

Tale af en kinesisk diplomat i Danmark på EIR's og Schiller Instituttets diplomatisk seminar i København den 30. januar 2015

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**China's "Economic Belt along the Silk Road" and
"Maritime Silk Road of the 21st Century."**

Speech by a Chinese diplomat.

This speech was held at the EIR and Schiller Institute's diplomatic seminar in Copenhagen on January 30, 2015. The Russian Cultural Center was the venue for the seminar entitled, "Economic development, and cooperation among nations, or, economic collapse, war and terror? The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land Bridge." Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche held the keynote speech [see <http://schillerinstitut.dk/si/?p=4818>], and diplomats from two other BRICS countries, Mr. Alexey Kolesnikov from Russia, and Mr. Machiel Renier van Niekerk from South Africa [see EIR...], also gave speeches.

In 2013, President Xi Jinping of China called for joint development of an “Economic Belt along the Silk Road” and a “Maritime Silk Road of the 21st Century.” The “Belt” and the “Road” are two major initiatives that China has made to deepen reform, and open up and advance its neighborhood diplomacy. They have been written into the documents of the Third Plenum of the 18th CPC Central Committee, the Meeting on Neighborhood Diplomacy, and the Central Economic Work Conference, and have been enthusiastically received both at home and abroad.

1. The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives are the continuation and development of the spirit of the ancient Silk Road.

Over 2000 years ago, the industrious and brave people on the Eurasian continent opened several trade routes connecting major civilizations across Asia, Europe and Africa. Together, they are referred to as the “Silk Road” by succeeding generations. Despite repeated strife and wars in Eurasia, traffic on the Silk Road never completely stopped. Such links of mutual emulation via the Silk Road made exchanges of goods, know how, people and ideas possible, promoted the economic, cultural and social progress in the various countries, facilitated dialogue and integration of different civilizations, and left behind brilliant pages in human history.

Moving into the 21st century, an era that is dominated by the themes of peace, development and cooperation, but continues to feature a complex international and regional landscape, the Silk Road has become all the more important and precious as a symbol of peace, cooperation, openness, inclusiveness, mutual learning and resilience.

2. Working jointly for the “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives meets the trend of the times for regional cooperation.

Asia, known as the engine of global growth, and a key driver for world multi-polarization and economic globalization, plays a critical and increasing role in the shaping of the international landscape. Meanwhile, Asia faces multiple challenges, old and new, including mounting pressures to stay vibrant. The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives linking the past with the present, and covering China and other countries, have a highly inclusive scope that bears witness to the history of great glory in Asia, provide an important source from which Asians draw confidence and pride for their history and cultures, and stand as a banner of Asian unity and commitment to cooperation.

Regional integration is an unavoidable phase towards economic globalization. The flourishing cooperation in Asia has boosted peace and development in the region. The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives, by linking Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and West Asia, will contribute to greater connectivity and complementarity across the sub-regions, and help the establishment and improvement of Asia’s supply chain, industrial chain and value chain, thus bringing Pan-Asian and Eurasian regional cooperation to a new level.

The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives foresee infrastructure development and systemic innovation, which is conducive to an improved business environment in relevant countries and the region as a whole, to an orderly and unimpeded flow of production factors and their improved distribution, to the development of landlocked countries and the remote areas of various countries, to lowering costs and trade and investment barriers, and to providing greater drive for reform and opening-up in the various countries.

3. The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives are for open and inclusive economic cooperation.

Both the “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives have been anchored on economic cooperation, and built on cultural and people-to-

people exchanges. They foresee no interference in the internal affairs of the countries involved, nor do they seek to dominate the regional affairs or secure spheres of influence in the region.

The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives look at ideas and suggestions for cooperation and development. They are not about building an entity or creating new mechanisms. The initiatives will rely on existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms between China and other countries, and use existing platforms of regional cooperation that have proven effective. They will not overlap or compete with existing cooperation mechanisms of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Community or ASEAN plus China. If anything, they will enrich and enliven those mechanisms. We should open our mind and heart for the various cooperation initiatives and mechanisms, take a more pragmatic approach, and make them more effective and mutually reinforcing.

The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives foresee complete openness in geographical and country-specific reference. They may trace, but not be limited, to the past Silk Road, and all countries along the land and the maritime Silk Roads, as well as all friendly neighbors of China, can get involved. Central Asia, Russia, South Asia and Southeast Asia will be the priority direction. So will the Middle East and East Africa, since they are where the Belt and Road join. Countries in Europe, CIS and Africa may also be included in the long run. What is more, the initiatives, as they make progress in the future, may involve a lot more projects, countries or entities, which can only ensure their increasing openness.

4. The “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives feature “links” and focus on result-oriented and project-based cooperation, all aimed at bringing tangible benefits to the people in the region.

The first of the “five links” is policy. Countries can discuss

strategies and policies on economic development and in the spirit of seeking common ground while shelving differences, harmonizing their positions through consultation, formulate corresponding plans and measures for cooperation, and give regional economic integration their policy and legal “green light”.

The second Link is road. We have a saying in China that goes “if you want to get rich, start by building roads.” There is need for China and its neighboring countries to improve their cross-border transportation infrastructure, put in place a transportation network linking Asia’s sub-regions and connecting Asia with Europe and Africa, and effectively address the existing inadequacies of connectivity and transportation in regions targeted by the project.

The third Link is trade. We should study issues of trade and investment facilitation while making proper arrangements accordingly, remove trade and investment barriers, promote economic circulation and improvement in the region, unleash still greater trade and investment potential of participating countries and make the regional cooperation “pie” still bigger.

The fourth Link is currency. We should promote greater trade settlement in local currencies and more currency swap schemes, strengthen bilateral and multilateral financial cooperation, set up financial arms for regional development, bring down transaction costs, enhance capacity to fend off financial risks through regional arrangements that make the region’s economy more competitive globally.

The fifth Link is people. Amity between peoples holds the key to sound relations between states. China and the neighboring countries need to shore up popular support for their state-to-state relations, promote inter-civilization dialogue, enhance exchanges, understanding and friendship among different peoples, especially those at the grassroots level.

Throughout this process, China will follow the right approach of upholding justice first and pursuing justice and interests simultaneously, providing developing countries and friendly neighbors with assistance as their abilities permit, and earnestly help them to achieve speedier growth. China will step up its input in the neighborhood, actively enhance connectivity there, explore the establishment of a regional infrastructure investment and financing platform, and strive to turn the neighboring land and sea areas into those of peace, friendship and harmony. Not only will China upgrade its own economy, it will go for an upgraded version of opening-up through such schemes as the “Belt” and the “Road” initiatives, and expand its mutually-beneficial cooperation with all countries, neighboring countries in particular.