Central Asia to bring about safer and more efficient connectivity between our countries. We need to ensure the steady operation of our oil and gas pipelines, speed up the construction of Line D of the China-Central Asia Gas Pipeline, expand cooperation across the energy industrial chain, and promote low-carbon transition in the energy sector. We also need to strengthen cooperation in artificial intelligence, big data, cloud computing and other high-tech sectors so that our peoples could enjoy the convenience enabled by high technologies.

Third, we need to strengthen the shield for defending peace. Peace is an aspiration shared by the people of all countries in the region. We must continue to combat terrorist, extremist and separatist forces, deepen cooperation in areas such as border management and control, combating terrorist use of the Internet and joint operation, and work together to strengthen the regional security net.

The COVID-19 pandemic proves once again that virus respects no borders and humanity shares a common future. China will continue to provide vaccines and anti-epidemic supplies to Central Asian countries, and step up joint production and technology transfer with respect to COVID vaccines and medicines. Here, I wish to announce that in 2022, China will provide an additional aid of 50 million doses of vaccines to Central Asian countries, and set up traditional medicine centers in countries with such need. China also calls for the establishment of a China-Central Asia health industry alliance.

Afghanistan is our mutual neighbor and partner. A peaceful and stable Afghanistan that enjoys development and prosperity is in the common interests of our six countries. China supports Afghanistan in establishing an open and inclusive political structure through dialogue and consultation, and calls on the international community to speed up the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the country. We encourage and support Afghanistan to make a clean break with terrorism and hope it will live in amity with neighboring countries.

Fourth, we need to build a family with diverse interactions. Exchanges make civilizations colorful, and mutual learning makes them prosper. We need to foster a multi-faceted framework of people-to-people exchanges, speed up the establishment of culture centers in each other's country, actively conduct dialogue on cultural heritage, and continue to promote exchanges between women, think tanks, media and in other fields. We need to step up tourism cooperation. China will build platforms for Central Asian countries to promote their tourism resources, and stands ready to make all five Central Asian countries approved destinations for Chinese tourists. China proposes to hold a China-Central Asia people-to-people friendship forum, and will strive to bring the number of sister cities with the five countries to 100 pairs in the next five to ten years.

Youth represents the future of a country. In the next five years, China will provide 1,200 government scholarships to the five Central Asian countries, with priority on opening Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms. We will also hold diverse events including a China-Central Asia youth arts festival and a "Bridge of the Future" China-Central Asia young leaders camp.

The Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 will soon open. We welcome athletes from Central Asian countries to take part in the Games in China and wish them good performance. We also stand ready to host the "Colorful Central Asia" online arts festival under the framework of the "Meet in Beijing" Olympic Cultural Festival.

Fifth, we need to protect the global village that enjoys peace and development. Not long ago, I proposed the Global Development Initiative at the United Nations, and called for joint efforts to tackle risks and challenges and advance the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Here, I wish to announce that in the next three years, the Chinese government will provide a grant assistance of US\$500 million to Central Asian countries in support of livelihood programs, and offer 5,000 seminar and workshop opportunities to help Central Asian countries train professionals in health, poverty reduction for agricultural development, connectivity, information technology and other fields and strengthen the driving force for self-generated development.

Colleagues,

As an ancient Chinese saying goes, "Even the shortest journey can't be finished without taking the first step. Even the most trivial task can't

be completed without taking actions.” To promote the well-being of the people of our six countries, let us renew our friendship, advance cooperation, and work together to create a brighter future for the relations between China and Central Asian countries and build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Thank you.