

INSIGHTS

China-Central Asia Summit Offers New Blueprint of High-quality Cooperation

Voice of the World

Edited by TANG Zhexiao

The China-Central Asia Summit which was held on May 18-19 in Xi'an, northwest China's Shaanxi province, marks the first major diplomatic event that China host this year.

The six countries jointly signed the Xi'an Declaration of the China-Central Asia Summit, adopted a list of summit outcomes, determining to work together to rise to challenges and foster a closer China-Central Asia community with a shared future.

Aktilek Musaeva, Kyrgyzstan's Ambassador to China, said that the China-Central Asia Summit is an important dialogue platform between China and Central Asian countries.

The foreign ministers of the five Central Asian countries, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz and Turkmenistan, said that developing relations with China is a priority of their respective diplomatic agendas and that they will maintain high-level exchanges with China, promote Belt and Road cooperation, deepen people-to-people exchanges, fight terrorism, separatism and extremism, and usher in the next 30 golden years of China-Central Asia relations, according to Kazakhstan's *The Astana Times*.

Over the past decade, China and these five Central Asian nations have jointly implemented a number of major projects, which have benefited the region and its people in various ways.

Some examples of these are comple-



The China-Central Asia Summit is held from May 18 to 19 in Xi'an, capital of northwest China's Shaanxi province. (PHOTO: VCG)

tion of the China-Kazakhstan Horgos International Border Cooperation Center and the China-Kazakhstan Logistics Base in Lianyungang, providing a gateway to the Pacific for Central Asian countries. The Chinese-built tunnel of the Angren-Pap railway line in Uzbekistan, the longest tunnel in Central Asia, which has saved local residents the trouble of climbing through the mountains or taking a detour via neighboring countries.

The China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan highway, which has become an important international transportation route that runs smoothly through the region's mountainous terrain. Vladimir Norov, former Uzbekistan foreign minister, said the railway allows goods from China to reach Europe several days faster.

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) proposed in Kazakhstan in 2013.

The BRI is actively seeking alignment with the Central Asian countries' development strategies, carrying out a series of win-win projects that bring tangible benefits to the people in the region.

These projects, including establishing the China-Central Asia Agricultural Cooperation Center and the Luban Workshop (a Chinese vocational workshop program training talent overseas), were planned for the betterment of the people.

Kubanychbek Taabaldiev, a Kyrgyz professor of international relations at Ala-Too International University, noted the close ties between countries in the region and China is China's success, not only in the economic field or through introduction of new digital technologies, but also in poverty eradication and the improvement of civil society conditions.

Shavkat Alimbekov, leading researcher at International Institute for Central Asia, said in an interview with

Global Times that the China-Central Asia Summit will give new impetus to the high-quality construction of the Belt and Road Initiative.

"One of the key aspects of this cooperation is the development of the 'Green Silk Road,' that is, the use of green development technologies, innovative solutions and advanced technologies to achieve environmental efficiency and sustainability," said Alimbekov.

In January, 2022, China and the five Central Asian countries jointly announced to build a China-Central Asia community with a shared future.

The China-Central Asia Summit, held at the starting point of the ancient Silk Road, is set to reinvigorate the millennia-old trade route, ushering in a promising outlook for China-Central Asia cooperation and contributing to an increasingly closer China-Central Asia community with a shared future.

Don't View Sci-tech Collaboration with Narrow Mindset

Opinion

By ZHU Rongsheng

Recently, high-level officials from China and the U.S. held intensive discussions to bring bilateral relations back on to a steady and upward trajectory. During a meeting with U.S. Ambassador to China William Burns in Beijing on May 8, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang emphasized the importance of avoiding a downward spiral in China-US relations. Qin said that the U.S. should not talk about communication while continuously suppressing and containing China.

In recent years, the U.S. government has pursued an offensive foreign policy towards China, including a trade war, and decoupling in high-tech chains, which has inevitably led to a deterioration in China-US relations.

However, the stable development of China-US relations has a deep influence on the global order. One major concern is whether sci-tech cooperation can be reestablished. In the view of the confrontation and prolonged competition between the two great powers, Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, has expressed his concern that geopolitical competition will push the world order into two systems, dominated by China and the United States respectively.

While Chinese and U.S. government officials have engaged in strategic communications to maintain a stable relationship, the polarization of U.S. parties could pose significant challenges to those efforts. In the U.S. foreign policy decision-making system that carries out whole-of-government strategic competition with China, the U.S. Congress persistently anchors the narrative of the "China threat" and reinforces the so-called "anti-China Political Correctness of containing China." The key U.S. lawmakers are embarking on a path of dependence against competition with China.

The U.S. Congress had an intensive debate on the "China Competition Act" and promoted the adoption of the *CHIPS and Science Act*, and the *Inflation Reduction Act*. The "China Competition Act" promotes heavily subsidization to technology industries, precisely decouple technology chains against China, and attempts to lock China in the lower end of the industrial chain and encourage the friend-shoring global supply chains.

On May 3, Senate Majority Leader

Chuck Schumer launched an upgraded version of the "China Competition Act 2.0 Initiative" limiting the flow of advanced technology to China, and curtailing the flow of investment to China to ensure U.S. global leadership in high technology. The initiative puts more emphasis on strengthening the technological investment and advantage of the United States through non-market means.

What would it cost for the U.S. to force technology decoupling? In April, IMF released its latest *World Economic Outlook* report. According to the report, the decoupling policy implemented by the U.S. government and the previous "China Competition Act" in Congress will produce a "slowing growth in cross-border flows" effect. The IMF predicts that this could reduce global growth by two percent. And the U.S. will take a large share of the loss.

In addition to the long-term economic damage, the U.S. Congress's obsession with upgrading the "China Competition Act" will also be detrimental to the development of science and technology, and the growth of social welfare it brings.

In *The Chip Wars*, Chris Miller brilliantly reveals, from the perspective of history, that the U.S. has always been unable to achieve complete independence in the innovation of high-end technologies such as chips. It has to rely on the lithography machines of the Netherlands, the silicon wafers of Japan, the manufacturing of China's Taiwan, as well as the huge processing and consumer market of China.

This means that only in the "big circle" of the interdependent global system can we enjoy the benefits of scientific and technological progress, and by deliberately creating a "small circle" for the one's own absolute security it is difficult to have a future.

Science and technology is an important engine driving economic and social welfare. Deepening sci-tech ties between countries will improve people's well-being. From the lens of history, both China and the U.S. have benefited from global opening-up and cooperation in science and technology. It is better for policy makers to see the benefits of sci-tech exchanges and cooperation for people of all countries, rather than a zero-sum mentality obsessed with maintaining hegemony.

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AR Glasses Benefit Hearing Impaired People

Hi! Tech

By TANG Zhexiao

According to the World Health Organization, nearly 20 percent of the global population are currently living with hearing loss. To assist with this challenge, Beijing LLVISON Technology has developed an augmented reality (AR) eyeglasses named LEION Hey that can transcribe and display spoken words to the wearer across the lenses.

After comparing and testing materials from more than 20 suppliers globally, the research team found Ultem resin, which is a tough, lightweight, and non-halogenated flame-retardant material. With the help of Ultem resin, researchers lowered the overall weight of the AR glasses to 79 grams.

LEION Hey's stems contain both a lithium-ion battery and computer chip, enabling rapid automatic speech recognition and multi-language translations in milliseconds.

It has its own AI algorithms and a

collection of more than 100,000 minutes of real voice data in different scenarios such as venues, restaurants and streets. With the Mic array for beamforming, the sound recognition rate of the glasses can reach above 85 percent within five meters in a downtown environment, and the data text can be displayed on the glasses within 500 milliseconds.

Additionally, using a dual waveguide lens and single direction virtual screen, the glasses can both be used to see clearly and protect privacy.

According to LLVISON, the next-generation of LEION Hey is expected to use a certified renewable, bio-based grade of Ultem resin.

LLVISON



The AR eyeglasses LEION Hey, which can transcribe and display spoken words across the lens. (PHOTO: LLVISON)

Comment

Decoupling from China: There's More to Lose than to Gain

By QI Liming

China's economy will grow 5.3 percent this year, up from the 4.8 percent forecast in January. That's according to a United Nations projection released in a mid-year update of its *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2023* report on May 16.

China's economy is steadily recovering after the pandemic and remains strong, instilling confidence in its economic future, according to Hamid Rashid, lead author of the mid-year report.

However, as recovery of the world's economy continues to be a struggle, politicians in some countries smear and suppress China for political purposes, even at the cost of their own country's economic recovery, which is unwise.

No one can benefit from decoupling

As Canadian media CBC News reported, economists worry growing conflict with China will make Canada and the world poorer. Analysts said that the "Cold War" effect could slow down economic recovery and weaken dialogue on crucial issues.

"Even as we need more international co-operation on multiple fronts, we are facing the spectre of a new Cold War that could see the world fragment into rival economic blocs," warned IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva earlier this year. "This would be a collective policy mistake that would leave everyone poorer and less secure."

Bank of Canada governor Tiff Macklem raised the issue in testimony to Canadian Senate Standing Committee on Banking, Commerce and the Economy in April after discussions in Washington.

"The reality is we have all benefited tremendously from an increasingly integrated global trade and investment system and if that goes in reverse, that will certainly have a cost to global growth," Macklem told senators.

Looking at Canada specifically, Danielle Goldfarb, vice-president of global affairs, economics and public policy at the Toronto-based research company RLI, said as an open trading economy, a decline in global trade could hit the country hard.

Growing domestic markets as a priority

Not all the traditional American allies are considering following Washington's lead in pursuing economic "decoupling" from China however, since these countries would prefer to see their own markets growing.

The Strategist, the commentary and analysis site of Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), reported that in Western Europe, France and Germany are showing an unwillingness to join their allies (U.S.) in decoupling from China. French President Emmanuel Macron's recent comments that Europe should not get "caught up in crises that are not ours" demonstrate this.

China is one of France and Germany's major trading partners outside of Europe and a significant export market for luxury goods and pharmaceuticals.

Genevieve Donnellon-May, the Asia-Pacific analyst at *The Red Line* podcast and researcher at the Oxford Global Society, said that given all the evidence, making a show of decoupling from China could cause significant repercussions for

France and Germany. The costs of decoupling outweigh the benefits for the two governments.

American companies dependent on China's economy

According to CNBC, U.S. companies like Procter & Gamble, Starbucks and MGM Resorts International all said that China's recovery is boosting their overall sales, as consumers in their home markets tighten their belts. With its large population and swelling middle class, China is a desirable market for many multinational companies that have seen their U.S. businesses mature.

Meanwhile Piper Sandler analyst, Korinne Wolfmeyer, called Coty one of her favorite beauty stocks in a note to clients recently, following Coty's quarterly earnings report. She in part cited its China performance.

"We are remaining cautiously optimistic on China for the beauty market in the near term, but for COTY specifically, we view the company's strategic investments in the region and key product launches as a driver of market out-performance," she wrote.

The West meanwhile is investing "very little" in developing economies, compared to countries like China, said the former World Bank chief economist. "There's a joke that we give them lectures about what to do, and they give them money," he said.

— Katie Forster, *Barron's*, 12-05-2023

'Hostile' US Policies On China Risk Dividing World: Stiglitz

Research Box

"Hostile" US policies on China risk splitting the world into two blocs, said Nobel-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, urging the West to offer investment not "lectures" to developing countries.

It would be a good idea for the

other G7 countries to try to put pressure on the United States to say, 'what you're doing is forming the world into two blocs, and that will be hard,'" the professor said on the sidelines of Group of Seven ministerial talks in Japan.

"We may be in some kind of strategic competition, but that doesn't mean that we have to be quite so hostile."

Stiglitz warned that competition

between US Democrats and Republicans to look tough on China could undermine international action on climate change and other global crises.

And he argued that recent moves by Washington, which is attempting to limit Chinese influence on critical supply chains, could not be explained simply by concerns over Beijing's political system.