

## INSIGHTS

## Hainan Expo Injects Vigor into Global Economic Recovery

## Voice of the World

By TANG Zhexiao

The 4th China International Consumer Products Expo (CICPE) showed just how much of an impact high-quality global consumer goods can have when showcased in a vibrant trading platform, particularly when that platform also fosters international cooperation and injects a measure of urgency into the ongoing efforts toward global economic recovery.

Held in Haikou, the capital city of south China's Hainan province, from April 13 to 18, the Expo attracted various world-renowned brand exhibitors as well as newcomers, all aware of China's huge market potential and growing consumption appetite.

Cooperation with other brands would be a very good thing, Hutch Hutchison, co-founder of XOR UK Corporation Limited told media. "The reason we came here is to get our name into the public eye, for people to realize that we exist."

On the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with China, Ireland participated as the guest of honor of this year's Expo.

With an expanded exhibition area six times larger than its predecessor, the



Intelligent robots attract a visitor to stop and watch at the 4th China International Consumer Products Expo in Haikou, China's Hainan province, April 14, 2024. (PHOTO: VCG)

Irish pavilion brought together 29 exhibiting companies and institutional representatives to display more than 200 exhibits from more than 50 Irish brands. The country's wine, agricultural products, shopping blocks, tourism, lifestyle and health sectors were all showcased.

Derek Lambe, economic counselor of the Embassy of Ireland to China, said, "We get more and more Irish companies coming to join our pavilion, and this [Expo] is very interesting to Irish business-

es, because we see this as a way for Irish businesses to gain access to the huge and valuable Chinese market."

"We are particularly interested in strengthening cooperation with China in the areas of clean energy and green transition. Ireland is committed to a green transition, and we have great potential in wind and tidal energy, [so] we hope to cooperate with Chinese companies," according to Derek Lambe.

The Expo can unleash the con-

sumption potential of Chinese people by showcasing innovative and desirable products, Matteo Giovannini, a China-based finance professional and a member of the Global Young Leaders Dialogue, wrote in an article published in CGTN, adding that the CICPE is a crucial platform that can promote cross-border business and allow international firms to display their products directly to Chinese consumers and businesses.

Zeng Senhong, president of Thailand Tencel Group China, said, the Expo is not only a stage to showcase their heritage and innovation, but also an indicator that helps them perceive market consumption trends. Based on this platform, the Group hopes to further gain insights into the needs of Chinese consumers and do well in product innovation and market strategies.

In addition to China's growing consumption market, a series of new measures across key areas including services trade, digital trade and its policy for developing a free trade port have attracted many companies to settle in Hainan.

According to provincial governor Liu Xiaoming's remarks at a news conference on April 11, the number of newly established foreign-funded enterprises in Hainan has grown at an annual rate of 65 percent since 2018, reaching a total of 6,543, signaling a strong vote of confidence from international investors.

## Comment

## Minister's Visit Shows Weight of China-France Ties at 60

By TANG Zhexiao

French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Stephane Sejourne's visit to China on April 1, within three months of assuming office, reflects the great importance France attaches to its relations with China.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and France. Since the beginning of the year, the two countries have engaged in a series of high-level exchanges, giving bilateral ties renewed vigor and vitality.

France is seeking more strategically stable and forward-looking China-France relations. During Sejourne's visit, the two sides agreed to lead innovative development, deepen cooperation in traditional areas such as aviation and aerospace, nuclear energy, agriculture and finance, and explore cooperation in emerging areas such as green transition and intelligent manufacturing, according to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Looking back at history, China-France science and technology cooperation has made significant achievements. In the 1980s, the French Atomic Energy Commission donated a flywheel generator to the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science in east China for the construction of the Hefei Tokamak-7, an experimental superconducting tokamak nuclear fusion reactor.

Other joint projects have consoli-

dated the relationship. They include the international thermonuclear experimental reactor, known as the world's largest "artificial sun," as well as the management of aging nuclear power plants. Liu Jing, deputy director of China Atomic Energy Authority, said the China-France technological cooperation has injected new connotation and vitality into their nuclear energy cooperation.

During French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Beijing in 2023, the two countries signed a pact on future sci-tech cooperation, notably renewable energy.

Space technology is also an area of close cooperation. The Space Variable Objects Monitor (SVOM) is the first astronomical satellite jointly developed by China and France.

Karine Mercier, payload manager of the French National Center For Space Studies, said, "The cooperation is very pleasant because we have worked together for a long time."

Currently, she and her other French colleagues are working on a project at the Innovation Academy for Microsatellites in Shanghai, where the SVOM is being assembled.

Being comprehensive strategic partners, China and France's common interests far outweigh their differences. France has stressed that it will work with China to address global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity conservation to improve global governance, giving more stability to a turbulent world.

## 'Overcapacity' an Excuse to Slap Tariffs on Chinese Products

## Opinion

By Marco Fernandes

China has reaffirmed a fundamental goal in the coming decades: to develop new quality productive forces, in other words, to raise the level of technological and human development in all sectors of the country's economy.

I don't think it's a coincidence that at a time when China is preparing to take a new leap in the quality of its industrial production, the collective West — through its powerful media — is creating new accusations against China. The current buzzword now is "overcapacity". China is accused of overproducing some goods, mainly new electric vehicles (NEVs) and renewable energy equipment and facing low domestic demand,

which means the country needs to seek even more foreign markets to sell its production at lower prices.

However, the accusation of "overcapacity" reveals the psychology of the West. That is, "We in the collective West can no longer compete with China, so we're going to invent an excuse to slap tariffs on their products."

The countries of Southeast Asia have been accelerating the pace of their industrial development, thanks in large part to the relocation of Chinese factories and Chinese investment in the region. But in Latin America and Africa, the two continents have generally suffered a process of deindustrialization in recent decades. This has had serious consequences for economies in the Global South. So, Brazil's President Lula, for example, has made re-industrialization the main task of his government.

China offers opportunities for the

Global South. After substantial Chinese investments in infrastructure through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), recent developments indicate a higher level of cooperation between China and developing countries. For instance, at the China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue in August 2023, African leaders expressed their appreciation for China's efforts over the past two decades to promote infrastructure on the continent, but also called on China to shift its investment focus from infrastructure to industrialization.

Meanwhile, numerous partnerships between Chinese state-owned and private companies in Global South countries have been established recently, many of them related to local processing of high-demand minerals, or the production of electric vehicles.

For example, China is investing billions of dollars in lithium processing

plants in Bolivia, another lithium plant and one mega steel plant in Zimbabwe, nickel processing plants in Indonesia, and a hub of electric vehicle factories in Morocco. Mexico and Brazil are also now destinations for Chinese NEV factories.

There are high expectations that regional initiatives like the BRI, the expanded BRICS-10, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization can serve as levers to strengthen this process, even though they face opposition from Western powers. We need to deepen this kind of cooperation.

Marco Fernandes is a Brazilian researcher at the Tricontinental Institute for Social Research, a network of research institutes in the Global South. Fernandes gave the above talk at an international symposium in Beijing, held by the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University of China.



An aerial drone photo taken on March 19, 2024 shows the permanent venue of the 7th China-France Forum on Urban Sustainable Development in the Sino-French Wuhan Ecological Demonstration City, in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

## New Smart Fiber Emits Light Without Being Plugged in

## Hi! Tech

By TANG Zhexiao

Researchers from Donghua University in Shanghai developed a new type of luminous smart fiber that can emit light and generate electricity without being plugged in.

The research group accidentally discovered that fibers emit light in a radio field in an experiment. Based on this, they developed a new type of smart fiber with a "non von Neumann architecture," integrating functions including wireless energy collection, information perception and transmission into a single fiber.

Textiles with such fiber can emit light with just a touch. Researchers also achieved human-computer interaction functions such as luminous display and wireless command transmission without

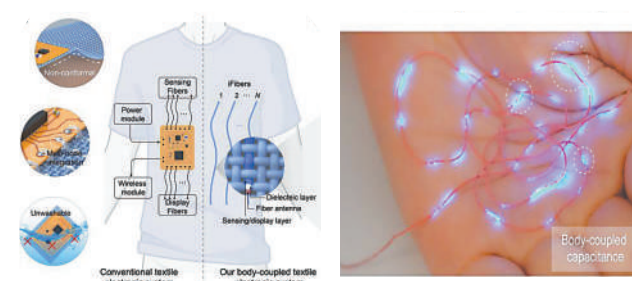
chips and batteries.

The new fiber offers comfort and stability as well. Compared with the traditional rigid semiconductor components or flexible thin film devices, electronic textiles made of smart fibers have better air permeability and softness.

However, the volume, weight and rigidity of textiles may increase as the current smart fiber uses complex multi-module integration, according to the researchers.

The study, published in the journal *Science* on April 5, said the smart fiber is expected to change the way people interact with the environment and between people.

The research group said the next stage of their work would be in-depth research on how to make new fibers more effectively collect energy from space and use it to drive more functions including display, deformation and computing.



The working mechanism of the new smart fiber and the display of hand-touch luminescence control. (PHOTO: Donghua University)

## 6G Technology Needs Joint Exploration

By YU Haoyuan

From April 16-18, scientists from multiple countries gathered at the Global 6G Conference in Nanjing, Jiangsu province in east China, to discuss the future of 6G research and development, as well as application scenarios and fostering cooperation.

The conference is actually in response to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)'s proposal in 2023 to develop the next generation of IMT standards, that is, the Framework and Overall Objectives of the Future Development of International Mobile Telecommunication for 2030 and Beyond (IMT-2030).

According to the IMT-2030, besides 5G's usage scenarios of immersive communication, massive communication, hyper-reliable and low-latency communication, 6G will add integrated AI and communication, sensing and communication, and ubiquitous connectivity.

During the conference, FuTURE FORUM, a communication platform

with significant influence in the scholar field, released the Initiative for Collaborative Advancement of Global 6G Consensus and Cooperation, which urges jointly building 6G as a technology with clear positioning, exploration of multiple new scenarios, a unified industry-wide definition, and a platform and organizational collaboration mechanism.

## The potential of 6G

6G will turn 5G's "Internet of Everything" into "Intelligent connection of everything."

Wu Hequan, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, said, "6G is supposed to meet the needs of multiple human-machine-object connections, and the multi-dimensional communication-sensing-computing scenarios, taking into account multiple requirements for bandwidth, time delay, energy efficiency and cost."

Johan Söder, head of Radio Networks at Ericsson Research, said, "I believe in 2030 there will be what we call a digitalized and programmable world. We

have the digitalization and automation trend going on for several years and it will continue to move on."

## Navigating challenges

"The use of millimeter wave hasn't gained popularity as a business-to-consumer solution, especially in terrestrial environments. That is why we need societal agreement in terms of need-pull for 6G," said Professor KyungHi Chang from Inha University in South Korea, who is also the chairman of the Executive Committee of the 6G Forum.

Kai-Kit Wong, chair professor of wireless communications at University College London, said overcoming technical, commercial and non-technical challenges is paramount for the development and commercialization of 6G.

## Global cooperation for 6G advancement

IMT-2030 has already defined the vision for how 6G technologies will be developed. "Internationalization and openness are fundamental characteristics and values of 6G, and a unified standard is the endogenous demand of technology. Therefore, 6G's R&D needs glob-

al cooperation and collaboration," said Wen Ku, president of the China Communications Standards Association.

"It is the shared goal of the global industry to avoid technological and standard fragmentation, persist in shaping a unified international standard for 6G, and construct an open and shared healthy industry ecosystem," said Wang Xiaoyun, chief scientist of China Mobile.

Sun Sumei, executive director at the Institute for Infocomm Research, A\*STAR, Singapore, said, "We are in the study phase, examining various candidate technologies for the 6G standard. We believe in and are open to collaborating with different partners to ensure a unified technology development and adoption."

Rahim Tafazolli, director and Regius professor of 5GIC and 6GIC at the University of Surrey in the UK, also said that internationalization and openness are fundamental values in the field of mobile communication and the foundation for the success of global mobile communications.