

A New Chapter for the Asia-Pacific Region

Voice of the World

Edited by QI Liming

ASEAN countries officially announced the establishment of a China-ASEAN Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in a joint statement on November 22, after the ASEAN-China Special Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations. Media reports from member states on the blueprint for ASEAN moving forward were upbeat about the road ahead.

Vietnam: strategic partnership most important summit outcome

According to *The Star*, the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that ASEAN and China established recently is a testament of the achievements from mutual cooperation, respect and understanding by the two sides over the last 30 years, said Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh.

Pham said that ASEAN and China should continue enhancing strategic trust, promoting comprehensive cooperation, and multiplying achievements towards higher goals and greater benefits for bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, Deputy Foreign Minister and head of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), Vietnamese Nguyen Quoc Dung, said from the very beginning his country backed China's proposal to hold a special summit to celebrate the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-China dialogue relations and subsequently participated in the



"Hainan-ASEAN (Singapore)" of COSCO Shipping. (PHOTO: VCG)

preparation and negotiations to achieve the Joint Statement of the summit.

"During the summit, PM Chinh underlined the core factors of cooperation, which among others, includes jointly maintaining peace, stability, and cooperation for development in an environment still full of uncertainties besides upholding attainments and further strengthening ties to effectively cope with emerging global challenges," he said as reported by the Vietnam News Agency.

According to Nguyen, the most important outcome of the summit was the establishment of the ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Thailand: blueprint leaves no one behind

According to *Bangkok Post*, ASEAN

has granted China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership status. The bloc has overtaken the European Union (EU) as China's biggest trade partner, with ASEAN-China trade amounting for 732 billion USD (24 trillion baht).

China's top five trade partners are

ASEAN, the EU, the U.S., Japan and South Korea. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha hopes to seek ways to build a secure, prosperous and sustainably inclusive future with ASEAN through a people-centric approach that, "Leaves no one behind."

Cambodia: multiple opportunities in blue economic partnership

Khmer Times reported that the establishment of the China-ASEAN partnership on blue economy is one of the important goals set in the China-ASEAN Strategic Partnership Vision 2030.

It is timely to launch cooperation on the blue economy, because this meets the development needs of countries and the region after COVID-19. It is conducive to enhancing the vitality and resilience of sustainable development and promoting economic recovery and improvement of people's livelihoods.

China and ASEAN are facing multiple opportunities in developing the blue economic partnership. The concept of sustainable ocean development has had a wide-ranging impact on regional countries.

Deepening cooperation in regional ocean governance has become a consensus among regional countries. Lots of achievements have been made in maritime economic cooperation between China and ASEAN countries. In this

light, the foundation for the establishment of a blue economic partnership between the two parties has become increasingly solid.

According to *The Manila Times*, three decades on, the relationship between China and the ASEAN countries has become the "most dynamic model of cooperation" in the region and the world, said Cambodian officials and scholars.

Philippines: boding well for regional peace and security

As *Manila Bulletin* reported, regional stability is vital. The mutual interest of all concerned nations should receive close attention.

The ASEAN-China summit comes at a time when many countries are already transitioning into more benign scenarios that soften the harsh impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped that economic recovery could be accelerated and enable the ASEAN peoples to resume their march toward greater prosperity.

Last year, ASEAN became China's top trading partner. Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong observed that this achievement has "become possible by both ASEAN and China actively contributing to and investing in an ASEAN-led regional architecture that is rules-based, open, inclusive and promotes free trade."

Hi! Tech

First Industrial Application of Crude Oil Steam-Cracking Technology Passed in China

Edited by QI Liming

Sinopec has successfully tested a technology that can convert crude oil directly into ethylene, propylene and other chemical products ("crude-to-chemicals") and achieved the first industrial application of this technology called crude oil steam-cracking technology (COSCT) in Tianjin, China this November.

COSCT is one of the "crude-to-chemicals" solutions which skips the traditional crude oil refining process, which would be like making bread directly with wheat and eliminating the flour grinding

process. This approach will greatly shorten the production process, lower production costs and significantly reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

At present, ExxonMobil and Sinopec are the only two companies to successfully achieve industrial application of COSCT worldwide. It's estimated that for every one million tons of crude oil processed by this technology, nearly 500,000 tons of chemical products can be produced, 400,000 tons of which are high-value products such as ethylene, propylene, light aromatics and hydrogen. This technology presents huge economic value and potential.

Ethylene is a hydrocarbon gas considered one of the key benchmarks to measure the status of a country's petrochemical industry. With the improving of people's living standards, the global demand for chemical products is also growing, so demand for ethylene and propylene has also increased accordingly.

Sinopec is preparing to build an industrial demonstration plant for the direct production of chemicals from crude oil in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. It is preparing to carry out the development and engineering design of packaged technology for the production of ethylene by steam-cracking one million tons of crude oil.



China's First Industrial Application of COSCT. (PHOTO: S&T Daily)

Heavy Ion Beams: Relief for Cancer Patients

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More therapy facilities under construction

Ma Zhen, chairman of the board of CAS Ion Medical Technology Co., Ltd., said that there are four heavy ion therapy facilities now being constructed and more cooperative agreements signed. Population and geographic factors will be taken into account regarding the construction of such facilities. Their accessibility improves if they are built in the

country's regional medical centers.

Much smaller facilities will be developed to benefit more patients and reduce the cost of treatment, said Xiao. Scientists will also upgrade the facilities by adopting technologies like artificial intelligence and 5G.

Personnel specialized in heavy ion treatment, such as frontline doctors and medical physicists, will also be trained, so as to provide more patients with the benefit of heavy ion therapy.

Opinion

By Staff Reporters

Many artificial intelligence (AI) experts have predicted that machines using AI could outperform humans at every task in 45 years. While there is no doubt that AI will lead future development, related security concerns are also on the rise worldwide. However, with a standard set of regulations, these fears may be allayed and lead to better cooperation.

The European Parliament passed a resolution in October calling for stronger security measures in AI, that includes law enforcement. China also agreed with UNESCO's AI guidelines to stop AI from wreaking havoc on societies and help protect user rights. An article published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) believes that China and Europe could cooperate in the future with similar AI ethics.

The article, *Can China and Europe find common ground on AI ethics?* was written by Pascale Fung, director of the Centre for Artificial Intelligence Research (CAiRE), and Hubert Etienne, Ph.D candidate in AI ethics at Ecole Nor-

male Supérieure. Authors compared the ethical principles endorsed by the Chinese National New Generation Artificial Intelligence Governance Professional Committee (CNGAIGPC) and those promoted by the European High-level Expert Group on AI (HLEGAI). They believe China and the EU have similar AI ethical principles in many aspects, both focusing on fairness, robustness, privacy, safety and transparency. Although the methods they prescribed revealed clear cultural differences (See table on the right), "The presence of major commonalities between them points to a more promising and collaborative future in the implementation of these standards," said the article.

At present, people believe that if the ethical risks can be eliminated, AI has huge potential to solve future human challenges, such as climate change and pandemics. Leaders from both China and the EU have already expressed their hopes for cooperation in the field of AI.

The two economies may promote AI collaboration when they share two common guidelines on ethics, according to Fung and Etienne.

The first is the "shared tradition of Enlightenment and the Science Revolution, in which all members of the AI re-

search community are trained today." They consider that the concept of science and technology development will definitely bring economic growth.

The second is their commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Both guidelines refer to some of these goals, including poverty reduction and inequality, gender equality, health and well-being, environmental sustainability, peace and justice, and economic growth, including social and individual development and rights.

If China and the EU adopt guide-

lines on an ethical approach to AI jointly, they may both ultimately benefit. Their regulations could provide different levels of operational detail and complementary perspectives for a comprehensive AI framework, the article concluded.

"Despite the seemingly different ... approaches on AI ethics from China and the EU, the presence of major commonalities between them points to a more promising and collaborative future in the implementation of these standards," explained Fung and Etienne on Twitter.

CNNGAIGPC's Ethical Principles	HLEGAI's Key Requirements
1. Harmony and friendship.	1. Societal and environmental well-being
2. Fairness and justice.	2. Diversity, non-discrimination and fairness
3. Tolerance and sharing.	3. Human agency and oversight
4. Respect privacy.	4. Privacy and data governance
5. Safe and controllable.	5. Technical Robustness and safety
6. Share responsibilities.	6. Transparency
7. Open collaboration.	7. Accountability
8. Agile governance.	

The ethical principles endorsed by CNNGAIGPC and those promoted by HLEGAI. (TABLE: WEF)

Xi, Putin Congratulate Closing of China-Russia Year of Sci-tech Innovation

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It has been proved that there is a great potential, as well as a broad prospect, for the China-Russia cooperation in scientific and technological innovation, he said.

Xi stressed that China and Russia, which are each other's largest neighbors, have jointly been playing an increasingly important role in the current international political and economic arena.

Xi called on the two sides to up-

hold the concept of enduring friendship and win-win cooperation, and push forward cooperation in various fields in a practical manner.

Xi also urged the two sides to promote bilateral relations to a higher level, higher quality and higher standards, and to inject new impetus into the forging of a new type of international relations, and the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

In Putin's congratulatory letter, he said with joint efforts from both sides,

the Russia-China Year of Scientific and Technological Innovation has been a success, which has fully demonstrated the significance of undertaking bilateral scientific and technological cooperation under the framework of the comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era.

Over the past two years, Russian and Chinese scientific researchers have overcome the impact of the pandemic and carried out more than 1,000 scientific research activities, he said.

Principal results from the cooperation, he underlined, includes China's participation in the construction of the Nuclotron-based Ion Collider facility (NICA), a large-scale scientific facility, and the establishment of the Russian-China Mathematical Center by both sides.

Putin said he believes the two sides will continue to uphold the notion of enduring friendship and win-win cooperation, and continue to inject strong impetus into the promotion of all-round cooperation between Russia and China.

Source: XINHUA

Toward a High-level China-Africa Community with a Shared Future

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Moreover, China will undertake 10 digital economy projects for Africa, set up centers for China-Africa cooperation on satellite remote-sensing application,

and support the development of China-Africa joint laboratories, partner institutes, and scientific and technological innovation cooperation bases, said Xi.

A green development program is

mentioned as well. China will undertake 10 green development, environmental protection and climate action projects for Africa, support the development of the "Great Green Wall", and build cen-

ters of demonstration on low-carbon development and climate change adaptation in Africa.

The other programs are in terms of trade, investment, capacity building, cultural and people-to-people exchange, and peace and security.

Source: XINHUA