

China Briefs

Chinese Ambassador: U.S. Should Learn Lessons from Pelosi Visit

Holding a press conference with American reporters at the Chinese Embassy in Washington on August 16, the Chinese Ambassador to the United States, Qin Gang, urged the U.S. government to take a lesson from the disastrous Pelosi visit to Taiwan. In response to a question from the *Wall Street Journal*, Ambassador Qin said,

“I want to see the United States at the moment think about its own behavior on Taiwan, to reflect on what the true One-China principle is, and to refrain from doing anything more to escalate the tension, because there are some worries around these days in China that the U.S. will take more actions, politically, militarily. If they happen, it will cause a new round of tensions and China will be forced to react.”

Asked if there is a “timeline” for Taiwan reunification, Ambassador Qin said,

“I don’t know if there is any specific time, but I do know there is a will. There’s a prospect for peaceful reunification.... The question of Taiwan was caused because of a weak and chaotic China, and must be resolved in the course of national rejuvenation.... No matter how different the political systems are between the mainland and Taiwan, the historical fact that both sides belong to one and the same China remains unchanged and will never change. And the fact that people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are Chinese remains unchanged and will never change. We share the same root, cultural heritage, and national identity.”

We fully understand Taiwan has been separated from the motherland for de-

cad. We fully understand the (different) political and social systems. We fully understand the sentiments of Chinese people in Taiwan. So that’s why we have designed the policy of ‘One Country, Two Systems.’ That is to accommodate the differences and accommodate the realities and people’s sentiments. This is democracy.... In Taiwan, we have shown great goodwill and tolerance to usher in peaceful reunification. The current political system can continue (after reunification). ‘Two systems’ is democracy.”

On the 2019 riots in Hong Kong, Ambassador Qin said,

“Hong Kong’s turbulence was a battle between violence and anti-violence, between law violation and law enforcement. Since the turbulence over proposed legislative amendments in 2019, Hong Kong experienced serious violence, vandalism, arson, traffic obstruction, attacks of police and assault on citizens. Some extremists even stormed the building of the Hong Kong Legislative Council. The damage and danger they caused far exceeded the January 6 incident. They seriously jeopardized Hong Kong’s security, stability, economy, democracy and even people’s lives. You can search for videos of their violent activities on YouTube. You will know that this is never about democracy. This is never a ‘beautiful sight to behold,’ as Nancy Pelosi called it. Their activities are absolutely crimes. They are violence. The U.S. is doing a reckoning over the January 6 incident. Likewise, Hong Kong will not allow such violent crimes.”

China Welcomes Indian Overture for Cooperation

According to Press Trust of India (PTI), Indian External Affairs Minister

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, speaking in Thailand on Aug. 18 on “India’s Vision of the Indo-Pacific,” said,

“The Asian Century would happen when China and India come together, but it would be difficult for this to happen if India and China could not come together.” He added that if India and China have to come together, there are many reasons to do so.

China’s *Global Times* welcomed the statement and the reference to an “Asian Century” by Minister Jaishankar, noting that this is “a much-quoted term by former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in meeting with then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1988, to call on China and India to work together.”

Programs of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Coordinators’ meeting to follow up on FOCAC program implementation took place Aug. 18. In anticipation of the meeting, Li Zhigang, Chargé d’Affaires of the Chinese Embassy in South Africa, wrote an overview of these programs, which appeared in the *Independent Online* (South Africa) on Aug. 17.

One project of especial interest: “The two sides have set up a China-Africa RMB [renminbi] center to explore RMB settlement for China-Africa trade, logistics, and industrial cooperation.”

The nine points in the program (summarized from Li Zhigang’s text) are:

Medical and health: China has provided more than 250 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to Africa, covering almost all African countries, and

launched joint production of COVID-19 vaccine in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco. China has made constant efforts to pair up Chinese and African hospitals for cooperation, and the African CDC headquarters project (Phase I) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia is expected to be completed in early 2023. China has also been helping with control of malaria, schistosomiasis and AIDS.

Poverty reduction and agricultural development: China has provided emergency food aid and other humanitarian assistance to the Horn of Africa and other regions. China has offered locust control insecticides, irrigation equipment, and technical assistance. The first group of four China-Africa Joint Centers for Modern Agrotechnology Exchange, Demonstration & Training have been set up in Haikou, Hainan Province to train professionals in the fields of tropical crops, aquaculture, biomass energy and dry farming.

Trade promotion: From January to June this year, China-Africa trade volume registered \$137.38 billion, up by 16.6% year-on-year, of which China's exports to and imports from Africa increased by 14.7% and 19.1% respectively. China has opened "green lanes" for faster export of African agricultural products to China. China has signed agreements with many African countries on expanding the scope of zero-tariff treatment to 98% of products exported to China, covering 350 kinds of African products.

Investment promotion: From January to June this year, China's industry-wide direct investment in Africa amounted to \$1.74 billion, growing by 1.5% against all the odds. The turnover of Chinese enterprises' contracted projects in Africa amounted to \$18.32 billion, an increase of 8.4% year-on-year.

Digital innovation: To expand Silk Road e-commerce cooperation, China and Africa have jointly made a success out of the Quality African Products

Online Shopping Festival to market African products in China. Fifteen China-Africa science and technology cooperation projects have been initiated.

Green development: China has completed the construction of hydroelectric power stations, photo-voltaic power stations, and water supply projects. China participates in the Great Green Wall of Africa initiative (a wall of trees 16 km wide and 8,000 km long, from Senegal in the west to Djibouti in the east), and is strengthening cooperation with Africa in desertification control.

Capacity-building: China provides vocational skills training for local youths where there are Chinese enterprises in Africa and gives the graduates jobs in these enterprises. China helps African students who have completed study courses in China to find jobs in Chinese enterprises in Africa.

People-to-people exchange: The first Conference on Dialogue Between Chinese and African Civilizations and the 11th Meeting of the China-Africa Think Tanks Forum were successfully held, contributing to the building of a China-Africa community with a shared future.

Peace and security: At the second China-Africa Peace and Security Forum in July, the two sides agreed to maintain strategic communication, strengthen cooperation in equipment and technology, expand maritime exercises and training, and enhance exchanges in professional fields. Chinese peacekeeping troops to Africa have performed to satisfaction, and the 25th batch of Chinese peacekeeping troops sent to the Democratic Republic of Congo was awarded the United Nations' Peace Medal.

China Increases Engagement with Afghanistan

China's Ambassador to Afghanistan, Wang Yu, has announced that Bei-

jing intends to step up its engagement with Afghanistan, "as Afghans are good neighbors, brothers and partners." China "will stand firm on the concept of community with the shared future for mankind," he said on Aug. 18, according to TOLONews. He underscored that he was not speaking about diplomatic recognition, because there are still certain criteria Kabul must meet for that, including becoming "stable, peaceful, pursue a moderate policy and meet expectations."

However, the ambassador said China will "substantially enhance bilateral cooperation in all areas" guided by Xi Jinping's Global Development Initiative and Global Security Initiative. One priority will be to assist with the grave humanitarian crisis, adding to China's already substantial contributions of food and other vital necessities. China has provided \$8 million in assistance to families affected by the recent earthquake in Afghanistan, in addition to 6,000 tons of rice worth \$8 million, with aid provided to all 34 provinces.

Ambassador Wang spared no words in addressing the devastation wrought in Afghanistan by 20 years of U.S. occupation and war. "The U.S. pursued its own interests only," he said. The 20-year U.S. occupation "did not help the country realize its social development ... war has destroyed its infrastructure, leading to more difficulties in its economic development and people's livelihoods." The U.S. military intervention has produced a "deep disaster" for the Afghan people. The irresponsible U.S. withdrawal a year ago "has created more problems for Afghanistan." And, he continued, not only did the U.S. ignore the disaster facing the Afghan people, but it also refused to return the billions in assets belonging to them, which were illegally seized. Those funds should be returned, he insisted.