

# Rising Asia

Special Issue

October-December 2015 Issue 03  
Centre for East Asia (Foundation)  
Bangladesh



**China-Bangladesh  
40 Years of Diplomatic Relations**

纪念中孟建交40周年

# Beautiful Bangladesh



Photo : Saif Uddin Saif

# Rising Asia

## A Quarterly Magazine of CEAF

Issue - 3  
October-December, 2015

*Striving for Asian Solidarity*

Centre for East Asia Foundation (CEAF)  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

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## **Rising Asia**

**A Quarterly Magazine of CEAF**

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# Contents

	Page No.
<b>Editor's Note</b>	<b>i</b>
Joining Hands to Fulfill Common Dream of Development <i>H.E. Ma Mingqiang</i>	1
Working Together to Forge a New Partnership of Win-win Cooperation and Create a Community of Shared Future for Mankind <i>H.E. Xi Jinping</i>	3
France is back to Bangladesh <i>H.E. Sophie Aubert</i>	7
Bangladesh and Russia remember... <i>Oleg P. Boyko</i>	9
Towards Win-win Partnership for Sustainable Development <i>H.E. Xi Jinping</i>	12
Brazil's Foreign Policy, Security Strategy & Brazil-Bangladesh Relations <i>Wanja Campos da Nobrega</i>	15
China and the world <i>Professor Selina Mohsin</i>	21
Russian intervention in Syria, its momentous consequences <i>Enam A. Chaudhury</i>	23
Spot light: China pushes for closer South-South Cooperation at UN <i>H.E. Xi Jinping</i>	28
Let the Ocean Embrace You on Holiday in Seychelles <i>H.E. Md. Amiruzzaman</i>	31
The Iranian Deal: An Important Pointer for International Relations <i>Wu Sike</i>	33
China Sees a Chance in TPP to Stimulate Reforms <i>He Yafei</i>	35
40 going on 400 <i>AKM Moinuddin</i>	37
AIIB Could Be A Win-win Game for China and U.S. <i>Gong Ting</i>	40
China is here for Peace <i>H.E. Xi Jinping</i>	42
A brief introduction to the Centre for East Asia (Foundation), Bangladesh	44

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## Editor's Note



In the forty years of diplomatic relations between independent Bangladesh and People's Republic of China, a steady framework of development partnership has been established between the two countries. Bangladesh has been continuously deriving benefits from that steady relationship by way of development assistance in infrastructure, defense capacity-building, technology transfer and trade growth. In the international community, Bangladesh for its part has to the best of its capacity maintained unwavering support to one-China policy and China's peaceful rise. The asymmetry in geo-political flux in the region is also in a process of rebalancing with scope of significant contribution from consolidations of Bangladesh-China relationship.

Apart from being a milestone in the span of Bangladesh-China diplomatic relations, this year is also witnessing some significant shifts in global power balance and the global financial order. After one and half decades of world war on terror led by the US and its Western allies, by distant warfare of manned and unmanned aerial bombing and missile attacks against unequal shadow enemies, with soldiery and boots on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq, without soldiery and boots on the ground in Libya, and now with hesitant bombing in support of unreliable insurgents fighting ISIL in Iraq and Syria, and demanding regime change in Syria without either bombing or soldiery on the strength of the same unreliable insurgents who have been losing grounds to ISIL. The US-led war on terror is proving only good enough for the time being to protect West's own territories, leaving chaos faced by unsteady regimes in their theaters of military intervention. In Afghanistan, the Talebans are far from beaten. In Iraq and Libya, al-Qaeda got the opportunity from the intervention for entry and gradual expansion of their foothold, and now in Iraq and Syria over a large territory ISIL rules the roast, and has established a mini-state for all intents and purposes.

With the intervention of Russia in favour of the Syrian regime lending air-support to recovery of territory lost to ISIL by Syrian army, the scenario is changing. Iran, with Hezbollah of Lebanon on the ground joined by Iraq along with its Shia militia and Kurdish Peshmerga, and Jordan lending its territory for war and intelligence have put their heads together with the Syrian regime and Russia to turn the tide against ISIL. The parallel coalition of US-led West, Turkey and Saudi-led Gulf Arabs, stalemated as they have been by ISIL territorial hold, initially agreed to flight-safety cooperation only with Russia-led coalition, refusing to assist in any way the survival of the Syrian regime. A postponement of decision on transition of power in Syria pending containment of ISIL has finally been agreed. The US-led coalition also continues bombing ISIL with some advance made by their favoured insurgents in Syria. The hope remains that the realities on the ground will soon become clear, and with ISIL removed or tamed, there will be conditions for peaceful settlement in the Middle East the same way as prevailing conditions in Afghanistan has led to a desire on all sides for negotiated settlement.

Our best wishes and thanks to the France Ambassador H.E. Ms. Sophie Aubert, Chinese Ambassador H.E. Mr. Ma Mingqiang, Brazilian Ambassador H.E. Ms. Wanja Campos da Nobrega, Russian Federation Consul General in Chittagong Mr. Oleg P. Boyko and Seychelles Honorary Consul to Bangladesh Mr. M. Amiruzzaman, who have contributed with their insightful articles for the current issue of Rising Asia.

Nevertheless, we express our sincere thanks to our regular contributors, as well.

We would appreciate your feedback/critique on our quarterly.

Best regards

Editor

Rising Asia Magazine (RAM)

# Joining Hands to Fulfill Common Dream of Development

Ma Mingqiang



The year 2015 marks the 66th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 40th anniversary of the establishment of China-Bangladesh diplomatic relations. Sixty-six years ago, the Chinese people, having fought tenaciously for several decades, embraced the founding of the People's Republic of China. Ever since then China ushered in the great journey of economic prosperity and national rejuvenation.

The year of 2015 has special significance. On 3rd September, the Chinese people, together with people all around the world, commemorated the 70th anniversary of victory of the Chinese People's Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. It demonstrates common aspiration of the peoples of China and all other countries to bear history in mind, honor all those who laid down their lives, cherish peace and open up the future.

After decades of unrelenting exploration and endeavors, great development achievements are everywhere in China now and everyday. China is contributing to the world new achievements and advances. China is now the second largest economy, the largest trading nation and the foremost trading partner for more than 120 countries in the world. China's high-speed railway runs over more than 16,000 kilometers, making up more than sixty percent of the world's total. China brought 439 million impoverished population out of poverty, and has significantly driven forward the global Millennium Development Goals process. All these outcomes are snapshot of China's developments, and part of the Chinese dream of revitalization of the Chinese nation. China's achievements are from consistent reforms, arduous efforts of the Chinese people, and China's embrace of globalization in seeking common development with other countries.



*Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in New York, USA, September 26, 2015. - Xinhua/Lan Hangguang*

This year, global economy recovery is still fragile. As an economic entity that is deeply integrated into the global market, China could not stand unaffected. Despite the moderation in speed, the overall performance of the Chinese economy is stable and moving in a positive direction. In the first half of this year, China's GDP hit a 7 per cent increase. With 7.18 million new jobs created, with the service sector accounting for close to half of GDP, and with energy consumption dropping as a proportion of GDP year on year, China's economic growth is also steadily improving in quality. As for the recent slowdown in exports, investment and industrial output, this is an expected and positive result of voluntary structural adjustment. Growth in China now relies more on domestic demand, on individual consumption and on the service sector.

It is China's unswerving belief that as a responsible global partner, all countries should make their contribution to global development. Therefore, China has come up with the initiatives to build the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, and to promote global cooperation on production capacity, with an aim to forge a more balanced and inclusive global industrial chain. This in turn could pool the comparative strengths of all countries and foster a global community of common interests and development for win-win, inclusive and common progress. Countries are now at different stages of development. Global cooperation on production capacity will match supply with demand effectively and generate more demands through innovation on the supply side, which will produce multiple benefits and win-win results among all three parties. China's role could be a bridge that links the parties together.

During the UN summit, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that it will set up a South-South cooperation fund with initial contribution of 2 billion US dollars and make available 20 billion RMB for setting up the China South-South Climate Cooperation Fund to support other developing countries to address the climate change issues, which are new measures China has taken to help other developing countries to grow economy and improve people's livelihood.

While China celebrates its national day, we are also commemorating this special year for the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Bangladesh. China and Bangladesh have a long history of friendly exchanges. We are geographically close and have strong cultural and economic linkages. In 1975, China and Bangladesh officially established diplomatic relations, leading a new era of friendly relations between the two countries. Over the past 40 years, regardless of the changes at home and in the world, our bilateral relations have maintained sound momentum of growth, developing into a full-ledged one. There are no historical disputes and conflicts between China and Bangladesh. The relationship has maintained robust momentum with features of mutual trust, reciprocal support and common development.

To improve people's living standard and achieve common prosperity is a dream for many nations. Bangladesh has the vision of attaining middle income country status by 2021 and becoming a developed country by 2041. The past years has witnessed tremendous efforts and progress by Bangladesh for the attainment of all the goals. China and Bangladesh share the same dream of development and prosperity, and our goals are identical and mutually inspired. China is ready to work with Bangladeshi people to strengthen cooperation and people-to-people exchange for the early realization of the great dream of development and prosperity.

**Ma Mingqiang**, Ambassador of China to Bangladesh.



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## **“Working Together to Forge a New Partnership of Win-win Cooperation and Create a Community of Shared Future for Mankind”**

*Highlights of the speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York, September 28, 2015.*

Seventy years ago, the earlier generation of mankind fought heroically and secured the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War, closing a dark page in the annals of human history. That victory was hard won.



*President Xi Jinping of China addresses the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly at the U.N. Headquarters in New York, Sept. 28, 2015. – Reuters/Mike Segar*

Seventy years ago, the earlier generation of mankind, with vision and foresight, established the United Nations. This universal and most representative and authoritative international organization has carried mankind's hope for a new future and ushered in a new era of cooperation. It was a pioneering initiative never undertaken before.

Seventy years ago, the earlier generation of mankind pooled together their wisdom and adopted the Charter of the United Nations, laying the cornerstone of the contemporary international order, and establishing the fundamental principles of contemporary international relations. This was an achievement of profound impact.

On the third of September, 2015 the Chinese people, together with the world's people, solemnly commemorated the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. As the main theater in the East, China made a national sacrifice of over 35 million casualties in its fight against the majority troops of Japanese militarism. It not only saved itself and its people from subjugation, but also gave strong support to the forces against aggression in the European and Pacific theaters, thus making a historic contribution to the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War.

History is a mirror. Only by drawing lessons from history can the world avoid repeating past calamity. We should view history with awe and human conscience. The past cannot be changed, but the future can be shaped. Bearing history in mind is not to perpetuate hatred. Rather, it is for mankind not to forget its lesson. Remembering history does not mean being obsessed with the past. Rather, in doing so, we aim to create a better future and pass the torch of peace from generation to generation.

The United Nations has gone through the test of time over the past seven decades. It has witnessed efforts made by all countries to uphold peace, build homeland and pursue cooperation. Having reached a new historical starting point, the United Nations needs to address the central issue of how to better promote world peace and development in the 21st century.

The world is going through a historical process of accelerated evolution. The sunshine of peace, development and progress will be powerful enough to penetrate the clouds of war, poverty and backwardness. The movement toward a multi-polar world, and the rise of emerging markets and developing countries have become an irresistible trend of history. Economic globalization and the advent of an information age have vastly unleashed and boosted social productive forces. They have both created unprecedented development opportunities and given rise to new threats and challenges which we must face squarely.

As an ancient Chinese adage goes, *"The greatest ideal is to create a world truly shared by all."* Peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom are common values of all mankind and the lofty goals of the United Nations. Yet these goals are far from being achieved, and we must continue our endeavor to meet them. In today's world, all countries are interdependent and share a common future. We should renew our commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, build a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, and create a community of shared future for mankind. To achieve this goal, we need to make the following efforts:

- ❑ We should build partnerships in which countries treat each other as equals, engage in mutual consultation and show mutual understanding. The principle of sovereign equality underpins the UN Charter. The future of the world must be shaped by all countries. All countries are equals. The big, strong and rich should not bully the small, weak and poor. The principle of sovereignty not only means that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries are inviolable and their internal affairs are not subjected to interference. It also means that all countries' right to independently choose social systems and development paths should be upheld, and that all countries' endeavors to promote economic and social development and improve their people's lives should be respected.
- ❑ We should be committed to multilateralism and reject unilateralism. We should adopt a new vision of seeking win-win outcomes for all, and reject the outdated mindset that one's gain means the other's loss or that the winner shall take all. Consultation is an important form of democracy, and it should also become an important means of exercising contemporary international governance. We should resolve disputes and differences through dialogue and consultation. We should forge a global partnership at both international and regional levels, and embrace a new approach to state-to-state relations, one that features dialogue rather than confrontation, and seeks partnership rather than alliance. Major countries should follow the principles of no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation in handling their relations. Big countries should treat small countries as equals, and take a right approach to justice and interests by putting justice before interests.
- ❑ We should create a security architecture featuring fairness, justice, joint contribution and shared benefits. In the age of economic globalization, the security of all countries is interlinked and has impact on

one another. No country can maintain absolute security with its own effort, and no country can achieve stability out of other countries' instability. The law of the jungle leaves the weak at the mercy of the strong; it is not the way for countries to conduct their relations. Those who adopt the high-handed approach of using force will find that they are only lifting a rock to drop on their own feet.

- We should abandon Cold War mentality in all its manifestation, and foster a new vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. We should give full play to the central role of the United Nations and its Security Council in ending conflict and keeping peace, and adopt the dual approach of seeking peaceful solution to disputes and taking mandatory actions, so as to turn hostility into amity. We should advance international cooperation in both economic and social fields and take a holistic approach to addressing traditional and non-traditional security threats, so as to prevent conflicts from breaking out in the first place.
- We should promote open, innovative and inclusive development that benefits all. The 2008 international financial crisis has taught us that allowing capital to blindly pursue profit can only create a crisis and that global prosperity cannot be built on the shaky foundation of a market without moral constraints. The growing gap between rich and poor is both unsustainable and unfair. It is important for us to use both the invisible hand and the visible hand to form synergy between market forces and government function and strive to achieve both efficiency and fairness.

Development is meaningful only when it is inclusive and sustainable. To achieve such development requires openness, mutual assistance and win-win cooperation. In the world today, close to 800 million people still live in extreme poverty, nearly six million kids die before the age of five each year and nearly 60 million children are unable to go to school. The just concluded UN Sustainable Development Summit adopted the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We must translate our commitments into actions and work together to ensure that everyone is free from want, has access to development and lives with dignity.

- We should increase inter-civilization exchanges to promote harmony, inclusiveness and respect for differences. The world is simply more colorful as a result of its cultural diversity. Diversity breeds exchanges, exchanges create integration, and integration makes progress possible.

In their interactions, civilizations must accept their differences. Only through mutual respect, mutual learning and harmonious coexistence can the world maintain its diversity and thrive. Each civilization represents the unique vision and contribution of its people, and no civilization is superior to others. Different civilizations should have dialogue and exchanges instead of trying to exclude or replace each other. The history of mankind is a process of active exchanges, interactions and integration among different civilizations. We should respect all civilizations and treat each other as equals. We should draw inspirations from each other to boost the creative development of human civilization.

- We should build an ecosystem that puts mother nature and green development first. Mankind may utilize nature and even try to transform it. But we are after all a part of nature. We should care for nature and not place ourselves above it. We should reconcile industrial development with nature and pursue harmony between man and nature to achieve sustainable development of the world and the all-round development of man.

To build a sound ecology is vital for mankind's future. All members of the international community should work together to build a sound global eco-environment. We should respect nature, follow nature's ways and protect nature. We should firmly pursue green, low-carbon, circular and sustainable development. China will shoulder its share of responsibility and continue to play its part in this common endeavor. We also urge developed countries to fulfill their historical responsibility, honor their emission reduction commitments and help developing countries mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The over 1.3 billion and more Chinese people are endeavoring to realize the Chinese dream of great national renewal. The dream of the Chinese people is closely connected with the dreams of other peoples of the world. We cannot realize the Chinese dream without a peaceful international environment, a stable international order and the understanding, support and help from the rest of the world. The realization of the



Chinese dream will bring more opportunities to other countries and contribute to global peace and development.

China will continue to participate in building world peace. We are committed to peaceful development. No matter how the international landscape may evolve and how strong it may become, China will never pursue hegemony, expansion or sphere of influence.

China will continue to contribute to global development. We will continue to pursue common development and the win-win strategy of opening-up. We are ready to share our development experience and opportunities with other countries and welcome them to board China's express train of development so that all of us will achieve common development.

China will continue to uphold the international order. We will stay committed to the path of development through cooperation. China was the first country to put its signature on the UN Charter. We will continue to uphold the international order and system underpinned by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. China will continue to stand together with other developing countries. We firmly support greater representation and say of developing countries, especially African countries, in the international governance system. China's vote in the United Nations will always belong to the developing countries.

I wish to take this opportunity to announce China's decision to establish a 10-year, US\$1 billion China-UN peace and development fund to support the UN's work, advance multilateral cooperation and contribute more to world peace and development. I wish to announce that China will join the new UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System and has thus decided to take the lead in setting up a permanent peacekeeping police squad and build a peacekeeping standby force of 8,000 troops. I also wish to announce that China will provide a total of US\$100 million of free military assistance to the African Union in the next five years to support the establishment of the African Standby Force and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis.

As the United Nations enters a new decade, let us unite ever more closely to forge a new partnership of win-win cooperation and a community of shared future for mankind. Let the vision of a world free of war and with lasting peace take root in our hearts. Let the aspiration of development, prosperity, fairness and justice spread across the world!



## France is back to Bangladesh

Sophie Aubert



French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius visited Bangladesh last 21 of September, along with the German Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

It was the first visit of a French Foreign Minister to Bangladesh since the inception of the country in 1971. This is why, for France as for Bangladesh, it was a historical visit.

This visit was the opportunity for France and Germany to show their support to Bangladesh, being the most exposed continental country to climate changes' impacts. We are just a few weeks before COP21, the Conference of Parties dedicated to international negotiations on climate change, due to take place in Paris from November, 30, to December, 11.

There's not time to lose in order to joint our efforts to get a legally binding agreement in Paris, because this is the only way to obtain the commitment of the entire world to protecting the planet, through their involvement in shaping a new world, based on energetic transition. The world has no choice but to change tremendously, on behalf of the next generations.

Minister Laurent Fabius came to deliver the message of the commitment of the French Government towards the mobi-

lization of the necessary funds in order to finance energetic transition all over the world. We must be sure that all the countries will have access to the new technologies on the basis of which the new economic models of the future have to be shaped. This tremendous effort has to involve all the actors: both Governments and private sector, because Governments must create the legal frameworks which will encourage the private sector to invest in clean technologies without fearing a change of the rules.

Minister Laurent Fabius was very enthusiastic to hear that Bangladesh would publish its National contribution to COP21 by October, the so-called INDC. And Bangladesh did it a few days ago. It is extremely important to show that non-polluting countries like Bangladesh are ready to work on adaptation and mitigation in order to contribute to facing the threat of climate disruptions and, therefore, to saving the world from the announced disasters nobody doubts they will occur, if nothing changes in our capitalist world.

Apart from climate disruptions and COP21, this visit was also the opportunity to celebrate the end of the main works regarding the building of the new collocated French German Embassy, here in Bangladesh.

This new Embassy is the symbol of the strength of the French German relationship in Europe. The two countries are the core of the European project, which foundations were settled by the French Robert Schuman and the German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. This new collocated Embassy is the symbol of European solidity and solidarity. It is built here in Bangladesh, showing the importance we give to Bangladesh, one of the big emerging countries of the coming decades.



*France Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius and the German Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier meets Bangladesh Foreign Minister A.H. Mahmood Ali, M.P. in Dhaka, September 21, 2015.*

This visit also means the real interest of France to Bangladesh, after the visit of Honourable Foreign Minister Mahmood Ali to France, in June 2015. As Minister Fabius said, Bangladesh is an important country and France has to be present in Bangladesh. Business trends between the two countries are increasing and the Embassy of France to Bangladesh is proud to see that many French companies are now coming back and they are ready to strengthen their positions on many fields: space, clean refinery, water, electricity and many other fields.

France has always supported Bangladesh and Culture Minister André Malraux is the symbol of our close involvement in favour of Bangladesh as a country and as a nation, since the beginning. Our "Alliances Françaises" have accompanied the country since its inception. Now France is coming back to Bangladesh and we are confident about a promising joint future for both our countries.

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*Sophie Aubert, Ambassador of France to Bangladesh*

## Bangladesh and Russia remember...

Oleg P. Boyko



In April 2015, 43 years passed after the USSR Navy's Special Expedition on mine sweeping arrived in the port of Chittagong to restore its activities that had been damaged during the Liberation war. Presence of Soviet expedition in Chittagong for more than two years created gratitude and respect in the historical memory of the Bangladeshi people to our country.

The treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation between the USSR and India, signed on August 9, 1971 in Delhi stipulated holding of mutual security consultations, in case if one party would be threatened by attack. Fulfilling this commitment the USSR took a strong position to support the Indian side in the Indo-Pakistani conflict in 1971. The Soviet Government strongly condemned the armed campaign against India. That step allowed India to extend support to Bengali people, being massacred in East Pakistan, in their struggle for independence. Islamabad urgently appealed to the UN Security Council with a request to oblige

India to ceasefire and withdraw its troops from the territory of present day Bangladesh. Despite the opposition of the United States, the USSR twice vetoed the respective resolutions of the UN Security Council.

In reply to the Indian government's concern with the threat of the United States intervention into the conflict on the side of the Yahya Khan's regime in Pakistan, the Soviet military authority made clear its intention to neutralize the US Navy shock troops headed by aircraft-carrier "Enterprise" that had been deputed to the Indian shores. Without taking part in military actions the group of Soviet naval ships under Rear Admiral V.S. Kruglikov's command skillfully blocked actions of the US 7th fleet which had been providing assistance to Pakistan in the Indian Ocean.



*The Chittagong city authorities and Russian Federation Consulate in Chittagong laying wreaths on the obelisk of Seaman Yuri Viktorovich Redkin in Patenga, Chittagong.*



The Soviet Union supported Bangladesh, which emerged on the world's political map on March 26, 1971, from the very beginning and established diplomatic relations with Bangladesh on January 24, 1972. At that time, the young South Asian nation was passing through difficulties, its economy was in a disaster and its people were in distress. During the war actions on the territory of modern Bangladesh many settlements and land communications were damaged and country's largest seaport Chittagong was affected mostly. Its passes were mined and main channels were cluttered by drowned vessels. Deprived of ability to use the port for delivery of goods and food, the young Republic faced the threat of hunger and economic collapse.

There upon, in March 1972, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, "the founder of the Bangladeshi nation", the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, visited Moscow. During his visit personally asked the Soviet leadership to send an expedition to the mouth of the Karnaphuli River, for clearing the port of Chittagong from mines and cleaning its waters from flooded vessels. The USSR responded to his request and on March 22, 1972 signed an intergovernmental agreement granting aid to Bangladesh to restore normal conditions of navigation in the seaports of the country.



*Father of the Nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (right) and Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin saluting as they meet at the airport in Moscow, March 1972. [Photo Credit: Keystone]*

Under this agreement, the Soviet part formed in the shortest time and sent to Bangladesh the special expedition of 800 sailors, including divers, under the command of Rear Admiral S. P. Zuenko.

On April 2, 1972 the first Soviet ship arrived to Chittagong Port. The port was in a deplorable condition. More than 40 ships were sunken, 12 out of 18 moorings were destroyed. "Under those circumstances it could be possible to provide assistance to Bangladesh only through the port of Chittagong, where the mouth of the river Karnaphuli was situated, but the port was tightly blocked by the barrier of mines and sunken ships. To avoid the risk, foreign shipping companies refused to send its ships to Chittagong. Soviet mine sweepers cleared the port from the mines and made a safe three miles wide channel on the way to Chittagong. A new sea gate was opened for the 75 mln people of the country. The ships from numerous countries were able again to travel to the revived port. The People's Republic of Bangladesh started to get food, medicine, clothes, industrial goods." - said about those days Mr. Znotin, the captain of the expedition ship "Atlas".





Despite the hectic climate and living conditions the Soviet sailors fulfilled their duties with honor. Operation of mine sweeping and cleaning of the port lasted from April 2, 1972 to June 24, 1974. The work without indemnity on reviving the most important port in the country known as the sea lifeline that links Bangladesh to the rest of the world and hoisting of the 26 drowned ships within 2 years is not forgotten. Even after 40 years the aid provided by our country is still considered to be exceptionally important support to the people of Bangladesh which rescued its economy from the threat of total collapse and saved this densely populated country from hunger.

At the valedictory speech while seeing off the Soviet sailors, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said: - *"I thank all members of the Soviet expedition for the work done. Our young Republic would find itself in extremely difficult position if the Soviet seamen did not subvene us. I thank all Soviet seamen for huge work on restoration of the Chittagong port which was conducted despite difficult climatic and living conditions. I am confident that your work will facilitate further expansion of friendship and co-operation between our countries"*.

Not all of the 800 Soviet sailors who heroically took part in the expedition returned home. On July 13, 1973 the leading seaman Yuri Viktorovich Redkin lost his life while fulfilling his duty. He was buried with full honours in Patenga of Chittagong. Since then the place of his burial has become to be known as the "Redkin Point". Nowadays, it is the territory of the Naval Academy, where cadets revere the memory of the hero and maintain the memorial. Every year on the birthday of this Soviet sailor, the authorities of the city and the Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Chittagong solemnly lay wreaths on the obelisk which was built in 1984 on the grave of Yu. Redkin.

The then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh Mrs. Dipu Moni in her letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov on the 40th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relationship between the two countries: - *"The People and the Government of the former Soviet Union provided us invaluable support during difficult times of 1971. The Russian help in rebuilding of our infrastructure and industry immediately after gaining the Independence was decisive. We remember with deep appreciation the efforts of the Russian soldiers who rescued the port of Chittagong at the cost of their lives"*.

The restoration the port of Chittagong by the Soviet sailors became one of the historical facts of independent Bangladesh. These events will remain in the memory of Russian and Bangladeshi people as evidence of the friendly relationship and cooperation between Moscow and Dhaka starting from the beginning of the existence of Bangladesh as the sovereign independent state.

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*Oleg P. Boyko, Consul General of the Russian Federation in Chittagong.*

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## Towards Win-win Partnership for Sustainable Development

H.E. Xi Jinping



It gives me great pleasure to attend today's Summit. With the United Nations marking its 70th anniversary, it is highly significant for world leaders to get together in New York to chart the course for future development.

To the people of all countries, development bears on their survival and hope and symbolizes their dignity and rights. It is with such an aspiration that we laid down the Millennium Development Goals 15 years ago in an effort to better the lives for hundreds of millions of people around the world.

In these years, we have witnessed both continued growth worldwide and severe impacts of the international financial crisis, and both the sweeping rise of developing countries and the lingering unbalanced development between the North and the South. While elated at the fact that over 1.1 billion people have since shaken off poverty, we cannot but feel deeply worried that still over 800 million people must go to bed everyday with an empty stomach.

At the global level, peace and development remain the dominating themes of the times. To properly address the global challenges of various sorts, including the recent refugee crisis in Europe, there is no fundamental solution other than through pursuit of peace and development. Faced with the multitude of challenges and difficulties, we must hold on to development as our master key, for only through development can we resolve

the root cause of conflicts, safeguard the fundamental rights of the people, and meet the ardent hope of our people for a better future.

The post-2015 development agenda adopted by this Summit draws up a new blueprint for global development and provides international development cooperation with fresh opportunities. We should take it as a new starting point to work out a course of equitable, open, all-round and innovation-driven development in the interest of common development of all countries.

*We need to ensure equitable development to make access to development more equal.* All countries should be participants, contributors and beneficiaries of global development. Development must not be made available to just one or certain number of countries and not available to a lot more others. Countries may differ in capacity for and achievement in development, but they have common yet differentiated responsibilities with shared objectives. It is important to improve global economic governance, increase the representation and voice of developing countries and give all countries equal right to participating in international rule-making.

*We need to ensure open development to deliver its benefits to all parties.* With economic globalization growing steadily, all countries should keep their doors wide open in development and allow factors of production to flow more freely and smoothly across the world. It is important for all countries to uphold the multilateral trading system, build an open economy and come to share its benefits through mutual consultation and joint collaboration. We should respect each other's choice for development, draw on each other's experience therein and make our different paths cross at the point of success, thus bringing the rich fruits of development to our peoples.

*We need to ensure all-round development to make the groundwork of development more solid.* Development will ultimately serve the people. While striving to eliminate poverty and improve people's livelihood, it is important for us to uphold equity and social justice and ensure that everyone has access to opportunities and benefits of development. Efforts must be made to realize a coordinated development of the economy, society and environment and achieve harmonious coexistence between man and society and between man and nature.

*We need to ensure innovation-driven development to fully tap the development potential.* Innovation has brought with it vibrant drivers for development. Problems arising in the process of development can only be resolved through development. All countries should look to reform and innovation for ways to bring out their development potential, build stronger engines for growth and cultivate core competitive edge that they have not had before.

The post-2015 development agenda is a high-standard list of deliverables that carries with it our solemn commitment. It is often said the worth of any plan is in its implementation. I therefore call on the international community to redouble their collective efforts for the joint implementation of the post-2015 development agenda in the interest of cooperation.

- ☑ First, build up the development capacities. Development, in the final analysis, is the job of individual countries. We Chinese say, "Eat according to the size of one's stomach and dress according to the size of one's figure." It is therefore necessary for them to formulate their own development strategies that fit their endowment and their national conditions. The international community has a duty to help developing countries with capacity building and provide them with support and assistance tailored to their actual needs.
- ☑ Second, improve the international environment for development. Peace and development go hand in hand. Countries should work together to maintain international peace, promoting development with peace and securing peace through development. A sound external institutional environment is required to sustain development. International financial institutions therefore need to step up their governance reform, and multilateral development agencies need to increase their supply of development resources.
- ☑ Third, update the partnership for development. Developed countries should honor their commitments and live up to their obligations in a timely manner. The international community, while maintaining the role of South-North cooperation as the main channel, should work to deepen South-South and tripartite cooperation, and encourage the private sector and other stakeholders to play an even larger role in the partnerships.

- ☒ Fourth, strengthen the coordination mechanisms for development. Countries need to step up their macroeconomic policy coordination to avoid as much as possible negative spillover effects. Regional organizations should accelerate their integration process and build their overall competitiveness by mutually complementing intra-regional advantages. The United Nations needs to continue playing its leading role.

Over the past 30 years and more since embarking on reform and opening up, China has followed a development path with distinct Chinese characteristics, which was chosen in light of China's national conditions. By lifting 439 million people out of poverty and making remarkable progress in areas of education, health and women's welfare, China has basically realized the MDGs. China's development has not only improved the well-being of the 1.3 billion-plus Chinese people, but also given a strong boost to the global cause of development.

Over the past 60-plus years, China has taken an active part in international development cooperation. We have provided 166 countries and international organizations with nearly RMB400 billion worth of assistance and dispatched over 600,000 aid workers, over 700 of whom have laid down their precious lives in aiding the development of other countries.

Looking to the future, China will continue to take a right approach to justice and interests by putting justice before interests and join the other countries in the concerted efforts to realize the post-2015 development agenda. To this end, I wish to announce the following:

- ☐ China will establish an assistance fund for South-South cooperation, with an initial pledge of US\$2 billion in support of developing countries' implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.
- ☐ China will continue to increase investment in the Least Developed Countries, aiming to increase its total to US\$12 billion by 2030.
- ☐ China will exempt the debt of the outstanding intergovernmental interest-free loans due by the end of 2015 owed by the relevant Least Developed Countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing countries.
- ☐ China will establish an international development knowledge center to facilitate studies and exchanges by countries on theories and practices of development suited to their respective national conditions.
- ☐ China will propose discussion on establishing a global energy Internet to facilitate efforts to meet the global power demand with clean and green alternatives.
- ☐ China is also ready to work with other relevant parties to move forward the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative, achieve an early operation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the BRICS New Development Bank, and contribute to the economic growth and people's well-being of the developing countries.

Here, I would like to pledge China's solemn commitment to take implementation of the post-2015 development agenda as its bounden duty and work together with other countries for continued progress in global development.

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*Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, New York, 26 September 2015.*



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# Brazil's Foreign Policy, Security Strategy & Brazil-Bangladesh Relations

Wanja Campos da Nobrega



Brazilian foreign policy has permanent state goals. In this sense, the implementation of foreign policy targets the international insertion of Brazil and the defense of Brazil's interests in the world.

Brazil is a global player - a country of continental dimensions, with the seventh largest economy in the world and the fifth largest population. It is a country that has always been present in all the great events of international life, since its

independence in 1822. He participated in all the major events that marked the twentieth century.

Brazil has a universal presence and universal interests, plus then interest - engagement!.

Brazilian foreign policy is guided by the Constitutional principles, such as: non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; advocacy of multilateralism; of peaceful settlement of disputes between countries; respect for human rights.

As a society we are and want to always be a democratic and plural society.

Brazil stimulates and supports an international order that reflects these same plural and democratic values. This means an open, inclusive and participatory order. It also means a committed order with prosperity and stability, with economic progress associated with social inclusion.

Diplomacy therefore is essentially a political instrument. It is important to us therefore, dialogue and political consultation in all regions of the world; the effective presence in other countries and dialogue with their governments and societies; the deepening of trade, technology and investment for the benefit of the country; the maintenance of peace and international security; the construction of international rules; and the operating strengthened and reformed multilateral institutions in line with our goals.

Our interests are geographically global; our concerns, thematically universal. Thus, our relationships, choices and external actions are unaware of exclusiveness.

There has been significant increase in the number of Brazilian embassies and consulates which Brazil has opened in Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the Middle East in recent years.

Since 2003, Brazil has opened or re-opened new representative offices in 44 countries.

## Defense: South America

The first round of Brazil's international insertion is South America. It is a priority to consolidate South America as a space for integration and stability in all areas and the expansion of efforts in the same direction with other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Despite the continental extension of our 17,000 km border with 10 neighbors, Brazil has not been involved in any border conflict for almost 150 years.!

150 year of uninterrupted peace that Brazil enjoys in South America is not due to chance. It is the result of our belief that the political and diplomatic dialogue is the best way not only to resolve conflicts, but above all to prevent them.

Investment in respectful dialogue and harmonious coexistence with the countries of our region gives Brazil the rare privilege of being among the countries with the highest economic and political weight in the world, one of the few who face no regional rivalries or conflicts.

The Brazilian economy is partly associated with the integration process in South America and will be favored by the strengthening of MERCOSUR as a means of promoting prosperity of its members, but also as an effective political and diplomatic instrument, based on their unique historical experience as a framework for building trust among its members.



*Brazil statue- "Christ the Redeemer" is an Art Deco statue of Jesus Christ in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.*

## Developed Countries

The ties with the developed world - with the United States, the European Union and Japan, among others - will remain essential to our economic and technological development. These countries are indispensable sources of capital, technology, innovation and market.

Brazil and the United States, for example, have an important economic and trading partnership, developed mechanisms of dialogue and cooperation in favor of a mutually beneficial relationship which respects the differences, but engaged the achievement of concrete results in the areas of trade, investment, scientific and technological cooperation and education, among others.

Our relationships with the USA will soon celebrate two centuries of existence.

Also with the European countries have a deep relationship, either bilaterally with individual countries, or between the two regional blocs. This relationship is facilitated by historical ties - remember that Brazil, a country of immigration has received millions of European immigrants from Portugal, Italy, Spain, Germany, Poland and others. These countries are important market for our goods and services and source of investment and technology transfer.

## Asia

Japan is old and valued partner in various fields. The example of the European countries, immigration of significant numbers of Japanese, especially early last century, greatly contributes to the proximity between the two countries. Incidentally, the largest population of Japanese descent outside Japan is in Brazil.

We also consolidate our strategic partnership with China. Actually, China has become in the decade the biggest Brazilian commercial partner, overpassing 40 years of American trade leadership.

We share with India common challenges and diplomatic horizons that unite us. We have in Russia a strategic partner in favor of a multipolar and balanced order.

We will strengthen relations with and within the BRICS countries and other emerging countries. We are in the implementation phase of the BRICS Development Bank (renamed New Development Bank) and the Contingent Reservations Arrangement, whose headquarter is in Shanghai.

It is crucial to deepen relations with the other countries of Asia, which remains the region with the greatest economic dynamism of our planet.

## South-South



It is clear that South-South dimension, which is consolidated on our diplomacy and what is not, in any way exclusive, left a clear diagnosis. The South is an active part in geopolitics and geo-economics in the world. We want to deepen cooperation with developing countries carried out by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, ABC. Such cooperation in various fields such as agriculture, biotechnology and health, not only strengthens our ties with these countries, but also helps to project Brazil's interests in the world, more broadly.



## Africa and Middle East

We maintain and deepen relations with countries in Africa and the Middle East, two regions linked to Brazil by historical ties and concrete interests.

Africa occupies in our foreign policy a prominent place. We share with Africa an important part of our identity, history and culture. There are those countries an extraordinary interest in deepening political and economic relations with Brazil and an extraordinary demand for cooperation initiatives in areas such as agriculture, biotechnology and health.

## International System

Whilst all those changes were taking place in Brazil, the international system was rearranging itself. Just to recall some of the main issues.

- The end of East-West political rivalry, in 1991: It led to a global rearrangement of the political distribution of power.
- The rise of non-State, asymmetric threats to human security: Such as, Human Rights crisis, Environmental catastrophes, Terrorism, emergence of the "poverty challenges", and the Refugee crisis. The world is facing right at this moment the biggest international migration crisis.
- The diversification of economic guidelines and new thinking after the 2008 international economic crisis: Rise of new economic powers
- The redistribution of power: That implies loss for some countries and gain for others, which could take the first BRICS Summit, in 2009, as its symbol.

It is not possible to regard unilateral actions as legitimate. The world must recognize the new regional and global powers, especially regarding collective security. In this sense, it is urgent to restructure international forums such as the United Nations Security Council.

In this sense, more than half countries of the world have now given some support for the Brazilian bid to a permanent seat on that Council. The recognition for Brazil's legitimacy, efficiency, representatively and transparency when dealing with global issues doesn't halt on the UNSC, though, and has been seen on: the Brazilian leadership of Minustah, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; the Brazilian leadership on Trade and Agriculture discussions, and many others.

These qualities have gathered plenty of support to the Brazilian stance in other international entities: we have broadened our basis of financial contribution to the International Monetary Fund; we have elected a Brazilian candidate, a consensus seeker, to the World Trade Organization, as well as another Brazilian, a specialist in Agriculture and an anti-hunger intellectual, to the Food and Agriculture Organization.

The countries that suffered less with the 2008 crisis were the ones which resisted the pressures for deregulation - mainly, Asian and Latin American countries, which learned their lessons from the 1997, 1998 and 2001 economic crises. The crisis thus helped us understanding that the invisible hand is not that powerful, that certain State co-ordination is needed and that economic activity should be addressing productive sectors of society, not speculative ones. Moreover, the 2008 crisis helped changing the G8 to become the G20.

The rise of the G20 was, from my point of view, a big flag in favour of the redistribution of power that invariably implies loss for some countries and gain for others.

An example, it is the first BRICS Leaders Summit in 2009. Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa who took big steps into proving that our countries, already big global players, could work towards the democratization of power in the international system.

It is unnecessary to mention that the global presence of the BRICS countries has contributed to dilute the power influence of the traditional global players.

Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa have made their ways into the economic and political stage.



It is the 7th BRICS Summit - held in Brazil in 2014 - that resulted in the creation of an international bank (The New Development Bank) to address developing issues.

These changes showed us that another world is possible. A world without unilateralism, without poverty and hunger, with peace and tolerance, without Terrorism or Extremism, in favour of civil and individual liberties and the full development of human abilities.

### Bangladesh-Brazil Relations



This is also how we chose to view Bangladesh. In forty years of independence, Bangladesh has been able to stabilize the economy, to fight poverty, to advance economic activity, including exports and the widening of a domestic market now resilient to external shocks. Just like Brazil, Bangladesh achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals before the deadline. Bangladesh empowered women, built a more democratic access to health and education, and improved living conditions.

Brazil was the first Latin American country to recognize the independence of Bangladesh and the only Latin American to have a resident embassy in Dhaka - two aspects that demonstrate the importance that we granted to the bilateral relationship.

Brazil and Bangladesh established diplomatic relations in 1972. The Bangladeshi Embassy in Brasilia was opened the following year. The Brazilian official presence in Bangladesh began with the opening of the embassy in Dhaka in 1974. The installation of a Brazilian diplomatic representation, the first by a Latin American country in Bangladesh, was coated of great importance for political rapprochement between the two countries. Due to budgetary constraints, however, the Embassy in Dhaka was shut down in 1998 and the Embassy of Bangladesh in Brasilia in 2002. The Embassy in Dhaka was reopened in January 2010, and the Embassy of Bangladesh in Brasilia, in turn, in 2012.

It is small number of Brazilian citizens when live in Bangladeshi territory, estimated at 40 residents. Bilateral trade grew significantly in recent years, surpassing the \$ 1 billion level since 2011. Both Governments have, however, sought to establish positive ties of technical cooperation.

Bangladesh is part of the group of 18 priority countries to participate in the initial activities of the Centre of Excellence Against Hunger, opened in Brasilia in November 2011. The Brazilian government is in partnership with the World Food Program of the United Nations. The Centre's work aims to encourage the development of skills in the field of food security, nutrition and school feeding.

Bangladesh is a signatory of the draft resolution of G-4 on the expansion of the UNSC. From Bangladesh, there were demonstrated sympathy in favor of Brazilian claim to a permanent seat in the UNSC, but still no explicit support. Between Bangladesh and Brazil, the number of visits and bilateral meetings have increased.

To us, Bangladesh is a friend and a partner. Our trade is growing but I believe it is still far from reaching its full potential.

The Brazilian exports to Bangladesh in 2014 was primarily consists of: sugar (76%); soybean oil (8%); soybeans (4%); waste soybean oil extraction (2%) and cellulose acetate cables. Among the imports from Bangladesh, this year, the highlights were: textiles (over 90%) and jute (1%).

In April 2014, the Brazilian Embassy in Dhaka began prospecting for potential purchases by the Bangladesh Armed Forces Brazilian defense products. Since 2011, Brazil exported more than \$ 1 million dollars in

weaponry to Bangladesh. Sales of Brazilian small arms, especially now forging Taurus SA, continues to grow. In 2012, equipment was sold for US \$ 973,891 and, in 2013, the year closed with US \$ 1,330,033. The forecasts for 2014 and 2015 are, respectively, \$ 1,500,000 and US \$ 2,250,000.

Taking into account the growing bilateral trade balance Brazil-Bangladesh Embassy of Brazil in Dhaka in February 2015, suggested some Brazilian companies, whose exported products have obtained good reception in the market, exert more effective presence with local buyers. Moreover commodities (especially sugar and edible oil), there are two high-value segments and growth potential, namely, light weapons and aircraft (commercial and military).

There is great potential for cooperation to be explored between the two countries. Both have several successful initiatives in the social area aimed at combating poverty that could be adapted to the peculiarities of each. Brazil and Bangladesh face similar challenges and can benefit from the exchange of experiences in this area.

The two countries are exposed to periods of flooding and would be mutually beneficial exchanges of information about mitigation of natural disasters effects adopted in each.

There is interest from the Bangladeshi side to receive technical cooperation of Brazil in a variety of fields. The main interest is in agriculture. Cooperation projects could be developed through dialogue between EMBRAPA and the "Bangladesh Agriculture Research". Attributed to stress, moreover, in social programs to combat hunger and poverty and family farming, as well as professional training in public management. Other areas of interest would be the census and statistics and electoral organization.

There is great potential to be explored in the Energy sector, especially related to the natural gas reserves recently discovered in Bangladesh and large Brazilian experience in renewable energy, particularly in the fields of hydroelectricity and biofuels technologies. Bangladesh can benefit, too, from the Brazilian experience in power generation in rural areas.

Brazil has the technical capacity to the construction of large civil engineering works (bridges, roads) and could contribute to the development of Bangladesh infrastructure.

We agree on so many grounds: the need for advancing Human Rights without embargos, punishment and other types of actions that only harm the innocent populations; economic growth as a tool for human development; the importance of agriculture and food security; SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITH RESPECT TO ENVIRONMENT AND CONCERN WITH GLOBAL WARMING, the focus on peace building actions that can really foster a country's development, to fight corruption, to have a more transparent and fair society.

Bangladesh is an example of secular State and moderate population in the region. Bangladesh's actions towards regional peace and stability and focus on development are dear to us. Our countries sit close to each other in so many stances - from World Trade Organization to the United Nations General Assembly - that our contacts have only been growing. Our cultural exchanges as well.

The value of this long lasting and dear friendship has been confirmed in the minds of my colleagues and myself after seeing the passion that Bangladeshi supports have shown to our country during the World Cup last year. This is more than football to us: this is the proof that Brazil is here, Bangladesh is there, and we are together for what it may take.

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**Wanja Campos da Nobrega**, Brazilian Ambassador to Bangladesh  
(Précis of Madam Ambassador's lecture at the National Defence College, Dhaka, August 2015)

# China and the world

Professor Selina Mohsin



As we celebrate, years of Bangladesh-China diplomatic relations we should also note the extent to which over two decades of rapid economic growth have transformed not only China itself but also much of the world. In purchasing power parity terms China now has not only the largest population but the largest economy. Despite the huge resources devoted to its own development, its 45% savings rate and enormous trade surplus have enabled it to pour investment and expertise into infrastructure development in Africa, Latin America and elsewhere on a totally new scale. Since the 2008-9 global financial crisis its massive imports have provided 40% of world demand growth. China is the world's largest oil consumer and importer and its economy's thirst for minerals and other commodities has guided much of its investment abroad. Chinese tourists have flooded into cities like Paris and London and millions of newly affluent urban middle class Chinese have created a new market for luxury products from the West.

As China's external trade has expanded, so has its drive to invest in projects designed to facilitate that trade while also reducing over dependence on sea routes, particularly given the narrow choke point of the Malacca Straits. A new network of roads, rail-

ways and oil and gas pipelines is growing to connect western China with central Asia and Europe. Regular freight trains already operate to Germany as part of the vast 'New Silk Route', which is backed with \$40 billions of Chinese projects. Another \$46 billions has been pledged by President Xi for power and other projects in Pakistan, as part of an 'Economic Corridor' linking Xinjiang with the new Chinese built and operated port of Gwadar, in Baluchistan on the Indian Ocean. An agreement has just been signed with Laos for a high speed railway to help speed access to South East Asia as far as Singapore. At the same time the 'Maritime Sea Route' is not being neglected, such as the new Chinese financed Hambantota port in Sri Lanka.

All this has immense potential for world growth and prosperity, but 2015 has seen a further slowdown in the Chinese economy as it makes a transition towards services and consumption while also trying to manage high levels of local government and domestic debt. It is further evidence of China's huge importance that even a slowdown has caused real alarm throughout much of the world, particularly as combined with a halving of oil prices. Emergent market countries reliant on mining and commodities exports are especially hit, with the probability of US and UK rate rises additionally worrying for those with high dollar denominated debt levels.

In world politics China under President Xi aroused concern with a more assertive foreign policy in the South China Sea but has recently seemed to have swung towards greater support for the UN and a readiness to help boost the World Bank's development capital. The USA and Japan remain cautious but seem ready to work alongside the new China led Asian Infrastructure Development Bank. Russia sees the rise of Chinese influence in Central Asian states once part of the Soviet Union and in its thinly populated Eastern Siberia, but is forced to try to work with this, including with new bodies such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. India's population and economic growth, together with border disputes inevitably establishes a degree of rivalry but neither side wants rivalry to disrupt mutual trade. China dislikes India allowing the Dalai Lama his sanctuary in Dehra Dun and India's relations with Pakistan, China's ally, remain strained. Yet both Asian giants have an interest in regional stability and might find it possible to work for that stability in Afghanistan and Central Asia.



Bangladesh needs cooperation from both China and India and has good relations with both. Prime Minister Modi and Sheikh Hasina have made progress in cooperation despite some remaining issues.

Bangladesh has excellent relations with China and, as wages in China have risen so Bangladesh has gained from transfers of greater RMG manufacturing capacity. It is to be hoped that the long projected Asian Highway will eventually also help bi-lateral trade by easing travel to China across Myanmar.

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*Professor Selina Mohsin, Former Ambassador of Bangladesh.*



# Russian intervention in Syria, its momentous consequences

Enam A. Chaudhury



Ever since August 8, 2008, when Russian tanks rolled across the border in to Georgia in immediate response to Georgian armed attack and bombings in the South Ossetia's regional capital Tskhinvali, it became evident that Russia has decided to play its own role in global arena in defence of what it would define as its own interest. Its subsequent recognition and support to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, interventions in Ukraine and Crimea, and now its direct involvement in the Syrian Crisis have had momentous consequences.

The fortunes of President Bashar Al-Assad, and the possibilities of peace in the region have suffered so many set-backs, and they face so much of uncertainties with new signs of doubts emerging within different concerned bases that it is difficult to say anything definitively that will sustain vicissitudes in any length of time. Situation is fast changing. Nevertheless, the truth in any moment of

passing time has its relevance and significance. Moreover, now with the direct intervention of Russia in Syria, the situation seems to be taking a turn having possibilities of a long-term solution. The balance of power, and the complexion of group-interests will undergo a radical change.

When the U.S. and her allies started air strikes, Syrian government did see opportunity and risks in them. Initially it was thought that President Obama's declaration that he may strike in Syria against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) granted a reprieve to battling President Al-Assad. The American decision, endorsed, by her allies, represented an indirect victory for Assad's long-standing strategy of obliterating opposition to his rule and persuading the world to believe that it faces a stark choice between him and the Islamic militants, who, inter-alia threaten the West and its unchallenged military and economic supremacy. However, there were also worries in Damascus that the American strikes in Syria, part of a ramped-up campaign against ISIS, carry new risks. Pro-government analysts held that it was not certain as to who would benefit militarily-government force, or Syrian insurgents and separatist Kurds, who also had clashed with the foreign-led ISIS militants. However, it was clear that neither the Syrian Army nor the west-supported groups among the Syrian insurgents were capable of taking immediate advantage of any weakening of ISIS, particularly in the Eastern Provinces bordering Iraq, where it is strongest - Raqqa and Deir Al-Zaur. US had thought that new aid to Syrian insurgents and air-strikes against ISIS will persuade the moderates to act as ground force against the ISIS as sending American force was ruled out, but that did not work at all. Rather, there is a sense of dejection and a belief in US camp (which includes Britain, France and other supporters) that the new, and the unavoidable focus on IS, has derailed what was left of Western Political will to oust President Assad or foster a 'favourable' political compromise any time soon.

Moreover, Western interventions and armed forays in the Middle-East and in Afghanistan have historically proved futile, destructive and counter-productive. Even the drone attacks, which occasionally have been indiscriminate, on Pak-Afghan border-area, have created widespread adverse re-action. The recent US air-strike on the

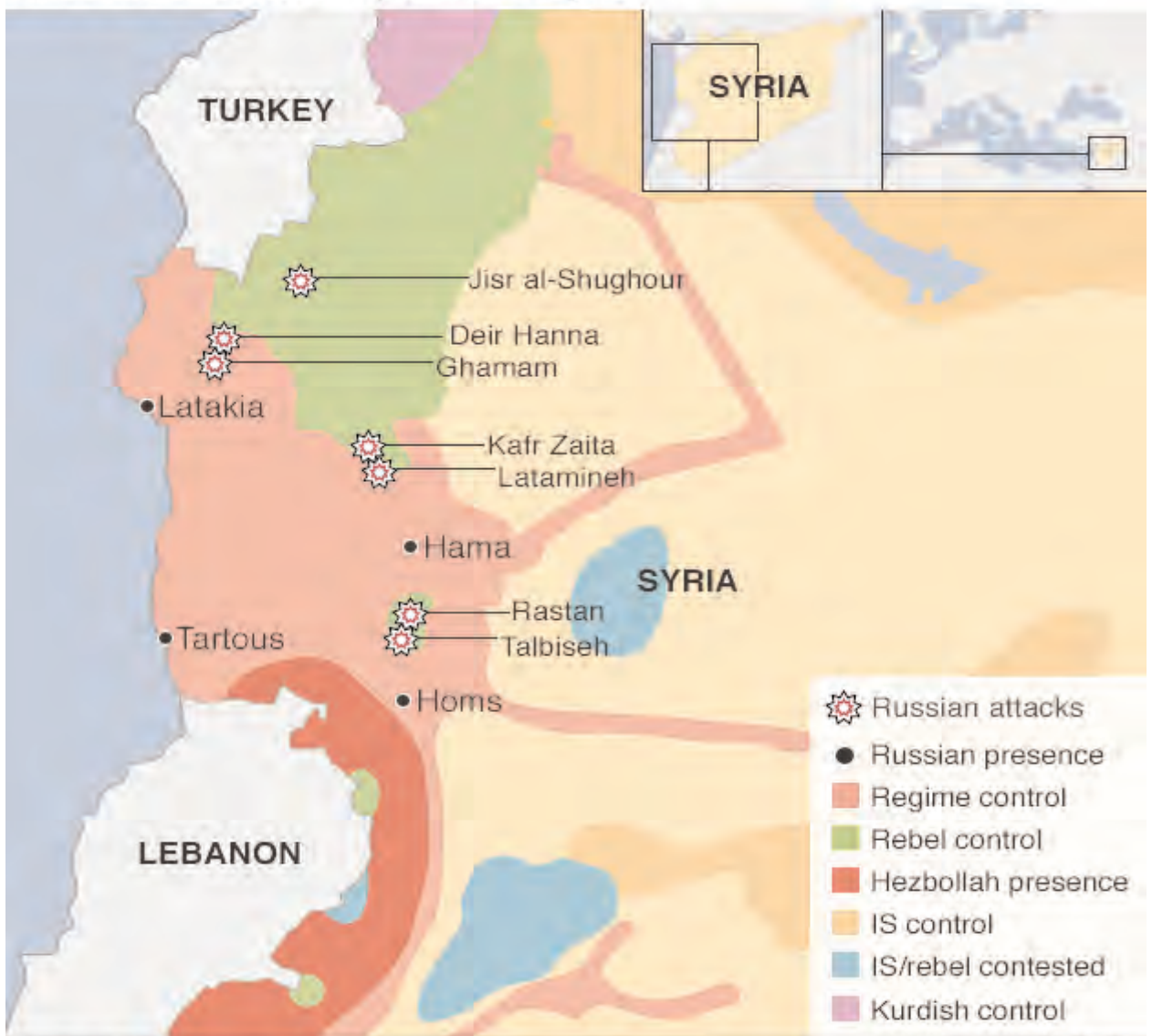


*President Bashar al-Assad of Syria and President Vladimir Putin of Russia meet in Moscow, October 20, 2015. [Source: The New York Times]*

Hospital in Kunduj run by the MSF (Medicine Sans Frontier), an international humanitarian agency, in which not only 19 patients and doctors were killed, but the hospital itself was razed to the ground, has given rise to world-wide condemnation, and a demand for trying the perpetrators of these brutal killings (The US Force)- as war-crimes of the most heinous level. The UN High commissioner for Human Rights termed it as a 'crime against humanity'. As soon as the bombings started, the US authorities were warned by MSF, but of no avail.

This is just one of the numerous mindless military interventions the US and the West have got themselves involved in. This happened when Iraq was devastated in the name of not-to-be-found Chemical bombs and weapons for mass destruction. (WMD) thereby worsening the situation. Naturally, when Russia decided to, and started well-directed meaningful air-strikes against IS (aided by Syrian governmental intelligence) on September 30, 2015, this was welcomed by people who really aspired for peace and stability in the region. Even Egypt heartily welcomed it through a strongly-worded message from her Foreign Minister. In a TV interview on October 3, 2015, he said- 'Russia's direct involvement will now make it easier to halt the spread of terrorism and its eradication'. Vladimir Putin announced that Russia has initiated this direct action in

### Russian airstrikes reported in Syria



Source: ISW, Strike targets: AFP

BBC

order to help and support her long-term friend Basher Al-Assad and to root out IS from the region. Obviously, Russian bombers will not spare the Syrian rebels. After Russian air-strikes hit ten strategic IS locations on October 2-3, 2015, an emboldened President Assad said his country, along with Russia, Iran and Iraq are jointly fighting against terrorism in the region and hopefully they will win. "Otherwise the results will be disastrous." The British PM David Cameron, however, said that it has been 'Putin's big mistake'. And Germany's Angela Merkel said 'only a political solution can ease the situation, and not military intervention'. But whatever may be the outcome, the fact is that henceforth Russia will have to be reckoned with as a World Power playing its role in the region. Significantly, China and Iran have expressed hope that Russia's move will lead to a resolution of the Syrian crisis. With the launching of rockets from Warships and shooting cruise missiles on ISIS positions and the threat of bringing in land army if required, it seems that Russia is determined to fulfill its mission. There are demands from Iraq as well for Russian intervention.

Meanwhile the awful and tragic Makka disasters have tarnished the image of the Saudi Royal family, the most trusted ally of the US and the West, and have weakened its hold in the Middle East and the Muslim world. Saudi Arabia's waning global influence is evident, and so is the weakness of its coercive governance based on austere interpretation of Islamic religious texts. It is widely held that "Saudi Arabia and the US have nothing in common other than the fact that the former has oil, and the latter needs it to lubricate the engines of its military and economic might. As such their alliance is just a cooperation of convenience with no moral or ideological commonality".

In 2005, the then US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice publicly told the Arab regimes that the days of unconditional American support for them and their repressive polices were over. She said, "For 60 years, we often thought that we could achieve stability without liberty in the Middle East. And ultimately, we got neither. Now we must recognize, as we do in other regions of the world, that liberty and democracy are the only guarantees of true stability and lasting security."

Unfortunately, the US did not follow these principles sincerely in a non-partisan manner. The US failed to recognize the supreme importance of ending the illegal and unacceptable occupation of Arab land in Palestine, the unavoidable necessity of stopping the aggressive designs and brutal conduct of Israel, which are the main impediments for bringing in liberty, democracy and security in the region. Additionally, the US misjudged the situation, particularly in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, adopted and executed policies which went against the vital interests of the countries concerned and became completely counterproductive and dangerously divisive. Only with Iran now, the US has shown a sense of maturity, and profitably (for both) avoided a direct confrontation. There is no reason why Iran's presence in the region should not be recognized with due importance, particularly when seriously addressing the all-important ISIS and Palestinian issues.

The US and the West have to review, and make necessary adjustments in their M.E. Policy. This would warrant some radical thinking. The two main confrontational groups are led by USA and Russia. It is very unlikely that in the US-led group, the important ones, France, Britain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar or Turkey, would take any independent stand. However, they also have their own angles. Recently President Francois Hollande of France, in his address to the European Parliament, alongside German Chancellor Merkel, said "what happens in Syria concerns Europe, what happens there will determine the balance of the whole region for a long time." He pointed out that they (The west) will like to give Syrian people an alternative to both Bashar and IS which is unlikely to happen. The US insists that it does not cooperate with Russia on air-strikes, but cooperates only on basic safety precaution. US Defence Secretary Ash Carter, however, adds that "they (Russia) continue to hit targets that are not IS. We believe this is a fundamental mistake." Russia will, of course, hit rebel positions and assist Syrian governmental forces (Assad) in their land attack on the rebels. As a matter of fact, Russia is prepared to send army on land as well. Turkey has protested air-space violation by Russian warplanes, but there is hardly anything more it can do, though Turkey strongly supports the US-led group having identical goals. The support countries like Britain, Saudi Arabia and Qatar will not change the balance. Russia holds that it is not the question of rejecting both Assad and IS, only IS will have to go and that too with Assad's support. With the launching of rockets and cruise-missiles, air-strikes and the threat of even sending land-army, Russia is determined to ensure that Iraq episode is not repeated in Syria, and that the present Syriangovernment continues. Not just Iran, but to most objective analysts, this seems now to be the best possible option or the lesser poison. There cannot be any double standard in trying to oust President



Al-Assad in the pretext of removing an autocrat with the support of other autocratic and repressive regimes. President Putin rightly argues that the removal of Assad would lead Syria to the situation prevailing now in Iraq and Libya, which again have been the outcome of the mindless and utterly wrong policies followed by the West. Assad's ouster will create complete lawlessness, and will, inter-alia, lead to carnage of the Alawite Shia population in Syria. It would also be impossible to effectively deal with the ISIS without the cooperation of President Assad and the Syrian government. If Assad fails, then between the rebels (with all external support) and the ISIS, the ISIS is likely to prevail, the rebels having no unified command nor extensive popular support. It has now become unavoidable to view any eventual peace-process in Syria without Assad's participation and IS destruction. In other words, however bitter it may be, The US and Europe will need to cooperate with Russia (and Iran), and indirectly Assad, if it seriously seeks meaningful peace in Syria and in the region, and effective elimination of ISIS.



*Smoke rises from the Syrian town of Kobane.*

The US-Russian 'moral consensus' of 2002 is now a distant memory. The list of issues separating the US and Russia has been growing long, and the issues extend well beyond the 'values gap.' Relationship became pronouncedly strained when Russian tanks rolled into Georgia in August-2008, in response to US policy therein. US moves that irked Moscow included prescribing Western democracy, recklessly encouraging Georgia and Ukraine to seek NATO membership, attempting to install ballistic missile defences in Eastern Europe, challenging Russian dominance, particularly in, the energy sector in central Asia and the Caucasus, encroaching on Russian hoped-for sphere of influence in ME and in its neighborhood. However, now that the US and Europe have experienced their inability to help Russia's neighbours slip into the Western orbit without a full-blown international crisis, and that Russia has emerged well in a test of strength in Georgia (Abkhazia and South, Ossetia), Ukraine and Crimea, it would be realistic for the west to re-assess the effectiveness of Russia's determination to ensure that her Syria policy succeeds. The stakes are high, and at least prudence should now oblige US and the West to seek Russian-Iranian cooperation in crushing the IS. It is evident that now the two sides-the US and Russia-will not see major goals and major international problems in broadly



compatible terms and that more than ever before, they should deal with each other as equals. Otherwise, Russia will follow its own course, "powered by a bristlier conception of its interests than at any time since the end of the cold war, by domestic political arrangements that appear to feed on international tension and by an enhanced ability to stand its own ground." (Prof. Stephen Sestanovitch vol.87 No 6 Foreign Affairs)

Recently, Al-Jazeera conducted an analytical discussion on the Syrian Crisis with a view to finding out a solution to end it. It seemed to me that some pragmatic truths emerged through the discussions. As it stands now, the situation may perhaps be summed up as follows:

- a) President Al-Assad has not been alone responsible for all the ills in Syria. Merely his removal will not solve the problem. Rather, this may be accentuated as it happened in Iraq and Libya after the removal of president Saddam Husain and Gaddafi respectively.
- b) If the rebels get defeated in the process of crushing the IS, it would perhaps be easier to bring in some sort of order in Syria. This will ease the Syrian refugee-problem to some extent, by drastically lowering the number of willing illegal immigrants about which Europe, and rightly so, is deeply concerned. At least there will be in Damascus a government that can control and administer.
- c) In Syria, the Western intelligence seems to have failed miserably as it happened in Iraq. The deficiency in their proper understanding of the Syrian (and the Middle-Eastern) problem is clearly evident from their inability to solve any problem whatsoever.
- d) Russia, and along with it Iran as well, will henceforth play significantly important roles in Syria and in M.E. Russian power and determination will have to be recognized. The IS cannot be crushed without Russo-Iranian cooperation, and in that process President Bashar Al-Assad will have an important role. Perhaps keeping this in view, the new Justin Trudeau government in Canada has withdrawn its fighting air-squad from the US-led anti-Assad offensive.
- e) Even though the rebels get and will continue to get a lot of support from different sources, they will be marginalized as an outcome of the all-out Russian offensive against the IS which targets them as well. The Syrian governmental Army will get stronger and the Iraqi government offensive against IS will increasingly become more effective.

The significantly important point to note here is that this direct participation of Moscow, along with the governments in Damascus and Tehran, have large-scale support. Plenty of other countries, from China and Venezuela to Egypt and Iraq-many more countries, and countless multitudes across the globe share Russian view of the regional power-struggle and the eventual peace-process. Beijing's People's Daily, the official newspaper, in a recent write-up commented that Russian military assertion in Syria "is a sensible strategic move in response to the strategic maneuvers in the region in the past few years." Furthermore, as the Global Times recently reported "Washington's escalation of tension over the maritime dispute in the South-China sea may lead to China's launching of counter-measures according to Washington's level of provocation." Though China's military involvement in the Syrian conflict is ruled out, these factors may strengthen Sino-Russian identical stand in some important geo-political issues, including ones in Syria and in the rest of the M.E. This bond may even influence the course of politics and power-grouping in South-Asia. Russia and Pakistan, a China-ally, are now coming closer as never before, a possibility which may be immensely liked by countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives, who feel aggrieved by the conduct of India, a country getting close to the alleged US-Japan Pacific Axis.

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*Xi Jinping Delivers Speech at High-level Roundtable on South-South Cooperation, Expounding on Cooperation Initiatives on South-South Cooperation in the New Era and Stressing to Uplift South-South Cooperation Cause to a New High.*

## Spot light: Chinese President Xi Jinping pushes for closer South-South Cooperation at UN

On September 26, 2015, President Xi Jinping attended and chaired the High-level Roundtable on South-South Cooperation co-hosted by China and the United Nations (UN) at the UN headquarters in New York, summarizing the experience and discussing the development plan on South-South cooperation with leaders of vast developing countries and heads of international organizations. President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi of Egypt, President Edgar Lungu of Zambia, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, President Rafael Correa of Ecuador, President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, Prime Minister Najib Razak of Malaysia, Prime Minister Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi of Samoa, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh, Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen of Denmark, and other heads of state and governments, as well as Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the UN and heads of other international organizations such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) were present at the Roundtable.

In his speech, Xi Jinping pointed out that Mr. Deng Xiaoping had stated in his speech at the UN General Assembly in 1974 that China was a developing nation belonging to the third world. Although China has scored tremendous development achievements in the past 40-odd years, China is still a developing country and the importance it attaches to South-South cooperation remains unchanged. China proposing to hold this Roundtable aimed at promoting South-South cooperation for higher-level and more in-depth development.

Xi Jinping pointed out that South-South cooperation, as a great pioneering measure uniting the developing

nations together for self-improvement, is featured by equality, mutual trust, mutual benefit, win-win result, solidarity and mutual assistance and can help developing nations pave a new path for development and prosperity. As the overall strength of developing nations improves, the South-South cooperation is set to play a bigger role in promoting the collective rise of developing countries and generating a robust, sustained, balanced and inclusive growth of the world economy.

Xi Jinping raised the following proposals on South-South cooperation in the new era:

- ❑ **The first is to explore diversified paths of development:** A matched key is required to open the lock. The developing countries should stick to the development paths of their independent choice and with their unique characteristics, share successful experience in governance and administration of state affairs, focus on capacity-building, explore growth potentials, solve development difficulties and improve the well-being of the people.
- ❑ **The second is to commit to docking the development strategies of developing nations:** The developing countries should make better use of their comparative advantages, enhance macroeconomic policy coordination, and advance cooperation simultaneously in such areas as economy, trade, finance, investment, infrastructure construction and environmental protection, so as to improve the overall competitiveness of the developing countries.
- ❑ **The third is to strive for results from practical development:** The developing countries should concentrate on rolling out a number of flagship projects with strategic and exemplary significance by taking connectivity and production capacity cooperation as breakthrough points and giving full play to such new mechanisms as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank of BRICS, so as to generate sound economic, social and environmental effect and instill vigor to South-South cooperation.
- ❑ **The fourth is to improve the global development framework:** The developing countries should promote the reform of global economic governance, consolidate the multilateral trading system, promote the Doha Round negotiations to obtain authorization at an early date, expand communication and exchanges with developed countries, forge a diversified partnership system, and thus build a community of common interests.



*Chinese President Xi Jinping (L) meets with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the UN headquarters in New York, Sept. 26, 2015.—Photo-Xinhua*

Xi Jinping announced that in order to help other developing countries to grow economy and improve people's livelihood, China will carry out the "Six 100s" initiative, according to which it will make available to other developing countries in the next five years 100 poverty reduction programs, 100 agricultural cooperation projects, 100 trade promotion and aid programs, 100 environmental protection and climate change programs, 100 hospitals and clinics, and 100 schools and vocational training centers. In the next five years, China will provide 120,000 opportunities and 150,000 scholarships for citizens of other developing countries to receive training and education in China, and help nurture 500,000 professional technicians for the rest of the developing world. China will also set up an Academy of South-South Cooperation and Development, and provide 2 million USD of aid in cash for the World Health Organization.

Xi Jinping stressed that solidarity and cooperation with other developing countries form the unshakable foundation of China's foreign policy, and that as a developing nation, China will share its development opportunities with other developing countries. China will closely link its development with the common growth of the developing world, connect the Chinese Dream with the dream of all the people in the developing countries for a better life, and join hands with other developing countries to create a bright future for common progress.

The Roundtable proceeded in a friendly and warm atmosphere. The leaders of other developing nations and heads of international organizations present at the Roundtable expressed gratitude to China for convening the Roundtable and their full support for Xi Jinping's initiative and propositions on South-South cooperation, saying that China is providing leadership in international affairs. The major and practical measures President Xi Jinping announced at UN Sustainable Development Summit and the Roundtable testify to the importance China attaches to, the support China renders for and the contributions China makes to South-South cooperation. The South has become a major impetus for global growth and South-South cooperation has become an important supplement to international development cooperation. However, South-South cooperation cannot replace North-South cooperation or the developed countries' aid to their developing peers. The UN should increase support for South-South cooperation.

Xi Jinping emphasized in the end that the post-2015 development agenda sets a higher development objective and brings forwards more demands for all parties. The South-South cooperation should take the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda as an opportunity to boost the development of the developing countries at higher levels and in broader areas.

The Roundtable issued a joint communique of the co-chairs, which affirms the significant contributions of the South-South cooperation, summarizes important principle of South-South cooperation and raises the suggestions on deepening South-South cooperation including boosting experience exchange in development philosophy, deepening coordination in macroeconomic policy, forging flagship cooperation projects and promoting reform on global economic governance.

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*Chinese President **Xi Jinping** attended and chaired the High-level Roundtable on South-South Cooperation co-hosted by China and the United Nations (UN) at the UN Headquarters in New York, September 27, 2015.*



# Let the Ocean Embrace You on Holiday in Seychelles

**Md. Amiruzzaman**



The Indian Ocean island nation of Seychelles is a well-known tourist destination throughout the region. But the majority of visitors come to Seychelles and confine themselves to the main islands of Mahe, Praslin, and La Digue. In the process they deny themselves the chance to see some of the greatest beauties the island chain has to offer. Taking a boat from each of these main islands unlocks a world of wonder just waiting to be explored.

When the winter weather turns bitter and seems as though it will never end, millions around the globe dream of warm temperatures, turquoise waters, and the sun's embrace. Whether these people realise it or not, the Indian Ocean island nation of Seychelles is the very definition of paradise on Earth. Consisting of roughly 100 different islands and islets about 1,000 miles off Africa's west coast, the Seychelles have

a number of hidden gems begging to be explored and experienced.

A trip to the Seychelles is not a success however unless the full breadth of the islands is experienced. Travelling to the capital city of Victoria on Mahe (the main island) and calling it a holiday would be like travelling to New York City and saying "I've seen America." To experience the Seychelles one must traverse its waters, take in its natural beauty, and enjoy its beaches.

## **Excursions from Mahe**

Every visitor to Seychelles will arrive on the main island of Mahe, home to the capital and international airport. While Victoria is the home of modernity in Seychelles, it is far from the main attraction. From Mahe, visitors can set out by boat and air transport to experience the variety of geographical and natural wonders the other islands have to offer.

## **Excursions from Praslin**

Praslin is the second largest island in the chain and while there is an airport, it does not operate on the scale of the international airport on Mahe. Most visitors to Praslin arrive via boat or helicopter transfer. On the island itself, tourists will find some of the richest wildlife in the country. Praslin is home to substantial stretches of tropical forest.

Numerous unique bird species call these forests home, including the Seychelles Bulbul and Black Parrot. The island is also home to the Vallee de Mai nature preserve with its one-of-a-kind coco de mer and vanilla orchids. The islands and islets surrounding Praslin are not without their own charm though.

## **Excursions from La Digue**

The third largest island in the archipelago, La Digue is often overlooked by international travelers because of its smaller population and transportation issues. In order to get to La Digue, international visitors arrive at the international airport on Mahe before catching a ferry to Praslin and another to La Digue.

Those looking for a truly wild destination can embark on the 15 minute boat ride to Ile Cocos. The island has been a protected marine park since 1996 and offers a multitude of aquatic and land-based excursions. What makes Ile Cocos unique is the lack of services and accommodation on the island. For a day, visitors can step out of the modern world to enjoy the quiet and beauty of Mother Nature.

The island of La Digue itself features towering granite boulders and a rugged mountainous landscape that must be seen to be believed. The island is home to but a few Seychellois people, roughly 2,000. Those who live here often travel by bike which leaves the island feeling like a piece of unspoiled nature in an increasingly modern world.

As for the beach at Anse Source d'Argent, there are few places on Earth to rival its quaint beauty. The beach itself



is framed in by rocky granite cliffs in the background and an offshore reef that encircles the cove, keeping the waters calm and clear for swimmers. Perhaps the most stunning feature of Anse Source d'Argent is its pink sand beaches.

#### How to get in there

Air Seychelles (HM), the national carrier, operates non-stop scheduled flights from Mauritius, South Africa (Johannesburg) into Mahé International Airport. Qatar Airways (QR), Etihad Airways (EY), Mihin Lanka

and Emirates (EK) provide flights to various destinations through their hubs in Dubai, Abu Dhabi Sri Lanka and Doha.

Seychelles International Airport Code: SEZ. Location: Seychelles International Airport is situated 10km (6 miles) southeast of Victoria, on the island of Mahe. Cruise ships: The Seychelles is a popular cruise stop and there are frequent cruises of the islands. The majority of cruise lines stop at Mahé. Some will also visit La Digue.



With so much natural beauty spread across a myriad of islands and islets, the only way to spend a holiday in the Seychelles is with a boat at the ready. Whether it is a private or charter yacht, sailboat, or ferry, having a boat available to hop from island to island is the only way to experience all the Seychelles has to offer. From above or below the water, onshore or inland, the Seychelles has magic waiting around every turn to make a holiday special.

**Md. Amiruzzaman**, *Honorary Consul, Consulate of the Republic of Scychelles, Bangladesh.*



## The Iranian Deal: An Important Pointer for International Relations

Wu Sike



The recent announcement of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear issue marked the conclusion of 12-year-long negotiations and the resolution of a three-decade-old crisis that nearly triggered a conflict at several points. The agreement was widely lauded as a "historic achievement".

The JCPOA opened the door to a series of diplomatic activities. Federica Mogherini, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, visited Saudi Arabia and held discussions with the Gulf States before traveling to Iran to smooth the way for the implementation of the JCPOA. The US Secretary of Defense Ash Carter and Secretary of State John Kerry also visited the region for the same reason - but also to placate key US allies. Important as these visits were, the one made by Iranian

Foreign Minister Javad Zarif to Kuwait, Qatar and Iraq drew more media attention. Focusing on mending fences and attracting investment, the Iranian "charm offensive" was a shrewd move aimed at ending Tehran's regional isolation and restoring its international reputation.

Iran is a big country with rich oil and gas resources. For decades, the Arab world and the United States embraced a regional order that excluded Tehran. In a marked shift, the US now seeks to change the balance of power in the Middle East by bringing Iran back into the fold. The new chapter being written in Tehran's relations with the region and the broader world, after decades of isolation and estrangement, is sure to transform the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East.

The conclusion of the JCPOA sets a powerful example for resolving regional and international problems.

It shows that negotiations can put an end to major international conflict, even though the parties in question have long had no contact or an adversarial relationship.

The Iranian nuclear issue must be understood in the context of US-Iran relations, which is a product of the intricate situation in the Middle East. Relations between Iran and the West (including the United States) have been marred by historical grievances going back to the Islamic Revolution



in 1979. This is compounded by the divergent ideologies and incompatible interests of the two sides.

The nuclear issue is also a manifestation of sectarian differences in the Middle East between Shia and Sunni Islam as well as the longstanding strains in Iranian-Israeli relations.

After President Barack Obama took office, he adopted a new approach to the region. Turning away from the use of force as a preferred option, he sought to resolve the Iranian issue through dialogue and negotiation. The nuclear agreement is a direct result of this new approach. It inspires similar efforts to settle other difficult international issues through negotiation and shows the path to resolving the various regional hot spots, from Iraq to Syria, from the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to the terrorist upsurge.

The Iranian agreement also enhances the authority and effectiveness of the United Nations in managing regional and global issues.

The P5+1 mechanism that delivered the JCPOA was set up by the UN Security Council in July 2006. The P5+1 has shied away from any ideological bias, which has derailed other international negotiations, and carefully balanced Iranian insistence on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and international concerns about nuclear proliferation. It is no exaggeration to say that the United Nations has shepherded the Iranian negotiations every step of the way.

Finally, the Iranian agreement creates a useful model of consultation and cooperation between the world's major powers.

Provided there is unity of purpose and a dogged determination, difficult issues can be resolved. Through negotiation, the unity and mutual trust of the P5 countries are enhanced rather than weakened.

China has played an active and unique role in this process. It has emphasized the importance of a phased approach and reciprocity at key moments of the negotiation and helped to highlight the usefulness of a political settlement. Beijing has also been in close communication and cooperation with Washington. The Iranian nuclear issue is a successful test of the new model of Sino-American relations and will have far-reaching implications for similar cooperation on other matters.

The JCPOA is no doubt a new beginning, but its implementation will not be smooth sailing. For starters, suspicions of the agreement run deep in both Washington and Tehran. The continuing concern of some regional capitals about the possible transformation of Middle East geopolitics may also prove a stumbling block. Yet China, for one, has pledged to implement both the letter and the spirit of the JCPOA in partnership with the other relevant parties.

To truly implement the "breakthrough" agreement, the parties must honor their commitments and work hard to build trust. There is no greater prize than the emergence of a new Middle East enjoying peace and harmony. This will be in the interest of all involved; more importantly, the peoples of the Middle East deserve it.

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**Wu Sike** is a member on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and member on the Foreign Policy Consulting Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



# China Sees a Chance in TPP to Stimulate Reforms

He Yafei



The recent conclusion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) under the auspices of the United States has touched off a heated debate about its impact on China's external trade and investment. Overall, the TPP is both a challenge and opportunity for China, as it comes at a critical moment when China tries to engage more deeply and widely in global governance.

The potential short-term impact of the TPP on China's trade and economy as a whole is almost negligible, while the medium- and long-term impact depends on how China reacts to the TPP and handles its economic "new normal." The TPP could even provide impetus for China's efforts to deepen its economic reforms.

Perhaps because the stakes are simply too great to contemplate, the world is no longer being haunted by the specter of wars among major powers. The remaining competition among major powers is mostly relegated to global rule-making or global governance. The TPP is precisely one such example: It is about who will lead in global economic rule-making.

On surface the TPP is all about trade and investment, but more broadly, it is a smart move by the U.S. to set a higher bar for China in global trade and investment in the face of a more diverse picture of global governance. The TPP has thus become an economic instrument to carry out the "Asia-Pacific Rebalance," brimming with geo-political implications. Through the partnership, the U.S. hopes to regain control of global trade rule-making as it has become uneasy about the growing influence of developing nations represented by China in such institutions as G20, WTO, and APEC. Fortunately the TPP is only one of over 260 FTAs currently in existence; it can't be everything at the same time.

From a purely economic perspective, when some economies form a tax union or FTA, there will be "trade creation" and "trade transfer." Only the latter will be detrimental to outsiders, as trade barriers are reduced or eliminated within the grouping. So how much trade transfer will occur with TPP? Actually, not much because 80% of TPP members' exports to the U.S. are already duty-free while even a bigger percentage of China's manufactured goods enjoy that status. So by and large, the TPP tax change mostly affects agricultural produce from the U.S., Japan, Canada and Australia.

In addition, TPP members such as Australia, New Zealand, Peru and Chile have signed bilateral trade agreements with China. The China-ASEAN FTA covers Vietnam, Singapore, Brunei, and Malaysia. All of this greatly reduces the TPP's negative impact on China. Another relevant point: Apart from NAFTA, American trade with TPP members amounts to a bit over \$400 billion yearly while its annual trade with China tops \$600 billion. That accounts for 10% of its trade as compared with 4.2% for Japan.

Most TPP members, except Japan and Australia, enjoy large trade surpluses with China. As long as China keeps growing under the "new normal" and with its new industrial base having consolidated in the last few decades, China will get an even greater share of the world market once the global economy fully recovers.

In sum, the TPP is more a psychological threat of "crying wolf." It will likely have little impact on China's foreign trade next year.

The TPP will mainly affect China's medium and long-term domestic economic policy reforms. As a regional FTA, the TPP puts more emphasis on "within border" policies and rules associated with trade like IPR protection, labor standards, environmental protection, and SOEs than "on border" trade barriers.

Many of the rules the TPP covers certainly fall within the purview of further reforms in China. They seem pretty difficult to achieve in the short term, but not too much so as to be unreachable. TPP members include advanced and less advanced economies and many face the same challenges as China does. Take SOEs for instance. 40% of Vietnamese GDP is contributed by its SOEs, while Singapore and Malaysia have similar

percentages. If they can cope with TPP rules on SOEs, China should have no major problems either.

Many TPP rules represent current trends in global trade and eventually will be accepted by the world. These new standards might bring great challenges to China's efforts to upgrade its industries, but in the end they could also be opportunities for China to pursue further economic reforms in the coming years. China must play its due part in the global rule-making in free trade and investment, instead of being led.



China will not be able to join TPP because the U.S. and Japan are opposed to it, although China and the U.S. say both are open to China membership. For that, China needs to be cool-headed and take the following steps among other things to meet the challenge posed by TPP.

**The first step is to deepen reforms** already in the pipeline. It is advisable to quicken the pace of four major domestic FTA experiments covering Guangdong, Fujian, Shanghai and Tianjin. A great deal of innovations will occur in these areas and they should be quickly copied nation-wide. That will lay a good foundation for future moves of either joining TPP, or having TPP merge with other regional FTAs. We are entering a new era of global governance and remolding of trade rules, which should be viewed as a good opportunity for China rather than a threat in globalization.

As China engages ever further in global governance, more new rules will present themselves and it ought to be ready for such scenarios. China should further reform its financial system and reduce costs for funding the real economy in order to elevate industrial competitiveness. It should also deepen reforms of SOEs and develop better mixed-ownership in enterprises to expand foreign trade. It needs to continue improving labor conditions so that a balance of decent work and better ecological and environmental effects can occur. The TPP is more about global governance, and should be treated as such.

**The second step is to offset any negative consequences** of the TPP by proactively pursuing other regional initiatives, given the fact that China will assume the rotating chair of the G20 in 2016, and enjoys great influence in regional institutions like APEC.

China should more vigorously pursue FTAAP negotiations, quicken the pace of a China-Japan-South Korea East Asia FTA, and conclude negotiations of the RCEP by the end of 2016.

**The third step is to put the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative** into practice as quickly as possible. Efforts should be made to pursue policy dialogues with countries along OBOR to adapt developmental strategies with one another. Major partners like Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Pakistan should be consulted first. Such new financial institutions as the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Silk Road Fund should be brought into full play-based on internationally accepted rules-to boost cooperation on redistribution of production capacities. President Xi Jinping's visit to the UK provides further impetus for greater European inputs into the OBOR initiative.

**The fourth step is to manage China-U.S. relations in a way** that will help OBOR rather than impede its implementation. The recent successful state visit to the U.S. by President Xi demonstrates that the U.S. is better prepared now to accept OBOR as a platform for bilateral cooperation. That is certainly good news for all involved to shed the TPP of "the geo-political coat" that it should not have worn in the first place.

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# 40 going on 400

AKM Moinuddin



China, today, is leading the world in many areas. Bangladesh and China are time-tested friends and the relations between the two countries are developing on all fronts. There is no problem between the two countries but have deep friendship, cooperation and mutual trust. Two countries achieved a lot in last 40 years.

The newly appointed Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Ma Mingqiang talked to Dhaka Courier and UNB on bilateral issues at his office on Sunday (September 27). He described how Bangladesh can prosper and develop further and stressed on win-win and common development. The Ambassador thinks the relations between the two countries have made remarkable eye-catching progress and this progress has brought tangible benefits for the people of the two countries.

The Ambassador indicates that Bangladesh is set to get around US\$ 4.5 billion Chinese investment in two designated special economic zones in Chittagong and Dhaka. To make that happen, China will focus on Bangladesh's needs and the global market. "Firstly, we need to meet the needs of Bangladesh and secondly the need of the global market," said the Chinese Ambassador.

Basically, the Chinese envoy said, they are working on two industrial parks - one in south Chittagong on 774 acres of land and another in south Dhaka that will attract US\$ 2-2.5 billion Chinese investment. The second one will be in collaboration with the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) with less than 500 acres of land which will create 200,000-250,000 new jobs in Bangladesh, said the diplomat. The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) has already approved the proposed Economic and Industrial zone exclusively for Chinese investors in Chittagong. Ambassador Ma, however, thinks only two industrial parks may not be enough as Bangladesh needs many more many parks to make the best use of advantage. "All the Chinese investors are very interested to get place inside the special economic zone. They're competing with each other." The diplomat said there should be 'marriage of advantages' in the bilateral cooperation to make it a win-win one.

## Minding the Gap

On minimising the existing trade gap, Ambassador Ma said at this moment the trade gap cannot be addressed solely or single handedly by trading because Bangladesh is not producing that much products. "At this moment, it can't be solved simply by trading. However, trading is, of course, primary method to address the issue in the long term."

He said both China and Bangladesh need to look for some other approaches like encouraging more Chinese investment to come to Bangladesh that will help reduce the gap. The Chinese diplomat laid emphasis on the idea of re-export from Bangladesh to China and the global market. Not only readymade garment, Bangladesh can also export fresh fruits like mangoes, seafood, huge marine and agro products, he said adding that China is a huge market and Bangladesh can explore it eyeing newer areas.

He said, "You need to further upgrade your industries. China is willing to transfer technology and will also work in Bangladesh's jute industry to produce finest jute clothes. It is happening in China. We can help Bangladesh and ready to transfer technology." On granting more duty-free access for Bangladeshi products to the Chinese market, the envoy said China is looking into it but it is not an easy task as China needs to look at other countries as well to do that.

"China is working on it. We want to see more Bangladeshi products in China. It'll also benefit our people and give them an option to buy quality products with affordable price." Asked about the China's willingness

on building deep seaport in Bangladesh, Ambassador Ma said he does not have any update on the issue but mentioned that China is interested in all projects that Bangladesh needs truly. China will support any endeavour of the Bangladesh government for its development. China will help within its capacity as much as possible to enhance the living standard of brotherly people of Bangladesh. They have seven friendship bridges in Bangladesh and Bangladesh will have eight one. "We'll do more, we'll not stop," he said adding that one more exhibition centre to be built with Chinese support.

### Going for 10

The Chinese envoy appreciating Bangladesh's stable economic growth over the last few years. He will not be surprised at all if Bangladesh economy is developed by 10 percent or more than 10 percent GDP growth.

"You're already on right track. With more FDI and cooperating with other countries you can catch up with the countries ahead of you. So, to achieve 10 pc growth is almost in your hand, it is reachable. It's really reachable. You have all that potential."

He also said, Bangladesh is the most competitive in the labour cost and Bangladesh is in the centre of three big economies - India, Asean and Northeast Asia. "You have the geo-proximity." Looking back, Bangladesh did 'extremely well' in implementing MDGs. "I'm fully confident that Bangladesh will also

succeed in SDGs as well. Bangladesh is in a better position to successfully implement the SDGs (sustainable development goals)."

### South-South Story

The Chinese Ambassador referred to the Chinese President Xi Jinping's announcement of US\$ 2 billion fund to support South-South cooperation in addition to launching the "Six 100s" initiative to help the developing countries in poverty reduction, agriculture, trade, environment, health and education.

China will set up the fund with an initial contribution of US\$ 2 billion to support South-South-South cooperation and assist the developing countries in implementing their post-2015 development agenda.

South-South Cooperation is the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries, also known as countries of the global South. Xi also announced US\$ 3 billion fund to help the developing countries combat climate change. China will also do its best to raise its investment in the least developed countries (LDCs) to USD 12 billion by 2030.

Responding to a question in this regard, the Chinese Ambassador said, "I think Bangladesh is part of these platforms. We need to make the best use of these platforms and these mechanisms and new opportunities to serve the interest of two countries." Chinese cooperation is not limited to Bangladesh-China only. "We're open and inclusive. We can also look for possibilities and opportunities in a tripartite manner or with many countries together. We're also willing to work with other countries."

### High-Level Contacts

China is willing to enhance further the high level contacts for more solid mutual trust. Last year we have seen President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Choudhury visiting China. The Speaker will go to China again very soon. Chinese Vice Premier, Foreign Minister and Chinese Commerce Minister were here in Dhaka. And just couple of days ago, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had met Chinese President Xi Jinping. I think there will be two more occasions for them to meet as well. So the contact at the high level is very frequent. The work on the very much expected one - visit of Chinese President or Premier - in Bangladesh is in progress. The Chinese Ambassador did not want to tell who is coming. Two sides are working on this. Timing is matter. We need to find a proper time. Both are working on high level visit.

The two countries have lot of cultural and social exchanges. But still there is room to enhance more and look into new areas like women affair and women empowerment. China is willing to take steps to speed up in



these areas with more scholarship. These ties will help build new bridges between two countries. Two countries must make the best use of existing mechanism of cooperation.

### Looking Forward

Ambassador Ma said, both countries are willing to further deepen the relations. "We need to further learn from each other and open a new chapter in our relations. We need to further enhance mutual trust and cooperation." He thinks both countries should further cooperate in the international and regional context to address big issues like climate change and Sustainable Development Agenda. Bangladesh and China need to further enhance the voice and representation of developing countries in the world. Two countries must work together to safeguard the interest of the developing countries.

Both countries can further strengthen their functional cooperation in infrastructure, energy, agro based industry, and also in the blue economy. The two countries can also look into new areas like renewable energy which is the trend of the world. China is also willing to boost production capacity in Bangladesh and transfer its technology. Over the next few years, there will be annual shortfall of US\$ 800 billion in Asian infrastructure and the World Bank and Asian Development Bank can not afford it. We need to look for other sources. Bangladesh and China can do it together. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) can work in these areas.

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**AKM Moinuddin (Moin)**, *Diplomatic Correspondent, United News of Bangladesh (UNB) and Member, Diplomatic Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (DCAB).*



## AIIB Could Be A Win-win Game for China and U.S.

Gong Ting



The key legal framework for the China-initiated regional multilateral institution - the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) - was inked by representatives of the bank's 57 founding members in Beijing last Monday. After European and Asian countries supported establishment of the bank, attention focused on whether the US, the world's only superpower and the largest economy, would also join.

Since the birth of the Chinese-led investment bank the US has publicly voiced support for the idea of an Asian infrastructure bank but has cited standards of governance as a key concern. To intensify matters, it was reported that the US pressured key transatlantic and Asia-Pacific allies, including but not limited to the UK, Australia and South Korea. In the eyes of US, its allies' attempts to engage in the Chinese initiative represented "a trend toward constant accommodation of China,

which is not the best way to engage a rising power," an anonymous US official was quoted as saying by the London-based Financial Times.

After the aforementioned US allies and partners joined the bank, the US's own failure to seek membership was described as a "miscalculated" decision by former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. It seemed that "all of a sudden everybody was in" except the US, she was quoted as saying.

Ever since China integrated with the current world system, its role as a rising power has been the subject of serious discussion and careful worldwide scrutiny. One of the criticisms made of China was that it was "a free rider" in the existing international system, as US President Obama stated in a 2014 interview with the New York Times. The fact is that China was urged to play a larger and more responsible role in regional and world affairs for many years, but as soon as China put forward its own vision - AIIB - with a view to enhance regional connectivity and upgrade infrastructure, the US opposed it. As Fred Bergsten, director emeritus of the Peterson Institute for International Economics and assistant treasury secretary in the Carter administration, put it, US opposition to the bank was "illogical," not to mention the fact China invested about US\$ 30 billion in the initial stage.

Even after the AIIB agreement was signed, US deputy spokesman Mark C Toner noted at a daily press briefing that the US wanted to see "the AIIB be an organization that employs the kind of high standards and governance reflecting the way international financial organizations like the World Bank and the IMF have operated over the past 70 years." That said, the US was still quite cautious about joining the bank.

By contrast Takehiko Nakao, president of the Japan-sponsored Asia Development Bank (ADB), immediately congratulated AIIB on key progress and declared his bank as "committed to working closely on cofinanc-

ing with AIIB, and will continue sharing necessary information and look into specific projects that could benefit from cofinancing."

Jim Yong Kim, president of the World Bank Group (WBG), the key institution of the US-dominated Bretton Woods system, stated WBG viewed the AIIB "as an important new partner that shares a common goal: ending extreme poverty," and WBG expected AIIB to adopt "strong environment, labor and procurement standards" with other development banks.



*Heads of Delegations representing 57 Prospective Founding Members take part in the Special Ministerial Meeting on the Establishment of the AIIB in Beijing, June 2015.*

No single development bank alone can meet the growing needs of infrastructure financing here in Asia. According to ADB's 2010 assessment, the region requires about US\$800 billion annually between 2010 and 2020 for infrastructure investment and upgrade. The World Bank spent US\$24.2 billion and the Asia Development Bank spent US\$21 billion on infrastructure during the 2014 financial year, according to World Resource Institute sources.

What also needs to be underlined is that China has adopted a quite open and inclusive attitude in responding to doubts and criticisms of the AIIB. Chinese finance minister Lou Jiwei made it public in 2014 that AIIB will fully respect and learn best practices from existing multilateral development banks including ADB and WBG, with a view to formulating and implementing feasible high standards.

Perhaps a more pragmatic approach for US policymakers would be to recognize that a zero-sum mentality towards the AIIB is of no help to US interests, a view shared by many Americans. In the recently concluded US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, both leaderships reaffirmed their desire to strengthen pragmatic cooperation. The AIIB is not about win-lose. A win-win result can be achieved if both sides are more open-minded. An even more important suggestion for the US leadership is that US concerns about governance standards cannot be best addressed by maintaining its opposition to the bank.

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**Gong Ting** is a research fellow in the Department for American Studies, China Institute of International Studies.

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## “China is here for Peace”

**Remarks by H.E. Xi Jinping President of the People's Republic of China at the United Nations Peacekeeping Summit, New York, 28 September 2015.**

President Obama,  
Secretary General Ban Ki-moon,  
Dear Colleagues,

I appreciate President Obama's initiative to convene this peacekeeping summit.

Peace is the common aspiration and lofty goal shared by all mankind. It was for the purpose of peace that the UN peacekeeping operations came into being. Now as an important means of upholding world peace and security, the peacekeeping operations bring confidence to the conflict areas, and hope to the local people.

As we speak, people in many conflict-ridden places around the world are still suffering. They have stronger yearning for peace, higher hopes for the United Nations and greater expectations for the peacekeeping operations. The following is what China stands for:

- ✦ The basic principles of peacekeeping should be strictly followed. The UN Charter and the Hammarskjöld principles, as the fundamental guidelines for peacekeeping operations, should continue to be adhered to. The Security Council resolutions should be implemented in their entirety, allowing no country to act beyond their mandate. The peacekeeping missions should be carried out with the situation on the ground and the will of the local people in mind. Exit strategies need to be timely formulated and executed.
- ✦ The peacekeeping system needs to be improved. The peacekeeping operations should be aligned with preventive diplomacy and peace building in sequence and coordinate with political mediation, rule of law, national reconciliation and improvement of livelihood at the same time. The UN Security Council should be more attentive to opinions of parties directly involved and troop-contributing countries. A better coordinated peacekeeping partnership should be established between the United Nations and relevant regional organizations.
- ✦ Rapid response needs to be enhanced. Fast deployment of peacekeeping operations can give peace more chance and win more time to save lives. China welcomes UN's establishment of a new Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System, and calls on member states to join the system.
- ✦ Greater support and help should be given to Africa. Africa has the biggest peacekeeping needs. In the long run, the international community and the United Nations should support African countries in increasing their own capacity in keeping peace and stability so that African issues can be addressed in an African way.



(Chinese President Xi Jinping addresses the leaders summit on peacekeeping at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, September 28, 2015) Photo: [Xinhua]





President Xi Jinping presents the "Zun of Peace" as a gift to the UN, commemorating its 70th anniversary. The gift, modeled after Chinese ancient bronze artefacts "Zun" using cloisonné technique, shows China's support to the UN, said Xi. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that he understands the seven doves and the sun on the gift symbolize not only peace but also the 70th anniversary of the United Nations. [Photo: Xinhua]

**Sixth,** part of the China-UN peace and development fund will be used to support UN peacekeeping operations.

Colleagues,

In UN peacekeeping operations, 18 Chinese men and women in uniform have laid down their lives. Five years ago, we lost He Zhihong, a peacekeeping policewoman in the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti. She left behind her four-year-old son and elderly parents. She once wrote: in this vast world, I may be just like a small feather. But even so, I want this feather to carry the wish for peace.

This was her wish, and it is also China's commitment to peace.

Thank you!

Colleagues,

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China has taken part in peacekeeping operations for 25 years. We are a main troop and fund contributing country to these operations. To support the improvement and strengthening of UN peacekeeping operations, I hereby announce that:

**First,** China will join the new UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System and has thus decided to take the lead in setting up a permanent peacekeeping police squad and build a peacekeeping standby force of 8,000 troops.

**Second,** China will give favorable consideration to UN requests for more Chinese engineering soldiers and transportation and medical staff to take part in UN peacekeeping operations.

**Third,** in the coming five years, China will train 2,000 peacekeepers from other countries, and carry out 10 demining assistance programs which will include training and equipment provision.

**Fourth,** in the coming five years, China will provide free military aid of US\$100 million to the African Union to support the building of the African Standby Force and the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis.

**Fifth,** China will send the first peacekeeping helicopter squad to UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.

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## A brief introduction to the Centre for East Asia (Foundation), Bangladesh

The "Centre for East Asia Foundation (CEAF)" was established in 2011. It is registered under the Societies Act. 1860 (ACT XXI of 1860), The People's Republic of Bangladesh. The registered office of the foundation is situated at House-49, Road-1, Flat-3AB, Dhanmondi Residential Area, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh.

The foundation is constituted as a non-profit, non-political, independent study circle engaged in research and analysis of geopolitical developments and economic opportunities in the south-eastern flank of Asia beyond Bangladesh borders. The foundation is committed to enhance understanding and to strengthen ties of people and policy makers of Bangladesh with those of East Asian and South-East Asian Countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The foundation has been holding periodic seminars and discussion meetings on matters of bilateral or regional import, amongst other multidimensional activities.

The broad objectives of the foundation are as follows:-

1. To promote understanding and cooperation among different professionals and interest groups engaged in development, welfare and research activities in the region.
2. To undertake studies in the areas of foreign policy, economic diplomacy, human rights, climate change, trade relations, human development, tourism, counter terrorism and security cooperation, with a view to identifying complementarities and to strengthen collaboration between Bangladesh and South-East Asian Countries.
3. To organize occasional local and international seminars, dialogues, academic conferences and round table discussions on topical issues in the region.
4. To disseminate information through the publication of books, journals/Magazines/periodicals, reports, online articles & research papers.
5. To provide fellowship, prizes and other financial assistance to scholars and students to encourage research in relevant fields of study.

There are cross sections of thinking members & highly reputed senior citizens are engaged with this foundation.

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## CHINA | Factsheet

<b>Country name:</b> conventional long form: People's Republic of China conventional short form: China local long form: ZhonghuaRenminGongheguo local short form: ZhongGuo abbreviation: PRC			<b>Religions:</b> Buddhist, Daoist (Taoist), Muslim, Christian		
<b>Government type:</b> Communist state			<b>Ethnic groups:</b> Han Chinese 91.51%, Zhuang, Man, Hui, Miao, Uyghur, Tujia, Yi, Mongol, Tibetan, Buyei and other minorities 8.49%		
<b>Government type:</b> Communist state			<b>Area (sq km)</b>		
<b>Capital:</b> Beijing			<b>Total:</b> 14,334,057		
<b>Founding:</b> 1 October 1949			<b>Land:</b> 9,634,057		
<b>Territory sea:</b>			<b>Total:</b> 4,700,000 (approx.)		
<b>Nationality:</b> Chinese			<b>Population</b>		
<b>Constitution:</b> Most recent promulgation, 4 December 1982			<b>Total:</b> 1,370,536,875 (2010)		
<b>Administrative divisions:</b> 23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, 4 municipalities and 2 Special Administrative Regions (Hong Kong and Macau)			<b>Growth rate:</b> 0.57% (2010)		
<b>Location:</b> Eastern Asia, bordering the East China Sea, Korea Bay, Yellow Sea, and South China Sea, between North Korea and Vietnam			<b>Sex ratio at birth:</b> 1.052 male(s): female (2010)		
<b>Geography:</b> World's 3rd largest country (after Russia and Canada); Mount Everest on the border with Nepal is the world's tallest peak			<b>Life expectancy at birth (years)</b>		
<b>Natural resources:</b> Coal, iron ore, petroleum, natural gas, mercury, tin, tungsten, antimony, manganese, molybdenum, vanadium, magnetite, aluminum, lead, zinc, uranium, hydropower potential (world's largest)			<b>Combined:</b> 75.3		
<b>Languages:</b> Standard Chinese or Mandarin (Puronghua, based on the Beijing dialect), Wu (including Shanghaiese), Yue (including Cantonese and Taishanese), Min (including Hokkien and Teochew), Xiang, Gan and Hakka dialects, and minority languages			<b>Male:</b> 65.5		
<b>Population below poverty line:</b> 10%			<b>Female:</b> 70.4 (2014)		
<b>Labor force:</b> 915.83 million (2014)			<b>Literacy (age 15 and over can read and write):</b> 95.92% (2010)		
<b>GDP</b>			<b>PPP:</b> \$10.38 trillion (2014 est.)		
<b>Real growth rate:</b> 7% (2015)			<b>Per capita (PPP):</b> \$7,575 (2014)		
<b>Currency (code):</b> Yuan (CNY); Renminbi (RMB)					

Compiled by: RammamUddin Ahamed, Associate Editor, Rising Asia





## Rising Asia

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