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BEIJNGREVIEW

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A GOLDEN JUBILEE

China and France mark half a century of their diplomatic bond





An Africa-oriented English monthly covering China and Africa published by BEUING REVIEW, ChinAfrica is the leading publication in China featuring news, views and analysis for an African audience.



The Sino-French Connection

China and France 50 years on



Tackling Terrorism

Peace in northwest China tops agenda

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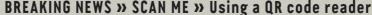
No Heavy Blow Limited impact of QE exit



From Prospect to Prosperity
Exploring post-manufacturing possibilities

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THE DESK



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President & Editor in Chief: Wang Gangvi

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Associate Editors in Chief: Li Jianguo, Huang Wei,

Wang Yaniuan, Zhou lianxiong, Ding Zhitao Assistant President: Li Zhenzhou

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Photo Editor: Wang Xiang Photographer: Wei Yao Art: Li Shigong Art Director: Wang Yajuan Chief Designer: Cui Xiaodong Designer: Zhao Boyu Proofreading: Qin Wenli, Ma Xin

Distribution Director: Hu Kegiang Human Resources: Hou lin

International Cooperation: 7hang Yaiie Marketing/PR Director: Pan Changging

Legal Counsel: Yue Cheng

North America Bureau Chief: Huang Wei Deputy Chief: Xu Tao Tel/Fax: 1-201-792-0334 E-mail: hw@bjreview.com

Africa Bureau Chief: Li lianguo

Africa Managing Editor: Francisco Little

Tel: 27-71-6132053 E-mail: casa201208@hotmail.com

General Editorial Office

Tel: 86-10-6899625 Fax: 86-10-68326628 **English Edition** Tel: 86-10-68996259

Advertising Department Tel: 86-10-68995810 E-mail: ad@bjreview.com.cn

Distribution Department Tel: 86-10-68310644

E-mail: circulation@bireview.com.cn

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EDITOR

Romantic Engagement

In the eyes of many Chinese, France is synonymous with romance. The mere mention of the country will conjure vivid images of its culture, lifestyle and fashion, while French icons such as the Louvre, Bordeaux wine and Christian Dior are widely admired in China.

The relationship China has forged with France since the establishment of their diplomatic ties five decades ago, however, is not only romantic but also pragmatic and fruitful. One of the most important driving forces behind this enduring partnership is a shared commitment to diversity, equality and independence.

The two countries' love affair began in 1964 at a time when many Western nations remained hostile toward New China. France took the initiative as it recognized the potential of the East Asian giant. More importantly, Paris sought to pursue an independent foreign policy without succumbing to outside pressure, which is also a cornerstone of China's diplomacy.

The two countries have since engaged in collaboration by making the most of their respective advantages. For instance, civilian nuclear power cooperation, which requires sophisticated technology as well as a high level of mutual trust, has borne abundant fruit. China and France jointly built the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station in south China's Shenzhen three decades ago, which supplies electricity to both the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong. Now the two countries appear poised to replicate their success story in other countries as they have agreed to explore global nuclear energy markets.

While business ties flourish, an increasing number of Chinese people have fulfilled their dreams to visit France. More than 1.5 million Chinese tourists poured into France in 2012, and 525,000 French visitors toured the "Middle Country," Tourism, coupled with cultural and educational exchanges, have cemented bonds between ordinary Chinese and French.

All-round interactions between China and France show that it is possible for countries with different cultural traditions and political systems to develop productive relations. They exemplify China's vision for a "harmonious world," in which nations following diverse development paths work together for common prosperity. Harmony, however, is not necessarily a state of affairs where no disputes exist. Instead, the new thinking calls on parties to resolve disputes by consulting with others on an equal footing and accommodating their legitimate concerns. It will enable the Sino-French ties to make continuous strides and at the same time exert a positive impact on the world at large. ■



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HOMEWARD BOUND

Weary passengers travel aboard a train heading from Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu Province, to Chengdu, southwest China's Sichuan Province, in the early hours of January 16 during a 26-hour ride.

The annual travel rush around the Chinese Lunar New Year, also known as Spring Festival, began on January 16. In the following 40 days, travelers across the country are expected to make more than 3.62 billion trips, up 200 million compared to last year, posing a great challenge to the transportation system.

Wetland Coverage

China has a total of 53.6 million hectares of wetlands, accounting for 5.58 percent of its territory area, according to survey figures released by the State Forestry Administration on January 13.

The survey was conducted between 2009 and 2013 to facilitate the country's wetland protection.

Total acreage of wetlands dropped 8.82 percent from a previous survey that ended in 2003.

Natural wetlands covered an area of 46.67 million hectares, or 87.08 percent of the total area of wetlands.



Lunar Exploration

China's moon rover *Yutu*, or *Jade Rabbit*, completed its first scientific exploration of lunar soil on January 14, according to the Beijing Aerospace Control Center (BACC).

The rover used its mechanical arm to carry out the survey, following instructions from the control center, according to a BACC statement.

"Accurate direction of the mechanical arm from a distance of 380,000 km has been realized, a breakthrough for China in achieving long-distance remote control," said Wu Fenglei of the BACC.

China's *Chang'e-3* lunar probe, which launched from Earth with

Yutu onboard, soft-landed on the moon at Sinus Iridium, or the Bay of Rainbows, on December 14 last year. After landing, the rover separated from the Chang'e-3 lander.

The rover and lander entered a period of dormancy that lasted two weeks, the same as one lunar night, on December 26, 2013, in a move designed to ride out the moon's harsh climactic conditions. They awakened autonomously on January 12.

Tough on Graft

The Communist Party of China's disciplinary watchdog closed graft investigations into eight high-profile officials and handed over their cases

to prosecutors in 2013, a senior discipline inspector revealed on January 10

The officials were Zhou Zhenhong, Liu Tienan, Ni Fake, Wang Suyi, Li Daqiu, Tong Mingqian, Yang Kun and Qi Pingjing, said Huang Shuxian, Deputy Secretary of the Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) and Minister of Supervision, at a press conference.

Five of the eight officials previously held provincial-level positions, two were senior officials of central government departments while one was senior executive of a state bank.

The cases were only a few among the 31 high-profile officials investigated by the CCDI last year, with the remaining 23 still under investigation, including Jiang Jiemin, former head of the Stateowned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council, and Li Dongsheng, former Vice Minister of Public Security, Huang added.

Last year, the Party's discipline inspection agencies punished about 182,000 officials nationwide, 13.3 percent more than in 2012, according to Huang.

Among them, about 150,000 were subject to Party discipline punishment and 48,900 were subject to administrative punishment.

Tibetan Education

Tibetans receive 8.4 years of education on average, according to data released by education authorities of Tibet Autonomous Region on January 14.

The data also showed that primary school enrollment rates in the region reached 99.59 percent in 2013.

In 2013, the regional government invested 11 billion yuan (\$1.82 billion) in education, benefiting 600,200 enrolled students, according to Ma Shengchang, director of the regional education department.

Ma added that Tibet was the first place in China to provide nineyear compulsory education for free,





Members of China's Qingdao Acrobatic Troupe perform a pole routine at the 10th Budapest International Circus Festival in Hungary on January 13, where they won a Golden Pierrot award

GRFAT HONOR

Bulgarian President Rosen Plevneliev presents the certificate of the Presidential Medal of Honor of Bulgaria to Wang Gengnian, Director General of China Radio International (CRI), in Beijing on January 14. CRI launched its Bulgarian language radio service in 1974

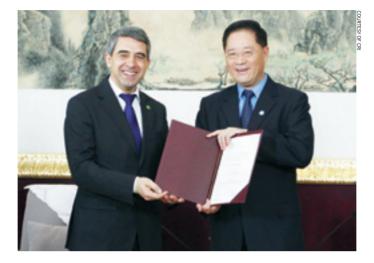
back in 2007, and it was the first to provide 15-year education for free when it started doing so in 2012.

The regional government also plans to increase the annual budget for the educational subsidy scheme by 70.5 million yuan (\$11.65 million) from September.

In the coming semester beginning in fall, children at a kindergarten through to a senior high level will receive 2,900 yuan (\$479) each to help cover annual expenses for food, accommodation and educational supplies while they attend boarding school, according to Lu Mingxiu, an official with the Tibet Bureau of Finance.

Top Prize

Following a three-year vacancy, the top natural science prize at China's annual national science awards was given for the discovery and research of iron-based compounds that can be used as high-temperature super-



conductors on January 10.

Superconductivity refers to a phenomenon where electrons travel with no resistance when a conducting material, known as a superconductor, is cooled below a certain temperature.

With a range of cutting-edge technological applications, superconductivity has become a part of daily life, from boosting cell phone signals to offering medical imaging.

At the award ceremony, leading project contributors, including Zhao Zhongxian and Chen Xianhui, received the 200,000-yuan (\$33,040) prize on behalf of their research team with the Institute of Physics under the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the University of Science and Technologu.

Most superconductors only

work at temperatures close to 0 K, or 273.15 degrees Celsius below zero—the lowest temperature possible, known as absolute zero.

The discovery marked a new "family" of iron-based superconducting materials that lift the highest temperature for resistance-free flow to 55 K. Chen said.

Blast Investigation

China's top work safety watchdog unveiled a full investigation report on January 11 regarding a fatal pipeline blast that claimed 62 lives in the eastern city of Qingdao, Shandong Province, on November 22, 2013.

The primary cause of the accident was that drilling operation by repair staff produced sparks that led to an explosion fuelled by oil leaked

from a pipeline owned by a subsidiary of Sinopec, the country's largest oil refiner, according to the report compiled by a special investigation group set up by the State Council, China's cabinet.

The blast also injured another 136 people and caused a direct economic loss of 752 million yuan (\$124 million), the report revealed.

A total of 63 people will be penalized, with 48 of them to receive punishments for violating Party and administrative disciplines and 15 others being transferred to judicial bodies for further judgment on their alleged crimes, the report added.

Desalinated Sea Ice

China will soon begin production of large amounts of fresh water through the desalination of sea ice, according to a Beijing Normal University research team and Beijing Huahaideyuan Technology Co. Ltd. The two organizations signed a technology transfer agreement on January 14.

The company is expected to be able to produce at least 1 billion cubic meters of fresh water annually by 2023, according to Yu Jian, Executive President of Huahaideyuan.

China's sea ice desalination program started in 1996 and has received a total of 29.7 million yuan (\$4.88 million) in funding from various government departments since then.

Sea Mission

A diver enters a diving bell to get ready for a 300-meter saturation dive under the South China Sea on January 9.

China succeeded in its first 300-meter saturation dive on the morning of January 12 as three divers returned safely to the living chamber on their snip

The diving bell reached a depth of 313.5 meters under sea surface. Saturation diving enables human beings to avoid the dangers of decompression sickness by being kept in an artificially high-pressure environment for longer periods of time.



Power Connection

A worker from a grid company checks a power transmission tower in Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province, on January 15.

This is the first 500-ky cross-sea power transmission line in China.



Probe Continues

China's anti-trust probe against Swedish firm Tetra Pak has not stopped, the State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC) said on January 15.

The investigation of the food processing and packaging company's possible abuse of market dominance is still underway, a SAIC spokesman said at a press conference.

Finance.ifeng.com, a Hong Kong media outlet, reported earlier that the SAIC had stopped the probe of Tetra Pak two months after the investigation began with little progress made.

In July, the SAIC enlisted more than 20 provincial and municipal industry and commerce agencies to look into Tetra Pak, and the probe made progress in December, according to Zhang Mao, SAIC Director.

Tetra Pak, which entered China in 1979, has a research and development center in Shanghai and packaging facilities in four Chinese cities, including Beijing. The company processes and packages liquid dairy products as well as other beverages.

Lending Moderated

New data has shown that China's lending in 2013 was moderated and the growth of broad money supply eased, triggering forecasts that credit tapering will continue in 2014.

China's new yuan-denominated

lending stood at 8.89 trillion uuan (\$1.5 trillion) in 2013, up 687.9 billion yuan (\$113.6 billion) from the previous year, said Sheng Songcheng, head of the Statistics Department at the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, on Januaru 15.

Total social financing, a measure of funds raised by entities in the real economy and a broad measure of liquidity in the economy, hit a record high of 17.29 trillion yuan (\$2.9 trillion) last year, up 1.53 trillion yuan (\$252.8 billion) year on year.

New yuan lending accounted for about 51.4 percent of total social financing, the lowest proportion in history and 0.6 percentage points lower than 2012.

The narrow measure of money supply (M1), which covers cash in circulation plus current corporate deposits, rose 9.3 percent from the

uear earlier period to 33.73 trillion yuan (\$5.6 trillion).

The broad measure of money supply (M2), which covers cash in circulation and all deposits, jumped 13.6 percent to 110.65 trillion yuan (\$18.3 trillion) in 2013, 0.2 percentage points less than in 2012, Sheng said.

Outstanding cash in circulation (MO) amounted to 5.86 trillion yuan (\$968.1 billion), up 7.1 percent from 2012.

"The moderation in M2 and credit growth is in line with our view that credit tapering will continue in 2014," said Zhu Haibin, J.P. Morgan China Chief Economist.

Sheng said 2014 will see the central bank continue to implement a prudent monetary policy, make appropriate preemptive adjustments, and use various liquidity management tools to make monetary conditions "not too tight nor too loose."

China has kept a proactive fiscal policy since late 2008, when the country unveiled a 4-trillion-yuan (\$566 billion) stimulus package to cushion the impact of the global financial crisis. Its monetary policy has been prudent since late 2010.



A worker dries handmade lanterns in Putian, east China's Fujian Province, on January 14. With complicated production procedures, the lanterns, sold for 10 yuan (\$1.7) each, can be used for many years

New Gas Field

The China National Offshore Oil Corp. Ltd., the country's largest offshore oil producer, announced



SHOPPING CARNIVAL

Buyers select cosmetics at a duty-free shop in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, on January 15. Hainan saw 1.1 million purchases at its duty-free shops in 2013

on January 14 the operation of the Liuhua 19-5 Gas Field.

The gas field is expected to hit its peak production of 29 million cubic feet per day within the year, a company press release said.

The project is located in the Pearl River Estuary Basin of the South China Sea with an average water depth of about 185 meters.

It was designed to share the existing production facilities of the Panyu 30-1 Gas Field. Two new producing wells have also been drilled.

Nuclear Project

The Ningde Nuclear Power Station in east China's Fujian Province will double its generation capacity in 2014 as its second generating unit is expected to be put into commercial use in the first half of this year, a company source said on January 15.

The second generating unit, which has an installed capacity of 1.09 million kw, went into operation on January 4, according to a press conference held by the Fujian Ningde Nuclear Power Co. Ltd., the



operator of the plant.

The first generating unit went into operation in April 2013. It produced about 7 billion kwh of electricity last year.

The two generators will produce 12.5 billion kwh of electricity in 2014, accounting for 7.26 percent of the province's electricity consumption in 2013.

After its third and fourth generating units, which also have installed capacity of 1.09 million kw each, become operational next year, the power plant is expected to produce 30 billion kwh of electricity annually.

Compared with a similar coal-fired plant, the four nuclear generators can reduce coal consumption by 9.8 million tons of coal a year. They can also help cut carbon dioxide emissions by 24 million tons per year and sulfur dioxide

emissions by 230,000 tons.

China currently has 17 nuclear reactors in operation, as well as 28 more under construction that account for two fifths of unfinished reactors throughout the world.

Hybrid Trains

The China CNR Corp. Ltd. (CNR), one of the country's largest train makers, announced on January 14 that it would roll out a prototype of a hybrid high-speed train off the production line in September 2015.

Changchun Railway Vehicle
Co. Ltd., a subsidiary of the CNR,
will integrate two or three power
sources—electricity, battery pack or
diesel engine—into the new model,
according to the CNR.

The power sources will form twoin-one or three-in-one power packs depending on operational and rail conditions. The design speed of the new model will be 160 km per hour. It is expected to run on both trunk and branch railways, said the CNR.

They will be widely used compared with traditional trains because of their adaptability to travel on both electric and nonelectric railways.

By the end of 2013, 52.4 percent of China's railways had been electric. This will increase, according to the country's medium- and long-term railway development plan.

The production of hybrid highspeed trains will serve the country's increasing number of electric railways, according to the CNR.

Numbers

309.33 bln yuan

China's lottery sales in 2013, up 18.3 percent from 2012

5.32 tlnkwh

Electricity consumption in China in 2013, up 7.5 percent from 2012

\$117.6 bln

Foreign direct investment in the Chinese mainland in 2013, up 5.25 percent year on year

Hi-Tech Plantation

A farmer walks in a greenhouse in the Huasheng Solar Power Farm in Jimo, east China's Shandong Province, on January 15.

The solar panels installed on the roof can adjust lighting and temperature in the greenhouse.



2.5 mln

Number of new firms set up in China in 2013, up 27.63 percent from the year earlier

THIS WEEK WORLD



An unmanned Cygnus cargo ship of a private U.S. company arrives at the International Space Station on January 12 to deliver supplies to the research outpost







Anti-government protesters wave national flags as they march through the streets of Bangkok in a move to "shut down" the city on January 13, in an escalation of their campaign to unseat Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra



FRANCE

A woman takes off her trousers prior to taking part in the 2014 No Pants Subway Ride on January 12 in a Paris subway station







EGYPT

Egyptian policemen arrest a supporter of ousted President Mohamed Morsi outside a police academy in Cairo on January 8



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stands in silent tribute in front of the tomb of former Israeli leader Ariel Sharon on January 13 on Sharon's ranch in southern Israel. Sharon died at the age of 85 following an eight-year coma







Residents ride a wooden boat as they paddle past submerged houses following floods caused by heavy rains on the outskirts of Butuan in the southern island of Mindanao on January 13

"Such seemingly outdated and primitive techniques truly represent traditional Chinese culture, and people should take pride in them."

Jiao Ruiqing, co-author of the book *Four Chinese*, which documents the daily lives of four farmers each using a traditional technique in their work, at the book's launch ceremony in Beijing on January 10



"Fancy clubs in parks and historical buildings are clearly invasions into public resources. These sites are public treasures, which should be open to the general public, rather than the privileged few."

Kong Fanzhi, former Director of Beijing Municipal Bureau of Cultural Heritage, commenting on Beijing Municipal Government's order for high-end clubs in public parks to close or operate as ordinary restaurants



"The core strategy of our international development is to foster enthusiasm and trust in traditional Chinese medicine among foreign patients by showcasing its effectiveness and relatively few side effects. We have sensed a widespread acceptance of and growing demand for it"

Ding Yongling, Deputy General Manager of Tongrentang, a Beijing-based pharmaceutical company dating back 300 years, on his company's plan to run 100 outlets abroad by 2015



"We will improve policies to encourage and support qualified enterprises of all kinds to participate in bidding for railway construction projects."

Zhao Guoqing, chief engineer and spokeswoman of the National Railway Administration, pledging to create a sound policy environment for private investment in the railway sector, at a press conference on January 14



TOP SCIENTISTS HONORED



Physical chemist Zhang Cunhao (left) and nuclear weapons expert Cheng Kaijia won China's top science award for their outstanding contributions to scientific and technological innovation on January 10.

The pair, both academicians with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), was presented with certificates by President Xi Jinping at an annual ceremony. Winners are also entitled to an award of 5 million yuan (\$820,000) each.

Zhang, 85, went to the United States to further his studies in the 1940s and obtained a master's degree in 1950. He then returned to China despite hard living conditions, and devoted himself to scientific research at the Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics of the CAS in the northeastern port city.

Zhang has focused on many pioneering technologies, including rocket propellants and lasers.

Cheng, 96, has participated in more than 30 of China's nuclear experiments. He also played a key role in developing the country's first atomic and hydrogen bombs, as well as the combination of the two bombs. Cheng devoted years to living in the vast Gobi Desert in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region beginning in 1963.

Cheng also participated in writing China's first academic document for atomic bomb research and experiments, designing a plan for setting off an atomic bomb at an iron tower higher than 100 meters, and planning the missions and the establishment of an institute dedicated to nuclear weapons experiments.

His team established China's understanding of nuclear explosions, the research into them, different kinds of nuclear experiments, and technical safety standards.

MEDIA DIGEST THIS WEEK



Film and Capital

China Newsweek January 6

At the end of 2013, China's annual box office hit 20 billion yuan (\$3.3 billion), up 20 percent from the previous year. The new movie by director Feng Xiaogang, *Personal Tailor*, produced by Huayi Brothers Media Group and released nationwide on December 19, did surprisingly well at the box office despite being panned by critics.

Feng himself was confused by the fact. "I made a fluff film and it made 400 million yuan (\$66.08 million)," he said. "But when I made a serious film, it got nowhere." Feng's dramatic picture was 1942, a film made around the end of 2012, which slumped at the box office.

What is going on in the Chinese film indus-

try? In 2013, despite rapid growth, there was neither improved movie quality nor a matured film industry. Instead, it was a result of the chaos in the industry. The fact is, films no longer reach audiences simply by their stories, but are rather a chain of commercial operations.

In the current Chinese film market, films are bound too closely with the capital market. For instance, every time Huayi released a new film, the company's stock price went up or down with it, from a low of 12.17 yuan (\$1.98) in December 2012 to a high of 80 yuan (\$13.22) in October of 2013.

This shows the film market in China is not yet fully mature. The problem is that capital is not currently used to promote a sound development of the film industry, but is instead used for speculation. Ideally, however, the core of the film industry is not capital but innovation.

Shangri-la Blaze

Workers' Daily January 14

A fire that broke out on January 11 in Dukezong Ancient Town in Shangri-la, a resort county in southwest China's Yunnan Province, has destroyed 242 houses and affected 335 families, but no deaths or injuries have been reported. The fire initially broke out at an inn and quickly spread to neighboring homes.

Narrow alleys and wood-structure houses as well as weather factors posed problems for firefighters, according to local authorities. But it is too late for excuses following this disaster.

In recent years, local government and enterprises have spent 200 million yuan (\$33 million) and absorbed investment of 800 million yuan (\$132 million) to build Dukezong Ancient Town as a tourist attraction. Nearly all families in the ancient town have joined in the tourism business. Tourism development brings huge revenues to local people, but they were unaware of the hidden danger behind the tourism boom.

Though some ancient towns levy a toll on tourists, funds spent on environmental protection and restoration are still limited. Finding a balance between developing tourism and protecting historic constructions is a big challenge.

Junk Mail

Beijing Times
January 14

Junk e-mail and short spam messages are becoming commonplace nuisances. According to statistics, there are 370 billion junk mails sent annually in China. Internet users have no better solution than to delete spam e-mails and messages. Some are even tricked by these messages and suffer economic loss.

The major reason is that telecommunication and Internet service providers turn a blind eye on it. Some service providers have even engaged in the business of mass texting. The sending of spam mails is a crime and will be punished with a fine of 30,000 yuan (\$4,962) according to Chinese law. But in the face of huge potential economic ben-

efit, some dare to take risks.

Telecommunication service providers should be held responsible for rampant junk mail that has damaged public interests. Technically, they have solutions to block junk mail for users. Therefore, the government should take a zero-tolerance attitude toward those junk mail producers and service providers.

Big Saving Oriental Outlook January 2

The Central Government's strict policies to cut government spending have proved successful. Despite limited growth in fiscal revenue, the government balance hit a record high of 4,116.3 billion yuan (\$680.01 billion) in October 2013, up by 801.8 billion yuan (\$132.46 billion) compared to October 2012.

The tough policies were launched in December 2012, and it is estimated based on public reports that since then the country has saved hundreds of billions of yuan. This achievement showed the firm resolve of the new Chinese leadership led by Xi Jinping to cut government spending.



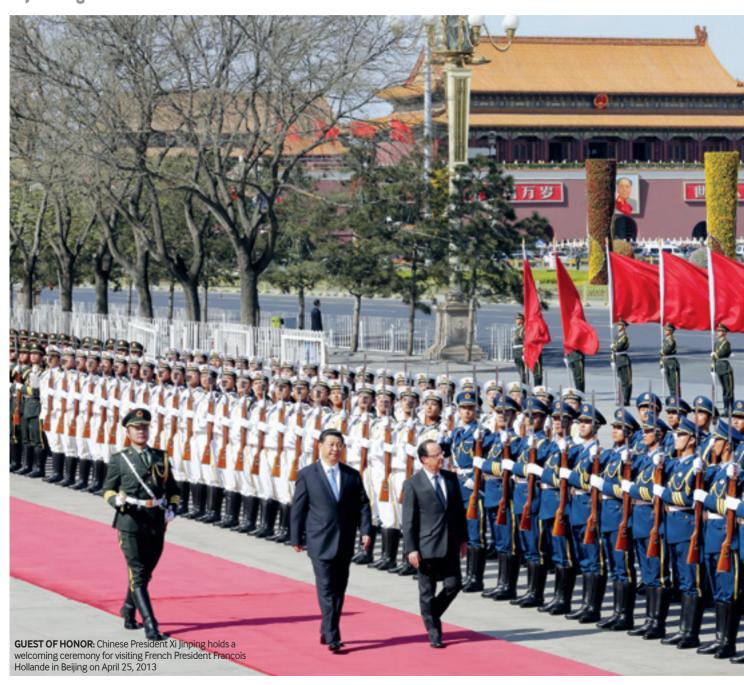
Of the spending cuts, the reception expenses and conference expenses have been reduced by about 30 percent. For instance, the conference fees have been controlled in an all-around way, including the conference size and other fees resulting from the conference such as accommodation and meals. Unnecessary conferences have been cancelled. And if issues can be dealt with via teleconferencing, a conference is not allowed.

And the reception costs have also dropped greatly. "I hope after a couple of years' efforts, a new atmosphere can be formed in all levels of government across the country. People truly cooperate in joint efforts to do the job, and needn't improve the cooperation over banquets or alcohol consumption. This is not only about physical health, but also about the working relations between the superior and the subordinate, and between colleagues," said Ye Qing, a Chinese anti-corruption expert.

COVER STORY

THE SINO-FRENCH

Reflections on a half-century of diplomatic relations between China and France By Jiang Shixue



CONNECTION



he year 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of official Sino-French relations. On January 27, 1964, Beijing and Paris announced the start of their diplomatic relationship. Described by some as a "diplomatic nuclear explosion," the event came as a shock to the international community.

The joint communiqué establishing diplomatic ties between China and France was unusually brief—just 45 Chinese characters long—but the reaction from around the world was grave.

Shortly after the announcement, U.S.-based *Time* magazine commented on the global significance of the event: "As a nation, France has seemed to be dying all through the 20th century ... Yet last week the impossible had apparently come true, and France was once more a mover and shaker in world affairs ... To cap his nation's re-emergence as a world power, [French President Charles] De Gaulle recognized the communist regime in Beijing as the government of China, brushing aside protests from Washington that the move would seriously damage U.S. policy in Asia."

In the geopolitical context of the 1960s, Paris' decision to establish diplomatic ties with Beijing illustrated the keen judgment of De Gaulle toward China, cementing his legacy as a visionary with an ability to discern fundamental historical trends. The far-sighted French politician said that China would play an important role in resolving a host of difficult problems facing Asia and the world.

Moreover, the independent foreign policy that De Gaulle endowed to France was an important factor contributing to the establishment of Sino-French relationship while not succumbing to the U.S. pressure. In 1965, De Gaulle proclaimed that "the United States is the greatest danger in the world today to peace."

Friendship

In France's last presidential election campaign, the then President Nicolas Sarkozy's team criticized rival Francois Hollande for never having visited China. Hollande asserted that he would visit China as soon as possible if elected, and went on to keep his promise. In April 2013, as France's new president, Hollande successfully completed his first China trip. He was also the first major Western leader to be received in Beijing by China's new leadership.

France can also lay claim to at least two other "firsts" in Sino-Western relations besides being the first major Western country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China: Then Chinese Ambassador to Paris Kong Quan was the first foreign ambassador President Hollande met after his election in May 2012 and Hollande was the first state head of a major Western country to make a congratulatory call to Chinese President Xi Jinping after Xi was elected in March 2013.

These firsts not only show the traditional friendship between China and France as well as the strategic insight of France but also the importance Hollande attaches to Sino-French relations and the healthy development of the current bilateral relationship.

Setbacks

After establishing an official relationship, the relations between the two countries gradually got on the right track. However, Sino-French relations have not always been smooth over the past half-century. In 1992, France decided to sell arms to China's Taiwan, infringing upon China's sovereignty and interfering with its domestic affairs. China reacted with decisive measures: Some proposed joint projects were canceled; France's Consulate General in Guangzhou was closed; and bilateral exchanges above the ministerial level were shelved. The Sino-French relationship was thus badly hurt due to France's misjudgment.

It was not until early 1994, when a joint communiqué was published, that bilateral relations were once again normalized. In the document, France recognized that Taiwan is a part of the People's Republic of China and promised not to sell arms to the region again. In the more than 10 years that followed, Sino-French relations witnessed rapid progress and fruitful cooperation in various fields including politics, the economy, science and culture.

On July 1, 2008, France assumed the rotat- ▶▶





ing EU presidency. It should have been a good opportunity for the then French President Sarkozy to promote relations between France and China. But he blackmailed China by saying that he would only attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics if the dialogue between the Central Government of China and the representatives of the Dalai Lama could be fruitful. Though Sarkozy later attended the ceremony, he also met with the Dalai Lama,

whom the Chinese Government accuses of attempting to separate Tibet from China, that December, the first head of state of the EU presidency to do so.

Sarkozy's defiance was met with a strong reaction. China felt dissatisfied with the irresponsible moves of the French side. The planned China-EU Summit was postponed, and the then Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's trip to Europe in early 2009 excluded France.

Premier Wen later said that, when he looked at the map, he noticed that his airplane circled around France. He added, "The reason France was not included in the trip is known to all. It is not China's fault."

To restore bilateral relations, China and France issued a joint press communiqué on April 1, 2009, in which France recognized the importance and sensitivity of the Tibet issue, reaffirmed its adherence to the one-China policy

Timeline of China-France Relations

January 27, 1964: China and France establish diplomatic relations. France becomes the first major Western nation to recognize New China. September 11-17, 1973: French President Georges Pompidou becomes the first Western European president to visit China.

May 12-18, 1975: Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping visits France in the first trip to a major Western state by a Chinese leader.

October 15-18, 1979: Chinese Premier Hua Guofeng conducts the first visit to France by a Chinese premier.

November 7-12, 1987: Chinese President Li Xiannian visits France, completing the first visit to the country by a Chinese president.

September 27, 1991: France sells six Lafayette-class missile frigates to Taiwan, se-

verely damaging bilateral relations.

January 12, 1994: China and France issue a joint communiqué, in which France commits to ceasing arming Taiwan, thus re-stabilizing ties

September 8-14, 1994: Chinese President Jiang Zemin pays a visit to France during the 30th anniversary of China-France diplomatic relations. The two countries agree to develop bilateral relations on an equal and mutually beneficial basis.

May 16, 1997: Chinese President Jiang Zemin and visiting French President Jacques Chirac sign a joint statement agreeing to establish a "comprehensive partnership."

January 26-29, 2004: Chinese President Hu Jintao pays a three-day visit to France, during which the two countries pledge to forge a "comprehensive strategic partnership," opening a new chapter in China-France relations.

November 25-27, 2007: French President Nicolas Sarkozy visits China.

2008: China-France relations are temporarily damaged by Sarkozy's meeting with the Dalai Lama.

April 1, 2009: China and France restore bilateral ties with the release of a joint press communiqué, in which France reaffirms its adherence to the one-China policy and the position that Tibet is an integral part of Chinese territory.

2009: France becomes China's fourth biggest trade partner within the European Union, whereas China is France's No. 1 trade partner in Asia.

November 4-6, 2010: China and France sign a series of cooperation agreements during a visit to France by Chinese President Hu Jintao.

April 25-26, 2013: French President Francois Hollande visits China.

(Compiled by Beijing Review)





and the position that Tibet is an integral part of Chinese territory, and refused to support any form of "Tibet independence."

In November 2010, the then Chinese President Hu Jintao paid a visit to France. After Hu's meeting with Sarkozy, the two countries issued a joint statement, pledging to build a new, mature and stable comprehensive strategic partnership based on mutual trust and mutual benefit. Sino-French relations thereby entered a new stage of development.

Sino-EU relations

Despite these ups and downs, both sides agree on the necessity to deepen bilateral relations further. At a time when the international political and economic pattern has undergone profound changes, it is particularly important for China and France, two permanent members of the UN Security Council, to jointly take on more responsibilities in maintaining world peace and promoting global development.

France has made indelible contributions to the promotion of Sino-European relations. For instance, acting as a mediator, France assisted in the establishment of China-Italy official relations in 1970. France also played an important role in promoting the establishment of the Sino-EU comprehensive strategic partnership in 2003.

France has long been committed to ending a European arms embargo imposed on China. When the then French President Jacques Chirac visited Japan in March 2005, he said at a joint press conference with the then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi that China's demand that the EU lift its arms embargo was legitimate and reasonable.

However, the efforts and attempts of France and some other EU countries in promoting the end of the European arms embargo on China failed under pressure from the United States.

Certainly, the support for one another on many international issues between China and France are mutually beneficial. The deep advancement of Sino-French relations is in keeping with the diplomatic diversification principle of both countries. It is not only helpful for the development of the relations between China and other Western countries but also conducive to the growth of the relationship between France and emerging economies. For instance, when France began to serve as the rotating presidency of the Group of 20 (G20) in 2010, Sarkozy actively sought the support of China. In August 2011, Sarkozy made a "blitz" visit to China during his trip to France's New Caledonia. International media claimed that the visit was related to the G20 Summit that would be held in France, noting that Paris needed the close cooperation of Beijing in promoting its G20 Summit agenda.

A promising future

As big nations with a strong spirit of independence, both China and France are committed

to the prosperity of their nations and the happiness of their people, as well as multilateralism and multipolarity. Those similarities have no doubt laid a solid political basis for the steady advancement of the Sino-French relationship.

Having undergone both positive and negative experiences, leaders from both countries have realized the importance of improving Sino-French relations. During Hollande's latest visit to China last April, Chinese President Xi said that the two sides should strengthen communication and exchanges, respect each other, deepen mutual trust, earnestly accommodate each other's core interests and major concerns and support each other's independent choice of development paths.

"We are looking forward to seeing the development of a new type of China-France comprehensive strategic partnership in the future," Xi said. "We stand ready to work with France through this visit to enhance strategic and political trust, promote practical cooperation across the board, strengthen coordination and cooperation in international and regional affairs and take the new type of China-France comprehensive strategic partnership to a new high."

Hollande also said that as two responsible powers, China and France should enhance dialogue and coordination on pressing global issues, working together to promote economic governance and safeguard world peace and prosperity.

China and France are at different stages of development, and the two economies are highly complementary to each other. This also provides a good opportunity for both countries to reach win-win results through economic cooperation. France is now China's fourth largest trade partner in the EU, behind Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. Bilateral trade increased from \$13.4 billion in 2003 to \$51 billion in 2012, with the bilateral trade volume in the first three quarters in 2013 reaching \$37.1 billion. Two-way direct investments are also on the rise, suggesting even greater opportunities for future growth and cooperation.

The author is deputy director at the Institute of European Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences





COVER STORY

BILATERAL PERSPECTIVES

Editor's Note: On the eve of the 50th anniversary of Sino-French diplomatic ties, *Beijing Review* interviews four people from China and France and asks them to share their impressions regarding the past, present and future of the relationship between their two countries

Cai Fangbai, former Chinese Ambassador to France (1990-98)

I have worked in France for 24 years, during which time I have personally witnessed the growing diplomatic relations between China and France. After World War II, there formed a bipolar system with the United States and the Soviet Union at



opposing ends. The whole world was covered by the dark cloud of the Cold War. The establishment of official Sino-French relations was an attempt to break this bipolar world system.

At a time when France actively sought to play a role as a big power in international issues and China faced both isolation from the United States and a Sino-Soviet split, the dialogue and cooperation between China and France were helpful in creating space for strategic maneuvering on international issues. They not only benefited the two countries but also exerted a strong influence on the development of the international situation and global pattern. In addition, France's move served as a model for other Western countries, which would later lead to their establishing diplomatic relationships with China.

During the last 50 years, China and France have maintained a sound relationship in spite of ups and downs. These zigzags can mainly be attributed to the following factors: The first is that the development of the international situation has directly influenced the Sino-French relationship. The great change in the balance of

power of the two countries is another important factor. The rise of China and other emerging economies have brought increasing pressure on traditional Western powers, including France. They have struggled to adapt to the new global landscape.

However, I believe that as long as China and France manage bilateral relations from a strategic point of view and respect each other's core interests and major concerns, Sino-French relations will move forward consistently in the next 50 years.

Cui Xiuli, a student at Hebei University

I love French culture. When I was young, I read



the masterpiece of the famous French short-story writer Alphonse Daudet (1840-97), *The Last Lesson*. The author states in the story, "French is the most beautiful language in the world." I have gone on to study French even though

my major is teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Many classmates share my feelings about French culture.

French wine, perfume and fashion are known worldwide. French culture gives me an impression that it is a place full of romance. I also like French movies such as Les Choristes (The Chorus), which carries a profound message. Jeux d'Enfants (Love Me If You Dare) left a deep impression on me too as it shows a different kind of romantic sensibility as well as a dreamlike effect.

I have made many French friends during my college years. Generally, French people are gentle, romantic and open-minded. I have taught Chinese to a 20-year-old French man named Jeff for half a year. He struck me as intelligent, energetic and thoughtful, with a deep interest in Chinese history and cuisine. Jeff said that as China is full of opportunities, he wants to find a job in China after mastering the Chinese language. He wants to travel around the country—not only to cities but also to China's rural areas. After my graduation, I hope I can teach Chinese in France. I also want to do what Jeff dreams to do in China, and travel all over France.

I think current Sino-French relations are sound in spite of an unhappy period several years ago. In my opinion, former French President Nicolas Sarkozy's meeting with the Dalai Lama was very offensive. If Chinese leaders were to meet with a French person who wanted to separate Corsica from France, how would French people respond? I hope no such things will reoccur in the future. And I hope people from the two countries can remain friends.

Li Xiaojing, an employee of Qingdao Customs in Shandong Province

As far as I know, most Chinese people have a good impression of France and French culture. Its capital Paris is seen as a symbol of romance and fashion. More and more people have begun to study French in recent years. Many of my



former classmates at Beijing Language and Culture University chose to go to France for further study after their graduation. They mainly chose to study design, art and other majors relating to fashion.

With the rapid economic development of China, French luxury goods are also becoming more sought after in Chinese households. For years, France has been an

important tourist destination for Chinese people, but many of them have complained that the public security situation in Paris is not good, as many Chinese travelers reported the experience of being robbed.

Comparatively speaking, Chinese people know a lot about France, while many French people are ignorant of China. To my knowledge, they see China as it was 10 years or even decades ago. I remember when I was still a French major studying in Beijing, as a volunteer I received former President Sarkozy's delegation visiting China. One French governmental official asked many strange questions about China, which made me feel uncomfortable. Their understanding of China is far from adequate. I think this might be due to the intensified negative news reports by the foreign media about China.

The Sino-French relationship can be seen as a model for Sino-European relations. With the deepening of mutual economic and cultural exchanges, I think more and more French people will understand more about China and love China.

David Gosset, Director of the Academia Sinica Europaea at China Europe International Business School, Shanghai, Beijing & Accra, and founder of the Euro-China Forum

One repeatedly attributes to Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) a statement he probably never uttered and which has

become an inept cliché: "When China awakes, the world will shake." In a press conference on September 9, 1965, then French President De Gaulle presented a more nuanced view: "A fact of considerable significance is at work and is reshaping the world: China's very deep transformation puts her in a position to have a global leading role."

Time has confirmed De Gaulle's prediction,

as the Chinese renaissance has modified the world's distribution of power in a gradual and peaceful process without abrupt discontinuity or violent disruption.

On January 27, four days before the beginning of the Year of the Horse, one will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between France and the People's Republic of China (PRC). From a French perspective, the full recognition of Beijing's government was, above all, the decision of one man, De Gaulle, one of France's greatest statesmen and a colossus of 20th-century world politics.

His acumen and strategic thinking were not only at the origin of a special relationship between Paris and Beijing, but the spirit of his groundbreaking decision remains a point of reference for the future of Sino-French cooperation.

His reasoning was solidly based upon two pillars which are also two distinctive features of Gaullism: a long-term view and the effort to take into consideration, beyond transitory events or relatively short-lived phenomena, more permanent realities.

Obviously, France's early recognition of the PRC was a political gesture with geopolitical motives—by recognizing Beijing, Paris signaled to both Washington and Moscow that France was an autonomous diplomatic force. De Gaulle was also well aware that China's strategic objective was to consolidate her sovereignty and to strengthen her independence.

De Gaulle believed that a multipolar order would be more conducive to sustainable equilibrium than either unipolarity or the dangerous bipolar structure. In some circles, his politics of grandeur caused uneasiness and uproar.

The imperatives of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité*, French propositions to the world, have been both a product and a generator of this passion for grandeur, only the exalted aspiration of a nation in movement could proclaim such revolutionary principles but

they were at the same time the source of a powerful collective energy.

In the Chinese context, centrality zhong—mirrors the French grandeur. If a sense of grandeur inspired the French monarchs, emperors and presidents, the "Middle Country" envisioned for itself centrality under Heaven. Versailles and the Forbidden City, Place de la Concorde and Tiananmen Square are obvious architectural illustrations of the correspondence between the "Grande Nation" and the "Middle Country."

Animated by a conscious effort of radiation, France aims to federate around what she conceives and enunciates as an enlightening project. By contrast, China's impact is by gravitation, wherein the "Middle Country" coheres around its demographic mass and the continuity of its civilization.

Beyond the contingent parameters of Sino-French relations, transient administrations or politico-economic conditions, Paris and Beijing, concerned by the destiny of mankind, will always find it necessary to articulate an explicit grandeur and an implicit centrality.

Ironically, the gap between France's representation of herself and the weight of her relative power is widening and, therefore, contrasts with the Chinese centrality which is increasingly effective. But the global evolution won't erase the rich French heritage, nor the French contribution to the making of Europe; and, more generally, it is precisely in the middle of the most challenging circumstances that the idea of grandeur itself can re-energize the country.

The synergies between centrality and grandeur are more than the affirmation of two separate political identities. They are impulsions for the new humanism of a global renaissance—connections between East and West as much as North and South.





NE-TIGER

侨福芳草地大厦一层L1-04单元 : (艺术形象店) :+861085622882 :(拾艺生活馆)

青岛: 阳光百货二层 电话: +86 532 86677199

