

As one of the essential foundations of the New Euro-Asia Continental Bridge, Hebei Province has many advantages to promote economic and trade cooperation and accelerate the construction of eastern Euro-Asia Bridgeheads.

### **Favorable geographical position and extensive market space**

Hebei Province, situated at the eastern end of the New Euro-Asia Continental Bridge, and in the center of Bohai region surrounding Beijing and Tianjin, forms the structure of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei economic development zone. It has an important position in the state master development plan. It has more than 100 million population and concentrated large and medium-sized cities. It also serves as a transfer station in the commodity chain connecting East, South, and Southwest China, with Northeast, Northwest, and North China. . . .

### **A well-developed transportation and communications system**

Hebei Province is located on the pivot area connecting the capital, Beijing, with all regions of the nation. There are 15 trunk railways: Beijing-Guangdong, Beijing-Shanghai, Beijing-Jiulong, Beijing-Harbin, Beijing-Baotou, Datong-Qinhuangdao, and Shijiazhuang-Taiyuan, and 17 trunk roads. . . .

There are several large ports, including the Port of Qinhuangdao, Port of Jingtang, Port of Tianjin, and Port of Huanghua, which is under construction. . . .

Industry economic structure has been formed in the whole province, and the main body is composed of ten industries, such as coal, textiles, metallurgy, building materials, chemical industry, machinery, electricity, petroleum, light industry, and medicine.

Many products hold important positions in China. Agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and fishing farming are well developed, and grain, cotton, meat, nuts, and fruits are leading in China. . . . Entering the 1990s, the speed of economic development has been obviously accelerated; annual GDP has increased at 14.1%, surpassing the national level for seven years running. . . . Hebei is one of the most vigorous regions of the Chinese economy.

Ladies and gentlemen, on our journey toward the new century, centered on the target of building Hebei into a province with a powerful economy, we will be more active to join the world economy and we will speed up the course of carrying out the strategies of "Rejuvenate Hebei through science and technology," and . . . "Sustained development." . . . These provide more opportunities to enhance exchanges and cooperation in the field of economy, technology, culture, and education. . . .

Let us join hands to build the New Euro-Asia Continental Bridge and march forward to the new century. May the seminar be a great success. Thank you!

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## Zhang Duliang

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# An important role for Qinhuangdao bridgehead

*This paper was prepared by Zhang Duliang, of the Qinhuangdao City Research Group on the New Euro-Asia Continental Bridge, in June 1998. Its full title is "Qinhuangdao Bridgehead Will Play an Important Role in the Transportation Through Eurasia Continental Bridge."*

1. *It will help expand trade among countries and districts in/around the economic band along the continental bridge.*

World trade has developed in the frame of global interaction, with transnational/continental companies. Commodity exchange, technical transfer, and international tourism between countries and districts urgently need easy, quick, safe, and cheap channels.

The continental bridge transportation route, with Qinhuangdao as its bridgehead, together with other bridgeheads along the coast of China, open a new "Silk Road" for the countries and districts in the three big economic zones of Asia-Pacific, Midwest Asia, and Europe. This route will shorten the distance by more than 10,000 km from that [sea route] from Qinhuangdao via the Straits of Malacca, the Suez Canal, the Strait of Gibraltar to Rotterdam, and save about 30 days time. It is 2,000 km shorter than that across the Siberian continental bridge, taking 3-5 days less. West Europe is a developed region economically, and the European Union has become the biggest trade group in the world. In 1994, total production value reached US \$7,300 billion, foreign trade totalled US \$3,200 billion, 40% of the world total. Their commodities need to find markets in East Europe and Asia.

With the world economy center shifting eastward, the Asia-Pacific region has become the most vigorous part in world economic development. In 1991-94, the rate of economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region was 7.7%. Some countries and districts, such as China, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore, have been among the world's 20 big trade zones. It is anticipated that the total economy of the Asia-Pacific region will increase from one-quarter of that of the world in 1990 to one-third in 2010. In the past 12 years, Asia's exports increased from 18.5% of the world total to 25%, while imports increased from 19% to 27%. Therefore, cargoes from Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, etc. in the Asia-Pacific region, are transported from Qinhuangdao quickly along the bridge to Mid-Asia, West Asia, and Euro-

pean countries. On the other side, cargoes from Mideast Asia and European countries are also transported or transshipped quickly through Qinhuangdao bridgehead to Asian-Pacific countries and districts.

*2. It will provide a convenient export channel to speed up the development and flourishing of inland countries in Asia and Europe.*

With the rapid development of inland countries in Asia and Europe, such as Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, the People's Republic of Mongolia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, etc., their rich resources (oil, natural gas, coal, nonferrous metals, cotton, wood, animal products, etc.) and great potential for development need urgently to find quick export channels . . . in order to participate in the world economy. Qinhuangdao bridgehead has access, to the west, to Mid- and West Asia and Europe through the New Eurasia Continental Bridge westward; to the north, to Mongolia and Russia through the Siberian Continental Bridge; to the south, to the coastal provinces and cities of China, and to southeast Asian countries by sea route; to the east, to northeast Asian countries and South/North Americas. . . .

*3. It will strongly promote the economic cooperation and flourishing of countries and districts in the Asia-Pacific, Midwest Asia, and Europe.*

The two continental-bridge routes and sea routes from Qinhuangdao link tightly together Japan, South Korea, the European Union, with the developing countries such as China, Russia, Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Poland, and Hungary. Each has its own advantages and features. They depend on each other, and also can help each other. They need wide-ranging cooperation to develop strong points and make up for deficiencies, such as in the fields of resources, finance, technology, management, etc., so as to promote the economy to develop and flourish. Closer economic cooperation and standardization between European and Asian countries and districts will promote the economic unification of Europe and Asia. Qinhuangdao bridgehead will become the tie of the economic cooperation and unification of the countries and districts along the continental bridges.

*4. It will speed up the economic development pace of the Bohai Sea region of China.*

The Bohai Sea economic region has become a major area, which is opening to the outside world and developing its economy with high speed. The circle includes Liaoning Province, Hebei Province, Shandong Province, Shanxi Province, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and Tianjin and Beijing cities, the strongest in comprehensive strength, and with the most potential to develop. The three provinces and two cities round Bohai, have a total area of 514,500 sq km, occupying 5.4% of the whole country, but the GNP is 22.2% of the nation. Transportation, communications, science and technology, and education all lead other parts of the country. Qin-

huangdao bridgehead directly links the Bohai economic circle, the strongest in comprehensive strength in China, with the developed West European economic zone. The Bohai economic region can directly absorb advanced technology and management experience of western Europe, while the latter can take advantage directly of Bohai's rich resources, cheap labor force, and big markets.

This will make the Bohai economic region leap up to develop rapidly.

*5. It will help the coordinated development of the economy of China.*

The coastal regions of China are well-developed economically, while the western and northern parts are backward, though with rich resources. The two continental bridges from Qinhuangdao bridgehead will link western and northern China with Beijing, Tianjin, and even developed Japan, South Korea, and the European Union, combining the resource advantages of the former with the advantages in finance, technology, experts, and information of the latter. Therefore, the bridge will coordinate and cooperate in a wider range, and make best use of the resources. This will help greatly to develop China's economy smoothly, in a balanced and coordinated way.

To sum up the above, one can see that Qinhuangdao bridgehead has unique natural advantages and great potentialities to develop. It will play an important role more and more in the transportation through the Eurasia Continental Bridge.

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