

## INSIGHTS

## CIFTIS Inspires Business Potential

## Voice of the World

By LIN Yuchen

Business representatives from around the world expressed optimism about China's market potential and opportunities at the 2024 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) held in Beijing from September 12 to 16.

This year's event attracted 85 countries and international organizations, including newcomers like France, Portugal, and Nigeria, who hosted independent exhibitions for the first time.

At the Mexico pavilion, Victor Cadena, vice president of the China-Mexico Chamber of Commerce, said seven Mexican companies participated in this year's fair. Cadena emphasized Mexico's desire to increase service exports to China, especially in logistics, education, finance, and tourism. He highlighted the growing potential in tourism between China and Mexico, saying Mexico is the only Latin American country with direct flights to China.

Cadena is optimistic about China's economic growth. "China's economic growth of 5.2 percent last year, given its massive economy, is impressive. Mexican companies remain eager to explore more opportunities in China," he said.



The 2024 China International Fair for Trade in Services highlights China's robust development and potential. Photo shows a view of the Shougang Park, one of the venues of the event in Beijing. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

Iran sent six companies specializing in knowledge-based services, including education and supply chain management. Mohammed Atarid, an Iranian business representative, underscored the potential for growth in the knowledge-based service sector. "China remains a highly attractive market for us, and we hope to strengthen our relationship with China and other nations through CIFTIS," Atarid said.

Kazakhstan, a regular participant at CIFTIS, emphasized the importance of service trade in global economic growth.

During the Kazakh pavilion's inauguration, Kazakhstan's Minister of Trade and Integration Arman Shakkaliyev highlighted the ongoing collaboration in logistics, education, healthcare, and digital services between China and Kazakhstan. Shakkaliyev stressed the significance of transportation and logistics, saying that strengthening cooperation in these sectors would unlock new business opportunities.

Italian and Zimbabwean delegates also shared their feedback. Maurizio Rasero, mayor of Asti province in Italy,

attended the 2024 World Conference on Tourism Cooperation and Development during the fair. Rasero remarked that CIFTIS opened up new opportunities for cultural and tourism exchanges between China and Italy, noting the rich variety of services showcased at the event.

Thuresi Ndarama, third secretary at the Zimbabwean Embassy, was enthusiastic about China's vibrant lifestyle and the potential for greater cultural and economic exchanges between the two nations. "China is truly a fascinating country. I hope more Chinese people can visit Zimbabwe and deepen ties between our countries," she stated.

Tomas Kudlacak, third secretary at the Slovak Embassy, commented on the value of cultural exchanges at CIFTIS. "Despite our different cultural backgrounds and languages, CIFTIS offers an opportunity to connect and learn from one another," Kudlacak remarked. He applauded China's inclusive attitude, which he said was key to the event's success.

Representatives from Yemen and Rwanda highlighted the importance of global service trade cooperation. Yemeni exhibitors praised China's Belt and Road Initiative for facilitating trade and cultural exchanges, while the Rwandan participants spoke of China's rapid development and the valuable lessons other nations can learn from it.

## Opinion

## China-LAC Commitment to Improving Lives in Global South

By QI Liming

Since China began sci-tech poverty alleviation in 1986, it has gone through more than 30 years of exploration and practice.

Over the past decades, China has eliminated extreme poverty, lifted more than 800 million people out of poverty, and brought more than 400 million people into the middle-income group.

This is a miracle in the history of human civilization, and has far-reaching implications for global human rights governance. More and more developing countries can learn from China's experience of poverty alleviation from the perspective of promoting human rights.

Today, China is at the forefront of poverty eradication in the world. This is a great encouragement and inspiration to other developing countries because almost all of them face the challenge of eradicating poverty, such as the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) countries.

Gustavo Pacheco Villar, president of the Andean Parliament, said both China and LAC countries have made significant contributions to human rights. Both should formulate policies to address present-day challenges such as international trade and food security.

According to a report released at the first China-Latin America Human Rights Roundtable in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on September 10, titled *Common Goals: China-Latin America and the Caribbean Cooperation on Human Rights Development, the Present and*

*the Future*, China and LAC share many commonalities. They can jointly enhance the voice of countries in the Global South in global human rights governance, and jointly contribute to the sound development of the human rights cause.

China and LAC account for about one-fifth of the world's land area and nearly one-third of the global population.

In 2022, their trade in goods reached nearly 500 billion USD, 35 times the amount in 2000. Since 2012, China has become LAC's second largest trading partner and the third largest source of investment.

Both believe that all countries need open human rights development paths based on their own national conditions. Without securing the right to subsistence and the right to development, the realization of other human rights is challenging, and the Global South countries must work together to play an important role in global human rights governance.

The report says China-LAC cooperation on human rights development needs to focus on three areas:

- To boost human rights communication and mutual learning to reach more consensus;
- To oppose the instrumentalization of human rights issues and strive for fairer, more equitable, reasonable and inclusive global human rights governance;
- To promote transnational common development for human rights protection and set an example for Global South cooperation on human rights development.

## Comment

## Dialogue Needed on China-U.S. Sci-tech Agreement

By GONG Qian

With the second six-month extension to the China-U.S. Science and Technology Agreement (STA) expiring on August 27, the two governments are communicating on it, China's foreign ministry said. At today's critical juncture, China and the U.S. need more than ever to manage their disputes through direct talks.

The STA, one of the first agreements when China and the U.S. established diplomatic relations in 1979, marked a new stage of development in bilateral relations.

"The landmark agreement is not just about science and technology, but a mechanistic framework covering

multiple aspects such as the economy and education," Liu Qing, vice president and senior research fellow at the China Institute of International Studies, told *Science and Technology Daily (S&T Daily)*. But in recent years, many collaborations under this framework have been overly interpreted by the U.S. as sensitive issues concerning national security.

The STA should not be abrogated casually, given its significant impact on bilateral relations, Klaus Larres, global fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center and professor of History and International Affairs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, told *S&T Daily*. Finding areas where both countries can collaborate is invaluable, and

tech cooperation should be based on scientific principles rather than being politicized, Larres said.

Both scholars emphasized the significance of communication. Larres is calling for increased dialogue to facilitate understanding and collaboration. "Engagements help move us forward," Larres said.

In Liu's opinion, the fact that the STA has been renewed twice indicates that China and the U.S. realize the need for continuing negotiations. However, the challenge lies in how to ensure that the sci-tech cooperation can conform to each other's interests while adapting to future exchanges and cooperation.

The demand for cooperation between enterprises in both countries re-

mains strong, Liu said. For example, U.S. company Tesla's success in the Chinese market not only secured it a significant market but also advanced its technology. For U.S. companies, it would be a big loss not having access to the world's largest market. This demonstrates that tech cooperation is an unstoppable trend.

From a global perspective, tech cooperation is a crucial driving force for global development, and China-U.S. tech cooperation plays an indispensable role in the process, Liu added.

And there is hope as both sides agree that maintaining a communication channel is incredibly necessary for fostering deeper understanding and promoting cooperation.

## Sci-tech Backyard Stands by African Agriculture

By TANG Zhexiao

Early in September, the China-Africa-UNESCO dialogue on education and cultural heritage protection was held in Beijing. As one of the outcomes of the dialogue, the Science and Technology Backyard (STB) center will be established in the southern Africa country of Malawi. Jointly organized by the China

Agricultural University (CAU) and Malawi University of Science and Technology, it will be a sci-tech agricultural hub with countries like Tanzania and Kenya.

In 2009, CAU initiated a novel approach to empower smallholder farmers to implement sustainable agricultural production in China, namely STBs.

Over the past 15 years, more than 1,200 STB programs have been estab-

lished by 74 universities and institutions nationwide, according to an official report, becoming a science and technology dissemination platform at the local community level.

In 2019, CAU established the China-Africa STB in Handan city, Hebei province. African students were invited to study agricultural technology in China, providing a platform for practical agricultural learning and technical exchange for African students.

Food shortages have been a serious challenge faced by African countries for many years. Around 733 million people faced hunger in 2023, equivalent to one in 11 people globally and one in five in Africa, according to the latest State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report published by five UN specialized agencies.

Agriculture is the backbone of Malawi's economy. "We have been learning how to operate agricultural machines recently," said Madalitso Chirwa, a Malawian international student of CAU who is participating in the STB project, adding that Malawi relies mainly on agriculture, with more than 80 percent of the

population engaged in the sector. "As long as agriculture develops, the country will develop. I've learnt so many things, not only on the mechanical side, but also theoretical, that has all increased my agricultural skills," Chirwa said.

Cooperating with domestic partners, CAU established seven STBs in African countries such as Zambia, Tanzania and Malawi. The project, which has been given high praise for its practice-based educational model, was recognized as one of the best poverty reduction practices in 2021 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN.

Since their establishment, STBs have trained 91 agricultural students in 12 African countries. Thirty-six of them have successfully graduated and implemented Chinese agricultural technology in their homes.

Jiao Xiaoqiang, head of the program and an associate professor at the CAU's college of resources and environmental sciences, said that he hopes to train more modern agricultural students from Africa and explore a new path for the green transformation of African agriculture.



China's new energy vehicles help Brazil's public transport transformation. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

## Luban Workshops Bridge Skills Gap in Africa

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At the Ethiopian Luban Workshop, for example, Jiang Jiang is the only Chinese teacher. The remaining instructors are all locals, many of whom have either studied in China or were previously Jiang's students.

The workshop has organized five training sessions in partnership with local governments and international organizations, benefiting nearly 200 talented youth from Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and other nations.

As an Ethiopian proverb says, "He who learns, teaches." These African instructors, equipped with advanced knowledge and technical expertise, return to their communities, contributing to sustainable development by leveraging Africa's demographic advantage.

**Innovative in education**

Kenya's Luban Workshop, located at Machakos University, southeast of

Nairobi, is the only one in Africa offering specialized training in AI, cloud computing, network security, and other digital skills. The workshop boasts advanced facilities, including smart city practice area, data center practice area, cloud network integration learning area, and air classroom teaching area.

In its more than four years of operation, the Kenya Luban Workshop has enrolled nearly 60 students in a four-year bachelor's degree program in cloud computing and information security. Additionally, it has offered short-term skills training to over 300 individuals.

One innovative project under the Engineering Practice Innovation Project has enabled students to develop a mobile app that assists visually impaired individuals in navigating the Internet independently. This app won an award in this year's Kenya Universities Innovation Competition.



Francina Lerato Kuwali (1st L), an international student from Malawi at China Agricultural University, and her classmates pose for a group photo with a farmer at an experimental field in Quzhou, Hebei province, north China. (PHOTO: XINHUA)