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THE BIG FIVE

BRICS leaders move closer to shared goals

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BRICS Means Business

Greater cooperation promised



Accord With Africa

President Xi reaches out to Africa

Cover Photo: Leaders of BRICS nations meet in Durban, South Africa, on March 27 (XIE HUANCHI)

Correction
Beijing Review regrets an error on the cover of issue No. 13 of 2013. The national flag of the Russian Federation should be white on the top, blue in the middle and red on the bottom.

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Busy lives call for reinforcements



Solar Shadow

Struggles in China's new energy industry

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EDITOR

Banking on Success

The leaders of the five BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—reached a new consensus and achieved tangible results at their latest summit, which concluded last week in the South African city of Durban.

According to a joint statement, the five major emerging economies will expand their future cooperation to include more sectors. They agreed to establish a development bank to mobilize resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in the BRICS countries. It is also believed that the bank will serve as a supplement to the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions to spur global growth and development. Other highlights of the summit include the founding of a foreign reserve pool and the establishment of a business council.

The BRICS efforts to jointly establish an international development agenda and create a more balanced global development will surely contribute to their integration and industrialization, as well as world economic governance at large. BRICS cooperation not only benefits the people of the five countries, but also contributes to promoting democracy in international relations.

Making his debut at the summit, which was held for the first time on the African continent since the establishment of the organization five years ago, newly elected Chinese President Xi Jinping expressed confidence with the other state leaders that the group will play a bigger role on the world stage.

Besides attending the BRICS summit, Xi also included Tanzania, South Africa and the Republic of Congo as destinations of his first overseas trip since he took office in mid-March. In a milestone speech in Tanzania, the Chinese president gave credit to the concerted efforts of China and African countries for pushing China-Africa relations into "a fast-track of all-round development." He pledged to continue fostering the bilateral ties in every possible areas, including cooperation on international and regional affairs, investment, infrastructure, trade, agriculture, education and people-to-people exchange.

In recent years, cooperation between China and the continent has bore notable fruits. China and the African states are now agreeing to upgrade traditional ties and to forge a better partnership.

Xi elaborated on the Chinese dream of national renewal and the African dream of gaining strength from unity. They share a common desire to achieve development and rejuvenation to maintain world peace. As Africa has become one of the fastest growing regions in the world and China continues to enjoy strong development momentum, China-Africa relations are certain to continue forging ahead. ■

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PUPPET SHOW

The Quanzhou Marionette Troupe of China presents a traditional play in Jakarta, Indonesia, on March 24.

Quanzhou, a city of southeast China's Fujian Province, is home to the most sophisticated form of marionette performance in the country. The Quanzhou puppetry, rooted in the Qin Dynasty of 2,000 years ago, has been well preserved through generations with over 700 traditional plays and more than 300 unique music pieces.

The Quanzhou Marionette Troupe, established in 1952, has won reputation for exquisite performing skills. It has thrilled audiences in over 30 countries and regions.



Celebration Gala

People in Xigaze, Tibet Autonomous Region, dance in celebration of Serfs Emancipation Day on March 28.

On this day 54 years ago, the Central Government announced it would dissolve the aristocratic local government of Tibet and replace it with a preparatory committee for establishing Tibet Autonomous Region.

About 1 million serfs and slaves, accounting for 90 percent of the Tibetan population in the 1950s, were thus emancipated from harsh feudal living conditions under a theocratic regime.



HE SHENGE

Organ Donation

Seven hundred Chinese donated 1,918 organs from the start of 2010 to March 20, national newspaper *Health News* reported on March 22, citing the National Organ Donation Center.

With China legalizing posthumous human organ donation in 2010, the center said that the 700th donor was a 15-year-old boy from east China's Shandong Province, whose organs saved three lives and helped two patients recover their sight.

There are currently 18,745 regis-

tered volunteer organ donors across the country.

The center said that its donation information database might come into service this year, facilitating equal distribution of donated organs.

Prior to 2010, no legal channels existed for posthumous human organ donation in China.

Government Microblogs

An annual report by the E-Government Research Center

under the China Academy of Governance said that China had 176,714 government microblog accounts at the end of 2012, almost 2.5 times more than the previous year.

Some 113,382 of these accounts are run by Communist Party of China committees, legislatures, governments, political advisors, Party disciplinary watchdogs as well as judicial and procuratorial agencies and government-sponsored institutions, said the report, which was released on March 27.

The remaining 63,332 are kept by officials and staff members of such agencies, according to the report.

It added that a great number of these accounts are run by agencies and individuals associated with the public security and police system, with the proportions respectively

accounting for 37 percent of authorities' microblogs and 39 percent of individual accounts.

Award on China Studies

Ezra F. Vogel, an 82-year-old Harvard University social sciences emeritus professor and author of *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*, was honored on March 23 with two other renowned researchers for their outstanding contributions to China studies.

Dr. Sergei Leonidovich Tikhvinsky, 94, academician of the Russian Academy of Science and former ambassador to China, was also presented the Award for Outstanding Contribution to China Studies at the opening session of the Fifth World Forum on China Studies.

Jao Tsung-I, a 95-year-old emeritus professor of Chinese language and literature at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, earned the Award for Outstanding Contribution to China Studies by an Overseas Chinese, a newly minted version of the general award.

Initiated in 2004, the high-



WANG CHENYUAN



ART EXPO

Artist Chen Yanmei displays her works at Artexpo New York in the United States on March 21. The expo celebrated its 35th anniversary as the world's largest fine arts trade show



COLORFUL WORK

A primary student from Yantai City, east China's Shandong Province, paints a Peking Opera mask on March 27, World Theater Day

profile forum aims to nurture new views and approaches in China studies while promoting mutual understanding and academic exchanges between Chinese and overseas scholars.

Wheat Gene

Scientists from China and the United States have mapped a key genetic code for bread wheat, a discovery that will help improve the crop's productivity and ability to withstand extreme conditions.

The sequencing and drafting of the A genome, one of the three basic genomes of wheat, was published by journal *Nature* online on March 24. Researchers present the generation, assembly and analysis of a whole-genome shotgun draft sequence of the genome of wild wheat *T. urartu*, the source of the A genome.

The identification of around 38,000 wheat genes is expected to



CHU YANG

world's population and provides 20 percent of a human's daily recommended amounts of calories and protein. Major efforts are underway around the world to increase the crop's yield and quality by boosting genetic diversity and resistance to cold, drought and disease.

However, the extremely large size and polyploid complexity of the wheat genome have so far posed substantial barriers for researchers to gain insight into its biology and evolution.

Weather Monitoring

China has built an integrated weather monitoring system that provides better information about potential weather disasters, the country's meteorological authority said on March 23.

A total 419 ground observation stations, 87 aerological stations and seven Fengyun weather satellites will provide weather information for nearly 100 countries and regions to help cut down damage caused by adverse weather, said Zheng Guoguang, Director of the National Meteorological Center.

In the past five years, economic losses caused by weather disasters dropped from 1.22 percent to 0.6 percent of the country's gross domestic product, with the overall

death toll decreasing by 2,000 from the previous five-year period, according to official figures.

Safety Sweep

The Ministry of Public Security launched a six-month safety sweep of vehicles used to transport freight on March 26.

With the campaign to begin on April 1, the ministry urged police departments to crack down on speeding, overloading, refitted vehicles, driving while fatigued, running red lights and other driving misconduct.

According to figures released by the ministry's Traffic Management Bureau, there are 19 million freight vehicles on China's roads, accounting for 7.8 percent of the country's total motor vehicles.

Disproportionately, 28 percent of road fatalities in 2012 were caused by freight vehicles. The accident rate per 10,000 freight vehicles in 2012 was more than twice that of other motor vehicles.

China's freight market lacks effective regulation, with many of its vehicles facing potential safety risks, said the Traffic Management Bureau, adding it will work with other supervision departments to better regulate freight companies as well as the vehicle maintenance industry.

Water Conditions

A March 21 photo shows a view of Qianzi Lake in Qinghai Province. Qinghai is the source of two of China's largest rivers, the Yellow and Yangtze.

On March 26, the first national report on China's water conditions was released by the Ministry of Water Resources and the National Bureau of Statistics.

The nationwide survey covered river conditions, water conservation projects, water consumption, river development

and management, and water and soil conservation in 2011.

China has 45,203 rivers each covering an area of at least 50 square km, totaling 1.51 million km in length. Some 2,865 lakes with a regular surface area of over 1 square km took up 78,000 square km, the report said.

The capacity of 98,002 reservoirs amounted to over 932 billion cubic meters and the total installed capacity of 333 million kw were generated by 46,758 hydropower stations.



WANG BO

Generating Electricity At Home

Kong Qingbin, a native of Hefei, capital of east China's Anhui Province, checks the solar panels installed on the roof of his home.

On March 25, the province's first household photovoltaic power generation system was added to the State Grid power supply system.

Kong purchased seven solar panels in 2012 and established a mini-scale power generation station, which can produce 8 kwh per day at most.



Regaining Momentum

China's economic growth will steadily regain speed in 2013 despite global economic uncertainties, according to a blue paper released on March 26.

Thanks to a proactive fiscal policy—or increased spending in a number of areas—and a prudent monetary policy introduced in 2012 along with a more coordinated

economic growth model propelled by consumption, investments and exports, the momentum of China's economic growth will continue, says the paper, which was published by the Social Sciences Academic Press.

Despite the positive outlook of China's economy, the blue paper warns that the country needs to advance its opening up and reform and restructure its economic growth model to ensure sustainable growth.

The blue paper, which focuses

on the development of the BRICS nations—the emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—says China remains the last country in the group where the service industry accounts for less than half of its economy.

State-owned enterprises still make up the bulk of the services sector and the share of non-state operators in the market is small, leading to insufficient competition, says the paper.

Anti-Dumping Duties

The Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) began imposing anti-dumping duties on resorcinol imports from the United States and Japan on March 23.

The duties will last for five years, according to the MOFCOM. Tariff rates on resorcinol imported from Japan and the United States are 40.5 percent and 30.1 percent, respectively.

The final ruling came after the MOFCOM found that the domestic industry had been substantially harmed by the two countries dumping resorcinol. The MOFCOM has been investigating the issue since March 2012.

Resorcinol is an essential component used to manufacture tires and other fiber-reinforced rubber goods.

Maritime Show

The China Shipbuilding Industry Corp. (CSIC) made its debut at the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition in Malaysia on March 26.



DEBUTING IN THAILAND

An SUV from Great Wall Motors is on display at the 34th Bangkok International Motor Show on March 26. The Chinese homegrown carmaker plans to open a factory in Thailand



FLOWER TRADE

Visitors share their experience growing the kaffir lily flower at the Ninth Kaffir Lily Flower Festival in Changchun, capital of northeast China's Jilin Province, which closed on March 26 and saw a transaction volume of 5 million yuan (\$804,800)



The company brought its latest product models, including submarine, landing platform dock and frigate, to the four-day show, which closed on March 30.

"It's our first time in the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition," said Xu Ziqiu, General Manager of China Shipbuilding and Offshore International, the international marketing and sales arm of CSIC.

CSIC is the largest manufacturer of maritime products in China with more than 100 subsidiaries including seven shipyards and 28 R&D institutes, producing naval products such as submarines, destroyers and frigates.

Xu admitted the shipbuilding industry has not yet fully recovered from the global financial crisis. "So we wish to explore outside the country and see if we can tap into the global market," he said.

CNOOC Profits Down

China National Offshore Oil Corp. Ltd. (CNOOC), the country's largest offshore oil producer, said on March 23 that its net profits fell 9.3 percent to 63.69 billion yuan (\$10.24 billion) in 2012.

Increased taxes and surging costs for oil and gas exploration reduced the company's profit intake, said the company in its 2012 report filed with the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

Despite the fall, the oil giant remains one of the most profitable companies in the country.

In 2012, its oil and gas revenues rose 2.9 percent from a year earlier to 194.77 billion yuan (\$31.36 billion). Oil and gas output totaled 342.4 million barrels, up 3.2 percent year on year, due to remarkable output in oilfields in the Bohai Bay.

Merchandise Fair

The 2013 Shandong Fair Merchandise Fair opened on March 26 in the western Japanese commercial city of Osaka, with more than 100 firms and factories from the Chinese province attending the three-day event.

The 15th session of the Osaka event, held in MyDome Osaka, a major exhibition hall in the city's center, was organized by Japan-China Economic Relations and Trade Center and Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry in cooperation with the Department of Commerce of Shandong Province, which led a delegation consisting of more than 250 business leaders and entrepreneurs from the province.

Lu Wei, deputy director of the province's Department of Commerce said that about 30 percent of the participants came to the event for the first time with high expectations and hopes of what they will sell or achieve in the Japanese market as well as of establishing a market presence in Japan, stressing that every year continuing the Osaka event is key to developing economic relations between the two sides.

According to the organizer, this year's event saw 100 booths on display on two floors, which were divided into three sections: daily necessities specially arranged for Japanese users, home fabrics and apparel.

Numbers

49%

Increase in New Zealand goods exported to China in February due to China's growing thirst for dairy products

1,821

Number of stores that Li Ning, a Chinese homegrown sportswear maker, closed in 2012 due to a loss of nearly 2 billion yuan (\$322 million) last year

1.3 bln yuan

Average daily profit of the Agricultural Bank of China, Bank of China and China Construction Bank, three of the "big four" state-owned commercial banks, in 2012

Energy Price Cuts

A staff member changes the price labels at a gasoline station in Yinchuan, capital of northeast China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

China cut the retail price of gasoline by 310 yuan (\$49.91) per ton and diesel by 300 yuan (\$48.3) per ton on March 27.

The National Development and Reform Commission announced a new pricing system that will adjust the prices of oil products every 10 working days to better reflect changes in the global oil market.



THIS WEEK WORLD



INDIA

New Delhi residents light up candles to mark the annual Earth Hour event on March 23. The global environmental campaign calls on people to switch off lights for an hour



ZHENG HUANGSUNG



CANADA

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper (right) greets two giant pandas from China at the Toronto Pearson International Airport on March 25. The pair will stay in Canada for 10 years



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

French troops unload a military plane in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic, on March 22. France sent an additional 350 soldiers there to protect its nationals after Bangui fell into the hands of rebels



XINHUA



CHEN CHONGJANG
XINHUA



JORDAN

Jordanian soldiers take part in the Warrior Competition, an international special forces contest, at the King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center on March 24



INDONESIA

Students perform beside a fountain in Jakarta on March 22 to mark World Water Day, a yearly event established by the UN to focus public attention on the importance of fresh water



ONUMA/ASP



PAKISTAN

Former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf (rear center) addresses supporters upon his arrival in Karachi on March 24. Musharraf returned home after more than four years in exile to participate in parliamentary elections to be held in May

“Schools should not only teach math and physics but also offer students real-life lessons about how to love, how to develop a good character and inspire kids to pursue true happiness in life.”

Li Yinhe, a leading sociologist in China, telling *Beijing Morning Post* on March 20 that schools should teach students about marriage and relationships



“Sharing rides can help reduce at least 10 percent of the vehicles running on the road. The most important thing is that we have more trust by helping one another, and that is the goal.”

Wang Yong, a businessman who has been offering free rides to strangers in Beijing for years, urging daily ride sharing as the city struggles to cope with pollution and increased heavy traffic. Beijing now has 5.2 million vehicles, and the number is expected to reach 6 million by 2015



“China is Africa’s old friend, but there are still many cultural differences between their peoples. We hope China’s leaders can initiate more cultural exchanges with African countries to help bridge the gap.”

Frank Setyi, a businessman from Ghana living in China, expressing the hope on March 23 that Chinese President Xi’s visit to Africa will boost cultural exchanges between China and Africa



“Historically, the expansion and influence of Britain and America were largely military and political; in the case of China, it would be economic and cultural.”

Martin Jacques, author of the best-seller *When China Rules the World*, commenting at the Fifth World Forum on China Studies that closed in Shanghai on March 24



NEWLY APPOINTED UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT



Wang En'ge was appointed President of Peking University (PKU) on March 22, becoming the 11th PKU President since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

Wang was born in 1957. After receiving a doctor's degree in physics from PKU in 1990, Wang went to study and work at French and U.S. universities. In 1995, he came back from the United States to work in the Institute of Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). In 2007, Wang was elected academician of the CAS. He served as executive vice president of PKU before the appointment.



A SOFTWARE PRODIGY



Ji Yichao, founder of the Internet company Peak Labs, appeared in this year's *Forbes* China 30 Under 30 List of top Chinese entrepreneurs under the age of 30. Ji, 20, became the youngest member of this list.

Products of Ji's company include mobile browser Mammoth 5 and Jigsaw, a data visualization toolset. A returnee from last year's 30 Under 30 List, he has already received capital from Sequoia Capital and ZhenFund.

Ji's father is a physics professor from Peking University and his mother is a senior manager of an IT company. Both have given him full support in developing software and starting his company.



Balancing Government and Market

Oriental Outlook March 14

The government's function in economic activities has always been a focus of attention.

In a market economy, how should the government play its role? What are the key functions of the state and market? Such questions have raised concerns for over 30 years in China.

Whether the relationship between the government and market can be well settled would decide whether the new round of institutional reforms of the government is successful.

After reform and opening up, China has realized that the government and market should complement rather than combat each other.

On the one hand, the state should not let the market go unchecked. In the late 1980s, local governments put the resource industry completely in the hands of the market,

resulting in small mines everywhere, the ill consequences of which still linger today.

On the other hand, government intervention should be carried out properly. The function of the market is yet not strong enough while the government remains the predominant force in the economy. Sometimes, intervention is overbearing and improper.

In order to more effectively and properly manage the market, the state should clearly understand that apart from ensuring the stability and continuity of macro-economic policies, it should follow the principles of a market economy. In the meantime, it should be transformed into a highly efficient management institution governed by the rule of law.

Office Building Waste

China Youth Daily March 28

A newly built four-storied office building in Chunhua County, northwest China's Shaanxi Province, has been rent out as café bar, with a lease of 20 years.

Since the building is not urgently needed, why was it built? Also, why are so many government departments interested in similar construction?

In China, office buildings are built via public funds and tax revenues. Renting out these facilities can bring huge incomes. Meanwhile, when a government department application for offices is approved, it can make additional money in the bidding and material purchasing process.

How do these departments manage to do this so freely? Key is the lack of restrictive systems that can effectively deter and prevent them from doing so. Thus, to save energy and also government reputation, it's necessary to stop building new government office buildings, as Premier Li Keqiang has said. Also, as for existing spare buildings, they must be dealt with as soon as possible, either to be assigned to departments lacking space or directly confiscated.

Lady Classes

Xinhua Daily Telegraph March 27

It is reported that a middle school in Guangzhou, capital of south China's Guangdong Province, is planning to open two classes exclusively for female students in grade one of the

senior high school section. Students recruited into these two classes will have to daily wear *qipao*, a traditional one-piece dress for Chinese women, and they will be given classes on how to become a lady, such as housekeeping and social communication skills.

It seems that "manly boys" and "ladylike girls" are disappearing in modern Chinese society. Thus, gender education means to help the young people develop a reasonable concept of female and male, so that boys will act in a manly manner while girls behave in a ladylike way. This is a good intention.

However, unlike in ancient society, females in modern society have long been liberated from housework. Now they have their own jobs and careers while some even play a very important role in public life. Modern life tolerates and encourages the diverse roles of women.

In an open and diverse society, it's natural to see boys pick up some girly habits and vice versa. Lady classes can't cut these girls' connection with the vivid outside world. They will probably still develop in a mainstream direction like other girls.

Electricity System Reform

Century Weekly March 18

China's electricity system reform, stagnant for 10 years, is set for a reboot.

In 2002, the then Prime Minister Zhu Rongji pushed forward a market-oriented reform of the electricity system. In 2003, the old State Power Corporation was split into the State Grid Corp. of China, China Southern Power Grid and five electricity generating companies. The State Electricity Regulatory Commission was also formed that year.

However, reform has come to a deadlock. The State Grid, expected to separate power transmission and distribution, has expanded into multiple industries both at home and overseas, forming the biggest obstacle for the reshaping of the electricity market.

According to experiences in other countries, if China's electricity system reform achieves success, electricity prices will be reduced. However, the precondition should be the dismantling of the State Grid and introducing sufficient competition.



COVER STORY

BRICS MEANS BUSINE

New development bank on the horizon By Francisco Little

In Africa they say it is a positive sign if it rains at the start of an important event. That certainly seemed to hold true in South Africa's premier eastern port city, where the Fifth BRICS Summit began with thunderous skies and unrelenting showers. As the flags of the five member countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China and host South Africa hung limply in the humid coastal air, beachfront street vendors, industrious taxi operators and local retailers spruced up to welcome the influx of 5,500 delegates and media professionals to Durban.

This year's theme, BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialization, was highlighted by South Africa taking over the group chair for the next year and using the opportunity to link Africa much closer to the potential of the BRICS collective and cement its place as the gateway to the continent.

BRICS potential is vast, not only in Africa, but across all member states where the five muscular emerging nations now fuel a combined engine propelling 50 percent of the world's economic growth. The BRICS 2013 annual report seen at the summit shows that BRICS makes up 17 percent of world trade—and predictably trade between China and other members topped \$300 billion last year.

This figure will eclipse \$500 billion by 2015, of which about 60 percent will consist of China-Africa trade, said Simon Freemantle and Jeremy Stevens, analysts with the South Africa-based Standard Bank. Clearly, from where Africa is sitting, China is the BRICS powerhouse, and subsequently comes in for much criticism from the traditional world order dominance of Europe and the United States.

Don't break the bank

Much of this criticism has been leveled at the proposed BRICS Development Bank, which was undoubtedly the star item on the summit's agenda. Speaking at the BRICS Business Forum, Business Unity South Africa President Jabu Mabuza said the major hurdle to development was access to funding, a theme echoed



throughout the two-day event. Adding to the pressing need for a group bank is the ongoing concern with the pedestrian pace of reform at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

It was therefore welcome news that a formal agreement had been reached on establishing a BRICS Development Bank.

Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff said BRICS success has confounded its critics, who now recognize its contribution to the global economy, and emphasized the need for an alternative to the World Bank and the IMF.

The BRICS bank has been under discussion for over a year, with much speculation as to its

specifics and implementation. However, the bank's doors won't be opening anytime soon, despite the ideological urging of politicians and business leaders.

South African President Jacob Zuma told the media that the bank, the first formal institution in the informal BRICS group, would make the group more autonomous and less reliant on traditional lenders.

"In terms of our earlier deliberations, we have decided to enter formal negotiations to establish a BRICS-led new development bank based on our own considerable infrastructure needs, which amounts to around \$4.5 trillion

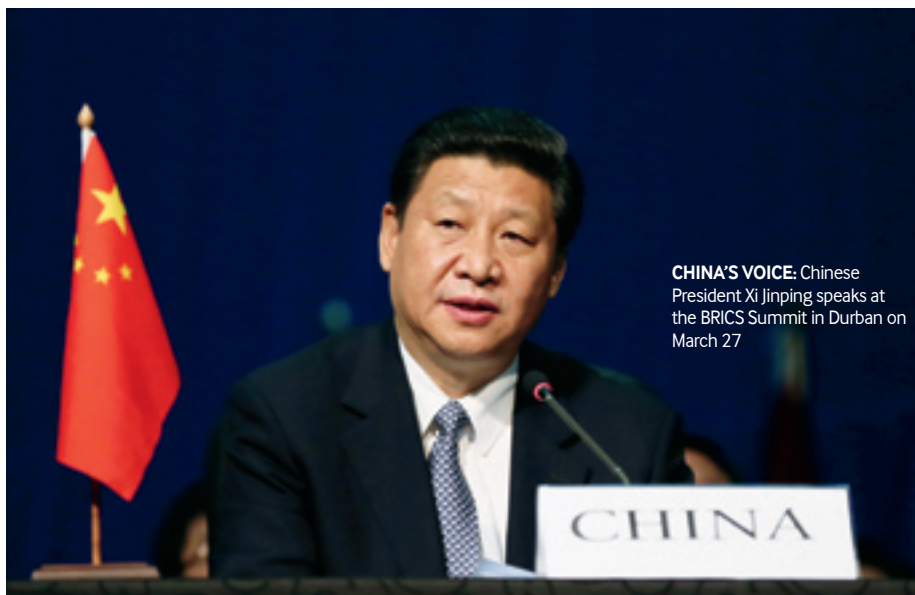
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AFRICAN FOCUS: South African President Jacob Zuma (center) addresses the Fifth BRICS Summit in Durban on March 27

over the next five years, but also to cooperate with other emerging markets and developing countries in the future,” said Zuma, adding that in addition a BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) “safety net” would be set up to provide emergency financial crisis funding for member states.

However, specific contributions and the bank’s location remain points of contention. A figure of \$10 billion each had been mooted, but South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said although a global amount of \$100 billion had been agreed for the CRA, details for bank seeding “still had to be worked out.” Analysts



CHINA'S VOICE: Chinese President Xi Jinping speaks at the BRICS Summit in Durban on March 27

say resolving these details could take years, especially if contributions are based on a country’s wealth and China is seen to dominate the bank.

Chinese Finance Minister Lou Jiwei told Xinhua News Agency the great demand for funds to expand infrastructure development had made the establishment of the bank “necessary.” Lou said the finance ministers had not discussed initial investment in Durban.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said his country supported the creation of the bank, but it must work on market principles only and support the businesses of “all our countries.”

A review of the progress made with both the bank and the CRA would be made by BRICS members on the sidelines of the Group of 20 Summit in September.

Along with the bank agreement, China and Brazil signed a three-year currency exchange agreement of up to \$30 billion in bilateral trade, ostensibly to prevent collateral damage of commercial ties from any future banking crisis.

A positive outlook

Aside from the BRICS Development Bank, and the Consortium of Think Tanks, to assist members with innovation, another notable launch at the summit was the BRICS Business Council. South African Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies said the council would be a permanent structure of business leaders from the five countries, with South Africa as host for the first year, promoting intra-BRICS cooperation. Speaking at the breakfast launch, business leaders stressed that the business council serves to support BRICS small and medium-sized enterprises.

It would also assist in training—South Africa has 3.2 million youth in need of skill improvement, according to President Zuma, who is keen to learn how other BRICS members are tackling this problem.

In tune with the summit’s theme, Brazil’s Minister of Development, Industry and Foreign

Trade, Fernando Pimentel, emphasized the importance of scaling up trade with Africa, while Anand Sharma, India’s Minister of Commerce, Industry and Textiles, confirmed India’s decision to share IT facilities with Africa.

Widely respected South African business tycoon Patrice Motsepe will chair the business council.

The energy at the summit clearly indicates that there is a positive outlook for BRICS moving forward. Members want to make things happen at their own pace of development, in spirit at least, and are committed to recognizing the importance of BRICS and shed the summits “talk shop” image.

China’s President Xi Jinping emphasized this by including the summit in his first visit abroad. He said the potential of BRICS is infinite, and that the “real potential of BRICS cooperation is yet to be realized,” adding that cooperation can improve global economic development.

The summit proceedings concluded with BRICS leaders meeting African heads of state in the BRICS Leaders-Africa Dialogue Forum to discuss cooperation in infrastructure development and alternative trade opportunities for the continent, especially with China.

South Africa has an emotional history with each of the other BRICS countries. Davies said that the summit’s success would not be measured just on the quantity of increased BRICS trade, but also in the number of partnerships that BRICS members will develop in supporting productive capacity. After the doors of the Durban International Convention Center have closed and members departed to prepare for next year’s gathering in Brazil, it is people-to-people connections, more than economic benefits, that will take BRICS to the next cooperative level. ■

(Reporting from Durban, South Africa)

COVER STORY

BRICS ASSEMBLES IN

Emerging economies team up with Africa for greater economic influence By Ding Ying



PROMOTED PARTNERSHIP: Participants pose at the BRICS Leaders-Africa Dialogue Forum on March 27 in Durban, South Africa

If the economy is the wheel that drives the world forward, then those countries with the most vigorous economies should play a bigger role in drawing up the blueprint of the future.

Leaders of five major emerging economies in the world—Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, known as BRICS—gathered in Durban, South Africa, on March 26-27 for their fifth summit, a widely watched event that Chinese observers said enhanced their partnership in a wide range of fields, most notably financial services. They argued that improving cooperation among developing

countries will help usher in a fairer and more balanced world order.

A significant summit

This year's summit was very fruitful, with an outcome that will drive further development of the organization, Chen Xulong, Deputy Director of the Department of Global Strategy at the China Institute of International Studies, said to *Beijing Review*.

The decision to establish a development bank was certainly the brightest outcome of the summit. It can be regarded as one of the greatest achievements since the formal estab-

lishment of the BRICS group in 2009, Chen said. While the leaders believed the creation of the bank was "feasible" and "viable," other details, such as the location and candidate of bank governor, are technical issues that can be resolved through communication and coordination, he added.

As the global financial crisis persists, establishing such a development bank will help stabilize financial markets and satisfy developing countries' capital demands, said Yuan Gangming, an economist with Tsinghua University.

"The development bank is not built on the

AFRICA

basis of stronger powers helping weaker ones. It is a mutual assistance pattern among BRICS countries based on their own efforts. Such cooperation will be more equal and effective, and it will help enhance BRICS members' status in the international financial system on the whole," Yuan explained.

Yuan added that China, which possesses adequate foreign exchange reserves, is expected to play a large role in the bank. He believed that if China becomes a major stakeholder, its foreign exchange reserve investment structure will likely be optimized. If the yuan can be included as a form of loan of the bank, it will greatly promote the Chinese currency's internationalization, Yuan said.

Strengthening cooperation with Africa was chosen as the main focus of BRICS. The leaders of BRICS members and some African countries discussed their cooperation at the First BRICS Leaders-Africa Dialogue Forum with the theme Unlocking Africa's Potential: BRICS and Africa Cooperation on Infrastructure following the BRICS Summit in Durban.

Chinese President Xi Jinping pointed out that the forum reflected the political will of both sides to realize equality and inclusiveness and seek common development. Xi promised that the Chinese Government is willing to form a cooperative partnership for transnational and trans-regional infrastructure, and help African nations with project consultation, planning, feasibility research and design.

The Chinese leader reaffirmed China's promise to give zero-tariff treatment to 97 percent of the tariff items of exports to China from the least developed nations that have diplomatic ties with China. China is also planning to help Africa to train 300 managing and technical personnel specializing in infrastructure every year, and encourage Chinese enterprises and financial institutions to participate in infrastructure construction and operation.

"This was the first time that the BRICS summit was held on the African continent, which is very significant to the organization," said Chen, noting that Africa is a land of brisk develop-

ment. "BRICS can find more common ground in developing relations with Africa," said Chen. He said that in addition to its own economic strengthening, South Africa was absorbed into the organization because it represents over 50 African countries.

BRICS and African countries are like-minded friends with extensive common interests, the Chinese president said, noting that the rise of Africa brings opportunities to BRICS countries, just as the development of BRICS countries brings opportunities to the continent.

A confident future

"BRICS has demonstrated its vitality, and it will play a big role in global governance in the future," Chen said.

Statistics can illustrate the potential possessed by the BRICS. The five major emerging economies cover nearly 30 percent of the land territory of the world, and 42 percent of the world's population. BRICS countries have made a great contribution to the global economy in the past years. In 2003, the GDP of Brazil, Russia, India and China combined was about 9 percent of the world's total. By 2009, their share of global GDP had grown to 14 percent. After South Africa joined the group in 2010, BRICS GDP was 18 percent of the global total that year. During the past 10 years, the total GDP of BRICS rose from \$3 trillion to \$13 trillion.

Chen pointed out that the rapid development of BRICS is based on the members' common interests. "The five emerging countries share the common demand of working together for better development," he said.

Moreover, BRICS countries share the goals of enhancing developing countries' role in global governance and enabling them to have a bigger say on international issues.

Furthermore, during the process of their emergence, the five countries will discover greater strategic interests. Their cooperation will thereby deepen in more areas, said Chen.

Since all BRICS members are developing countries, competition in trade and economic areas is inevitable. "Without the mechanism of

BRICS, the competition can be cutthroat. But BRICS countries now have a good platform to communicate and control their competition in a healthy direction," said Chen.

While boosting multilateral cooperation under the BRICS framework, the mechanism provides a platform for bilateral cooperation between BRICS members. During this year's summit, two agreements between China and Brazil and 10 between South Africa and Russia were signed. China and Brazil signed a financial policy memorandum as well as an agreement on a currency swap to broaden access to financial resources between the two countries whenever the need arises. Russia and South Africa reached agreements on air safety, transportation, energy and science and technology.

According to the action plan issued at the summit, BRICS nations will explore the possibility of strengthening cooperation between their state-owned firms, and promote dialogue among small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, BRICS members will also consider expanding their cooperation to more sectors including public diplomacy, anti-corruption, drug control, youth exchanges, tourism, energy and sports.

Previously, BRICS countries put more emphasis on development. But in the newly released Durban Declaration, the leaders expressed BRICS concerns over a variety of hotspot issues throughout the world.

According to the declaration, BRICS nations called for the reform of international financial institutions to make them more representative and to reflect the growing weight of BRICS and other developing countries.

"The mechanism is playing a bigger role in coordinating developing countries' stances on world issues. And this will be helpful for BRICS to act as a whole unit in international forums such as the Group of 20," Chen stressed. ■



TOUCHDOWN IN AFRICA: Chinese President Xi Jinping (first left) and his wife Peng Liyuan (in white) are welcomed by Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete and his wife Salma Kikwete in Dar es Salaam on March 24

COVER STORY

ACCORD WITH AFRICA

Xi's state visits further revitalize Sino-African relations By Yu Lintao

During Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Tanzania, the newly elected leader hailed China's friendship with the African country as one deeply rooted in the hearts of both peoples. Speaking neither in exaggeration nor cliché, his words were an accurate portrayal of the China-Africa relationship.

Xi visited Tanzania, South Africa and the Republic of Congo in late March during his first trip abroad as Chinese president. Though China's African policy has been misunderstood and demonized in recent years by some Western media, the traditional brotherly friendship between Chinese and African peoples enjoys a long history.

Observers said that Xi's choice to visit African countries in his first overseas trip in office undoubtedly highlights the great importance China assigns to the Sino-African relationship.

It is true that Sino-African economic relations have developed quickly in recent years, but the current positive state of relations between China and African countries is based on their historic friendship and equality as well as mutual benefit, they said.

Long-standing friendship

China and Africa have maintained a close friendship for the last half century, marked by mutual respect, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, said He Wenping, a researcher with the Institute of West Asian and African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Since the mid-20th century, Chinese and African peoples have supported each other on their just cause of fighting imperialism and seeking development. It is well known that in 1971, with the enormous support of African countries, China restored its lawful status in the UN. Late Chinese leader Mao Zedong once remarked, "It was our African brothers that carried us into the UN."

During his brief stay in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Xi paid a visit to a cemetery where 69 Chinese experts who lost their lives while on aid missions to Tanzania in the 1970s were buried, accompanied by Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete.

More than 40 years ago, over 50,000 Chinese experts, technicians and workers went to Africa. They worked together with Africans to complete the Tanzania-Zambia Railway, which

was of great significance for the economic development and decolonization of the African continent.

Li Wentao, a research fellow on African studies with the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, said Sino-African relations historically focused on mutual political support, but the rapid development of the Chinese economy in the past three decades has made Sino-African economic relations increasingly prominent.

Statistics from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce show that trade volume between China and Africa exceeded \$10 billion in 2000, soaring to nearly \$20 billion in 2012. In addition, by the end of 2012, China's direct investment in Africa had accumulated to nearly \$20 billion, with 75 percent going to such sectors as finance, infrastructure, processing and manufacturing, trade-related services, agriculture and transportation.

"China's rapid development is a good opportunity for African countries. The fast growing Chinese economy benefits the African economy a lot," Li told *Beijing Review*. "Particularly, the boom in Sino-African trade relations started

from the 1990s, at a time when Western countries showed indifference to Africa and many African countries were in financial trouble. Therefore, vigorous Sino-African economic relations did much to assist those countries in overcoming economic difficulties.”

Li noted that the key factor for the rapid growth of Sino-African economic relations is that China is committed to promoting mutually beneficial cooperation without any political strings attached. “China develops economic relations with African countries on the basis of equality while respecting their way of development, which is welcomed by African countries,” Li said.

South Africa’s Deputy Minister of Economic Development Hlengiwe Bule Mkhize is frank about how cooperation with China and other BRICS members differs from that with the West.

She said, “The developed world has always been interested in how they can benefit when cooperating with Africa, whereas with China and BRICS it is all about partnerships, the value chain, long-term relationships and cultural ties, all things you don’t hear about in terms of traditional business relationships.”

“Partnerships tend to be long-term and often have a win-win at the center. They also are about respect for each other and real commitment to mutual growth. There is a huge difference [between BRICS and the developed world]—you cannot compare [them],” she added.

Speaking about the proposed BRICS Development Bank, she said, “The terms will be different. All our lives we’ve been dictated to in terms of what the World Bank wants and how we are rated [by credit agencies] and this has nothing to do with our growth.”

Win-win outcome

China considers Africa a market with big potential, while Chinese products have met the needs of African people. African countries also receive generous support from China in technology and investment. Both sides have enjoyed tangible benefits in their cooperation, making it a win-win outcome.

Chinese business people flocked to the BRICS Summit, held in Durban, South Africa, on March 26-27, to look for opportunities to invest in Africa.

Qiu Lixia, President of the Silk Road Group, a Chinese company engaged in high technology, cloud computing and IT, said China can send a lot of products it manu-

factures to Africa, which has a big emerging market, and also import goods it needs from Africa. “I have made several good contacts to take my business forward,” Qiu said. “Dealing with Africa, despite the challenges, has more potential than the tough struggle to enter developed countries.”

Wally Jiang, President of Greenville International Solar City Westech Enterprises that works in the field of green energy production, was equally optimistic.

“The way investment and trade are taking off between China and Africa is an eye-opener for the rest of the world,” Jiang said. “Historically, China and Africa have links that go back decades and the relationship is built on mutual cooperation and respect, as opposed to the West’s more domineering approach. My company is involved in solar technology and as Africa has so much sunshine, it is a land of much opportunity for us,” he added.

However, China’s intensified engagement with Africa is sometimes denounced in the West as resource-oriented “new colonialism.”

“It is true that resource trade takes a large share of Sino-African trade. But we should also recognize that 90 percent of U.S.-African trade is also resource related,” Li said.

“Being rich in resources and energy is one of the advantages of Africa,” he added. “The major problem is how to turn this resource advantage into a development advantage.”

Li said China sees Africa as a reliable resource supplier, but China’s development of natural resources in Africa is completely different from the way Western colonists did it in the past, which was indeed greedy exploitation. China has provided huge investment and much infrastructure construction for African countries while exploiting resources.

Largely due to the efforts of Chinese companies operating across the continent, Africa is experiencing an explosion in infrastructure construction that has laid a good foundation for the industrialization of African countries.

Figures released at the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held last July showed that China has helped build 100 schools, 30 hospitals and 20 agricultural technology demonstration centers across the African continent within the framework of the FOCAC, which was created in 2000.

In his latest trip to Africa, President Xi reaffirmed China’s pledge to provide a \$20-billion credit line to African countries

from 2013 to 2015. He said China will promote cooperation in such sectors as transnational and trans-regional infrastructure, agriculture and manufacturing.

Instead of merely offering financial assistance, China is dedicated to helping enhance African countries’ ability to pursue development on their own by transferring advanced technologies and management skills. Xi has stressed that China will provide not only loans, but also training programs. China plans to help Africa train 30,000 professionals, and provide 18,000 government scholarships to African students from 2013 to 2015.

Challenges

It cannot be denied that with the deepening of engagement in Sino-African relations, problems will unavoidably emerge, which He described as “growing pains.”

The researcher said Chinese enterprises might make mistakes when investing in Africa for a variety of reasons. However, some Western politicians and media tend to exaggerate China’s flaws, and a few negative cases have been overstated as universal conduct.

Li echoed He’s views. Rejecting accusations that Chinese companies do not hire local people, Li said the data he gets shows currently 80 percent of the employees of Chinese enterprises in Africa are local people, including management teams.

According to Li, local labor cost is much lower, and admitting more local people to management teams can make things much easier because they know the local customs and culture. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement in local workers’ skill levels.

At the same time, Li cautioned that individual cases of misconduct by Chinese companies abroad might take a heavy toll on China’s image. As overseas Chinese enterprises are not under the jurisdiction of the Chinese Government, China’s Ministry of Commerce is trying to use economic means to make stricter demands of Chinese enterprises to abide by local laws and protect local environments. China also supports the right of governments of countries where Chinese enterprises reside to take legal action against illegal conduct. ■

(With reporting by Francisco Little in Durban, South Africa)

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