

Delicious soup

Xi Jinping

In January 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping addressed the United Nations in Geneva, in the presence of António Guterres, the UN's new Secretary-General. We reprint excerpts from President Xi's wide-ranging speech. Its global approach to peace and development, and its call for a world free of nuclear weapons, strike more positive notes during turbulent times.

... When countries enjoy peace, so will the world; when countries fight, the world suffers. From the Peloponnesian War in the fifth century BC to the two world wars and the Cold War that lasted more than four decades, we have drawn painful and profound lessons. ‘History, if not forgotten, can serve as a guide for the future.’ By establishing the United Nations, those before us won more than 70 years of relative peace for the world. What we need to do is to improve the mechanisms and means to more effectively resolve disputes, reduce tension, and put an end to wars and conflicts.

The Swiss writer and Nobel laureate Hermann Hesse stressed the importance of serving ‘not war and destruction but peace and reconciliation’. Countries should foster partnerships based on dialogue, non-confrontation and non-alliance. Major powers should respect each other’s core interests and major concerns, keep their differences under control, and build a new model of relations featuring non-conflict, non-confrontation, mutual respect and win-win co-operation. As long as we maintain communication and treat each other with sincerity, the ‘Thucydides trap’ can be avoided. Big countries should treat smaller ones as equals, instead of acting as a hegemon imposing their will on others. No country should open the Pandora’s box by wilfully waging wars or undermining the international rule of law. **Nuclear weapons, the Sword of Damocles that hangs over mankind, should be completely prohibited and thoroughly destroyed over time to make the world free of nuclear weapons.** Guided by the principle

of peace, sovereignty, inclusiveness and shared governance, we should turn the deep sea, the polar regions, outer space and the Internet into new frontiers for co-operation, rather than a wrestling ground for competition.

We should build a world of common security for all through joint efforts. No country in the world can enjoy absolute security. A country cannot have security while others are in turmoil, as threats facing other countries may haunt it also. When neighbours are in trouble, instead of tightening one's own fences, one should extend a helping hand to them. As the saying goes, 'united we stand, divided we fall'. All countries should pursue common, comprehensive, co-operative and sustainable security.

Terrorist attacks in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East in recent years once again demonstrate that terrorism is the common enemy of mankind. Fighting terrorism is the shared responsibility of all countries. In fighting terror, we should not just treat the symptoms, but remove its root causes. We should enhance co-ordination and build a global united front against terrorism so as to create an umbrella of security for people around the world.

The number of refugees has hit a record high since the end of the Second World War. While tackling the crisis, we should also get to its roots. Why would anyone want to be displaced if they have a home to return to? The UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration should act as the co-ordinators to mobilize the whole world to respond effectively to the refugee crisis. China has decided to provide an additional 200 million yuan of humanitarian assistance for refugees and the displaced of Syria.

As terrorism and refugee crises are closely linked to geopolitical conflicts, resolving conflicts provides the fundamental solution to such problems. Parties directly involved should return to the negotiating table, and other parties should work to facilitate talks for peace, and we should all respect the role the UN plays as the main channel for mediation.

Pandemic diseases such as bird flu, Ebola and Zika have sounded the alarm for international health security. The World Health Organization should play a leadership role in strengthening epidemic monitoring and sharing of information, practices and technologies. The international community should step up support and assistance for public health in African countries and other developing countries.

We should build a world of common prosperity through win-win co-operation. Development is the top priority for all countries. Instead of beggaring thy neighbour, countries should stick together like passengers in the same boat. All countries, the main economies in particular, should

strengthen macro policy co-ordination, pursue both current and long-term interests, and focus on resolving deep-seated problems. We should seize the historic opportunity presented by a new round of the scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, shift growth models, drive growth through innovation, and further unleash social productivity and social creativity. We should uphold World Trade Organization rules, support an open, transparent, inclusive and non-discriminatory multilateral trading regime, and build an open world economy. Trade protectionism and self-isolation will benefit no one.

Economic globalization, a surging historical trend, has greatly facilitated trade, investment, flow of people, and technological advances. Since the turn of the century, under the auspices of the UN and riding on the waves of economic globalization, the international community has set the Millennium Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thanks to these initiatives, 1.1 billion people have been lifted out of poverty, 1.9 billion people now have access to safe drinking water, 3.5 billion people have gained access to the Internet, and the goal has been set to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. All this demonstrates that economic globalization is moving in the right direction. Of course, challenges such as development disparity, governance dilemmas, digital divide, and equity deficit still exist. But they are growing pains. We should face these problems and tackle them, instead of taking no action. As we Chinese like to say, one should not stop eating for fear of getting choked.

We should draw inspiration from history. Historians told us long ago that rapid economic development makes social reform necessary; but people tend to support the former while rejecting the latter. Instead of watching in hesitation, we should move forward against all odds. Answers can also be found in reality. The 2008 international financial crisis teaches us that we should strengthen co-ordination and improve governance so as to ensure sound growth of economic globalization and make it open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all. We should make the cake bigger and share it fairly to ensure justice and equity.

In September 2016, the G20 Summit in Hangzhou focused on global economic governance and other major issues, adopted the ‘Blueprint on Innovative Growth’, put development in the global macro policy framework for the first time, and formulated an action plan.

We should build an open and inclusive world through exchanges and mutual learning. Delicious soup is made by combining different ingredients. Diversity of human civilizations not only defines our world, but also drives progress of mankind. There are more than 200 countries

and regions, over 2,500 ethnic groups, and multiple religions in our world. Different histories, national conditions, ethnic groups and customs give birth to different civilizations and make our world a colourful one. There is no such thing as a superior or inferior civilization, and civilizations are different only in identity and location. Diversity of civilizations should not be a source of global conflict; rather, it should be an engine driving the advance of human civilizations.

Every civilization, with its own appeal and root, is a human treasure. Diverse civilizations should draw on each other to achieve common progress. We should make exchanges among civilizations a source of inspiration for advancing human society and a bond that keeps the world in peace.

We should make our world clean and beautiful by pursuing green and low-carbon development. Man coexists with nature, which means that any harm to nature will eventually come back to haunt man. We hardly notice natural resources such as air, water, soil and blue sky when we have them. But we won't be able to survive without them. Industrialization has created material wealth never seen before, but it has also inflicted irreparable damage to the environment. We must not exhaust all the resources passed on to us by previous generations and leave nothing to our children, or pursue development in a destructive way. Clear waters and green mountains are as good as mountains of gold and silver. We must maintain harmony between man and nature and pursue sustainable development.

We should pursue a green, low-carbon, circular and sustainable way of life and production, advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a balanced manner, and explore a model of sound development that ensures growth, better lives and a good environment. The Paris Agreement is a milestone in the history of climate governance. We must ensure this endeavour is not derailed. All parties should work together to implement the Paris Agreement. China will continue to take steps to tackle climate change and fully honour its obligations.

The Swiss army knife embodies Swiss craftsmanship. When I first got one, I was amazed that it has so many functions. I cannot help thinking how wonderful it would be if an exquisite Swiss army knife could be made for our world. When there is a problem, we can use one of the tools on the knife to fix it. I believe that with unremitting efforts of the international community, such a knife can be made.

For us Chinese, China will do well only when the world does well, and vice versa. Many people are quite interested in what policies China will pursue, and we have heard various views. Here, I wish to give you an explicit answer.

First, China remains unchanged in its commitment to uphold world peace. Amity with neighbours, harmony without uniformity, and peace are values cherished in Chinese culture. *The Art of War*, a Chinese classic, begins with this observation:

‘The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road to either survival or ruin. Hence it demands careful study.’

What it means is that every effort should be made to prevent a war and great caution must be exercised when it comes to fighting a war. For several millennia, peace has been in the blood of us Chinese and part of our DNA.

Several centuries ago, China was strong and its gross domestic product accounted for 30 per cent of the global total. Even then, China was never engaged in aggression or expansion. For more than 100 years after the 1840 Opium War, China suffered immensely from aggression, wars and chaos. Confucius said, ‘do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you’. We Chinese firmly believe that peace and stability is the only way to development and prosperity.

China has grown from a poor and weak country to the world’s second largest economy, not by committing military expansion or colonial plunder, but through the hard work of its people and our efforts to uphold peace. China will never waver in its pursuit of peaceful development. No matter how strong its economy grows, China will never seek hegemony, expansion or sphere of influence. History has borne this out and will continue to do so.

Second, China remains unchanged in its commitment to pursue common development. An old Chinese saying goes, when you reap fruits, you should remember the tree; when you drink water, you should remember its source. China’s development has been possible because of the world, and China has contributed to the world’s development. We will continue to pursue a win-win strategy of opening up, sharing our development opportunities with other countries, and welcoming them aboard the fast train of China’s development.

Between 1950 and 2016, China provided foreign countries with over 400 billion yuan of aid, and we will continue to increase assistance to others as our ability permits. Since the outbreak of the international financial crisis, China has contributed to more than 30 per cent of global growth each year on average. In the coming five years, China will import eight trillion US dollars of goods, attract 600 billion US dollars of foreign investment, make 750 billion US dollars of outward investment, and Chinese tourists will make 700 million visits abroad. All this will bring

more development opportunities to other countries.

China pursues a path of development in keeping with its national conditions. We always put people's rights and interests above everything else and have worked hard to advance and uphold human rights. China has met the basic living needs of its 1.3 billion-plus people and lifted over 700 million people out of poverty, which is a significant contribution to the global cause of human rights. The Belt and Road initiative I put forward aims to achieve win-win and shared development. Over 100 countries and international organizations have supported the initiative, and a large number of early harvest projects have been launched. China supports the successful operation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and other new multilateral financial institutions in order to provide more public goods to the international community.

Third, China remains unchanged in its commitment to foster partnerships. China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, and is ready to enhance friendship and co-operation with all other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. China is the first country to make partnership-building a principle guiding state-to-state relations. It has formed partnerships of various forms with over 90 countries and regional organizations, and will build a circle of friends across the world.

China will endeavour to put in place a framework of relations with major powers featuring general stability and balanced growth. We will strive to build a new model of major country relations with the United States, a comprehensive strategic partnership of co-ordination with Russia, partnership for peace, growth, and reform among different civilizations with Europe, and a partnership of unity and cooperation with BRICS countries [Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa]. China will continue to uphold justice and friendship and pursue shared interests, and boost pragmatic co-operation with other developing countries to achieve common development. We will further enhance mutually beneficial co-operation with our neighbours under the principle of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness. We will pursue common development that is result oriented with African countries in a spirit of sincerity, affinity and good faith. And we will elevate our comprehensive co-operative partnership with Latin America to a higher level.

Fourth, China remains unchanged in its commitment to multilateralism. Multilateralism is an effective way to preserve peace and promote development. For decades, the United Nations and other international institutions have made a universally recognized contribution

to maintaining global peace and sustaining development.

China is a founding member of the United Nations and the first country to put its signature to the UN Charter. China will firmly uphold the international system with the UN as its core, the basic norms governing international relations embodied in the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, the authority and stature of the UN, and its core role in international affairs.

The China-UN Peace and Development Fund has been inaugurated officially. We will make funds available to peace and development oriented programmes proposed by the UN and its agencies in Geneva on a priority basis. China's support for multilateralism will increase as the country continues to develop itself.

Geneva evokes a special memory for us. In 1954, Premier Zhou Enlai led a Chinese delegation to the Geneva Conference, and worked with the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France to seek political settlement of the Korean issue and a ceasefire in Indo-China. This demonstrated China's desire for peace and contributed Chinese wisdom to world peace. Since 1971, when China regained its lawful seat at the UN and began to return to international agencies in Geneva, China has gradually involved itself in disarmament, trade, development, human rights and social issues, putting forth Chinese proposals for the resolution of major issues and the making of important rules. In recent years, China has taken an active part in dialogues and negotiations on the Iranian nuclear issue, the Syrian and other hotspot issues, giving Chinese input to their political settlement. China applied to the International Olympic Committee to host both the summer and winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, and we have won the bids. In addition, we have gained endorsement from the International Union for Conservation of Nature for over a dozen applications for world natural heritage sites as well as world cultural and natural heritage sites. All this has presented Chinese splendour to the world.

The ancient Chinese believed that 'one should be good at finding the laws of things and solving problems'. Building a community of shared future is an exciting goal, and it requires efforts from generation after generation. China is ready to work with all the other UN member states as well as international organizations and agencies to advance the great cause of building a community of shared future for mankind.

On 28 January, we Chinese celebrate the Chinese New Year, the Year of the Rooster. The rooster symbolizes bright prospects and auspiciousness. As a Chinese saying goes, the crow of the golden rooster heralds a great day for all.